





# ROMAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER IX

50 A.D. - 58 A.D.

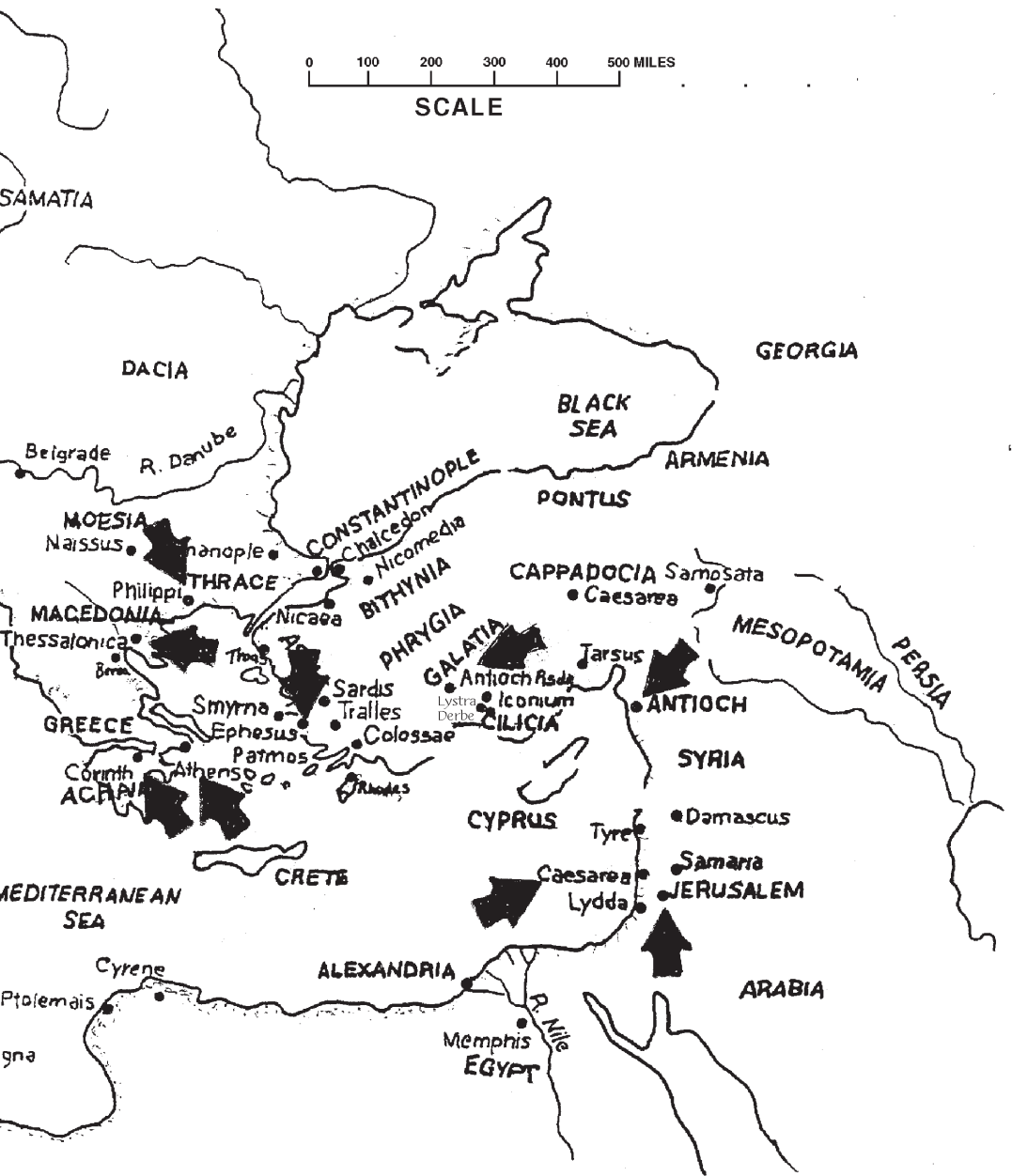
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## WHAT WAS SATAN'S REACTION

Jewish Christians of the Circumcision (Judaizers),  
 Council at Jerusalem (50 A.D.), Paul's Ministry,  
 Thessolonians, Galatians, Corinthians, Romans,  
 Thousands of Judaizers and Arrest of Paul

0 100 200 300 400 500 MILES

SCALE



In 50 A.D., the ekklesia-church in Antioch was rocked by a group from Jerusalem who were instructing that a person must be circumcised in accordance with Mosaic custom in order to be saved. This group was the same ones who were not happy with Peter for taking the Gospel to the Gentiles, even though they received the Holy Spirit in the same manner as the Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 11:2). What happens to people like this? They must require something of a tangible nature in order to secure their faith. In their case it was probably the Temple in Jerusalem.

At any rate, Paul and Barnabas along with others were sent by the Antioch ekklesia to Jerusalem to confer with the Apostles and elders about this matter. On the way they stopped in Phoenicia (Tyre) and Samaria and told the brethren about the conversion of the Gentiles, and this caused great rejoicing among them. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they were heartily welcomed by the ekklesia-church, Apostles and elders. The group from Antioch related to them all that God had accomplished through them with the Gentiles. Some of the believers who were Pharisees rose up and told them it was necessary to circumcise the converts and charged them to obey the Law of Moses, (could this be the leaven of the Pharisees?)

After a long debate, Peter arose and said, "quite a while ago, (approximately nine years), God made a selection from among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the message of the Gospel". ***AB Acts 15:8. And God, Who is acquainted with and understands the heart, bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit as also He did to us; They receive the Holy Spirit and showed the same signs as everyone else. AB Acts 15: 11-12. But we believe that we are saved through the grace (the undeserved favor and mercy) of the Lord Jesus, just as they (are). Then the whole assembly remained silent, and they listened (attentively) as Barnabas and Paul rehearsed what signs and wonders God had performed through them among the Gentiles.*** Peter laid it on the line. It's by Grace we are saved. This

pretty well ended the debate. They knew better than to argue with Peter.

James, the brother of Jesus, related how God had visited the Gentiles, and that the prophets agreed on this. Therefore, it was his opinion that no obstacles should be put in the way of the Gentiles who turn to God. He was careful not to rile the group that wanted the circumcision. This was a mistake and as history will show, they would become a definite hindrance to Jesus' ekklesia. In verse 21 James showed he was not ready to tangle with the Jews of the circumcision. ***NIV Acts 15:21. For Moses had been preached in every city from the earliest times and is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.*** Maybe this was another place where the "leaven of the Pharisees" came into play.

Even though these people had experienced signs and wonders by the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem, some were not willing to give up the Temple worship and meetings in their own synagogues. The Temple speaks for itself with all its grandeur, pomp and ceremony. However we must remember the veil of the Holy of Holies was rent from top to bottom when Jesus died on the cross. The Holy of Holies was now in heaven and Jesus had put His blood on the altar for our sins. The synagogues are a more insidious matter. We know that people who professed Jesus in His day were systematically removed and barred from their synagogues. Probably what some of these Jewish Christians of the Circumcision did in Jerusalem was form their own synagogues.

I imagine the synagogues would have their own organization and the people would meet on specific days and discuss Jesus and the Law. (Sound familiar?) I'm sure some of the old Pharisees loved this since they were such experts on the Law. After all the discussion at the counsel, they decided to release the Gentiles, from most of the rules, except eating meat sacrificed to idols and all sexual impurity. The party of the circumcision was left to their own devices. They would raise their ugly head again at a later date.

I'm sure Paul did not approve the way the conference went down, but he probably felt he was too young in the faith to raise a big issue. Besides a lot of people in Jerusalem remembered the way he was as a

Pharisee and prosecutor of the Christians. You can tell by reading his letter to the Galatians how he felt about the decision. **AB Gal 2:7. But on the contrary, when they (really) saw that I had been entrusted (to carry) the Gospel to the uncircumcised (Gentiles, just as definitely) as Peter had been entrusted (to proclaim) the Gospel to the circumcised (Jews, they were agreeable);** Paul, more or less, left it to the people in Jerusalem to take care of these believers of the circumcision. He said we agreed that my mission would be to the Gentiles and their mission would be to the circumcised. When Paul and group brought back to Antioch a letter from Jerusalem, the ekklesia-church rejoiced at the consolation, and encouragement it brought to them. (Acts 15:30-31)

According to the chronological Bible, the Gospel of Mark, the first Gospel was written around 50 A.D. This makes sense to me in that Marks' Gospel more or less gave the faith a chronological order to go by and was probably copied by the other Gospels. Mark probably interviewed Peter for his take on the events of Jesus' ministry. Prior to this the teachings and miracles of Jesus had been transmitted by word-of-mouth coming mainly from the Apostles. The Gospel of Mark doesn't seem to have an agenda or reason in response to something that had happened except relating the curtain of the Holy of Holies being torn when Jesus died on the cross. **AB Mark 15:37-38. And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed out His life. And the curtain (of the Holy of Holies) of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.** This was remembered and related to thwart the efforts of the Jewish Christians of the Circumcision

Paul was yearning to go back to the ekklesia-churches he had started on his first trip. He and Silas, who had the Gift of Prophecy, were commended by the ekklesia-church at Antioch to make the journey. He and Silas passed through Syria and Cilicia, Paul's home country, establishing and strengthening ekklesia-churches along the way. **NIV Acts 16:1-2. He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek. The brothers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him.** Here he comes back to the people who prayed for him when he was left for dead. Timothy and his family must've been a part

of that group. He convinced Timothy to go with him as a missionary and he had him circumcised because Paul knew they would have to contend with the Jews. This sounded wishy-washy on Paul's part, but I'm sure he felt that it was not worth the problems it might create for Timothy's ministry.

As these three made their way strengthening the ekklesias north across Phrygia and Galatia, Paul was really tuned onto the Holy Spirit. It was revealed to Paul by revelation to go straight to Macedonia and they ended up in Philippi. This was a relatively new city settled by Roman veterans along the Egnatian highway that ran from Rome to Asia. There evidently were no synagogues in this town; however, a group of women were sitting along a riverbank at a place of prayer. Paul sat down and addressed these women. **AB Acts 16:14-15. *One of those who listened to us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a dealer in fabrics dyed in purple. She was (already) a worshipper of God, and the Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. And when she was baptized along with her household, she earnestly entreated us, saying, If in your opinion I am one really convinced (that Jesus is the Messiah and the Author of salvation), and that I will be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay. And she induced us (to do it).*** This was very interesting in that these verses say a lot about this woman. She was not married but had a family. She was a dealer in purple fabric which meant she only did business with rich people. She made a point of asking Paul if he thought she was worthy for him and his party to come and stay at her house. Lydia left this for Paul to decide. It's very possible she had been, in her earlier years, one of the hetaira (high-class prostitute). This would explain her having achieved the order of business success on her own in the Roman world. Nevertheless, Paul and his group stayed with her and her household and witnessed in Philippi.

In obedience to the revelation, Paul and Silas went on to Thessalonica and witnessed to both Jews and Greeks. **NIV Acts 17:4. *Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women.*** Notice the leading women in the area were involved in his ministry. This was probably Lydia's influence because she probably notified them Paul

was coming to Thessalonica. The Christians in Macedonia always supported Paul's ministry. Paul and Silas went on to Berea and they witnessed to Jews and prominent Greeks, both men and women. Again we probably see the influence of Lydia as she had contacts with the prominent women because of her purple fabric.

Paul went on to Athens, "the think-tank" of the Greco-Roman world. He was really in his element; however, it grieved his spirit because there were so many idols. **AB Acts 17:17. *So he reasoned and argues in the synagogue with the Jews and those who worshiped there, and in the market place (where assemblies are held), day after day with any who chanced to be there.*** Paul went straight to the Agora with its stoas to proclaim Jesus to anyone who would listen. This was made possible by the democracy which began five hundred years before in Athens. Paul so impressed some of the philosophers they escorted him to the Aero Pagus (Mars Hill) so he could proclaim his views to a much larger audience. Paul then gave his famous Mars Hill address about the unknown god.

Paul moved on from Athens to Corinth. Corinth was a relatively new city because it was destroyed by the Romans on their march through Greece in 146 B.C. Julius Caesar rebuilt the city in 44 B.C. and it had become once more a major city because of its location on the isthmus between the Adriatic in the Aegean Seas. Corinth had a terrible reputation before the destruction because it was a major seaport and a wild and unruly place. There were at one time over one thousand priestess (prostitutes) of the Temple of Aphrodite plying their trade in the city. In fact, during that time the Temple of Aphrodite was so strong financially it was the first international bank. Corinth had settled down quite a bit by Paul's time.

A visit to Corinth many years ago prompted me to do the research for this book. After seeing the layout of the town during Paul's time and hearing the tour guides discuss the history, I had a real thirst for more knowledge about the early church.

When Paul arrived he met a Jewish couple from Rome named Aquila and Priscilla. Aquila was originally from Pontus which was north of

Paul's hometown of Tarsus. Because they and Paul were tent makers by trade, Paul stayed with them and together they plied their trade. Paul went to the synagogue and discoursed with the Jews. By his witnessing he won both Jews and Greeks to Christ; however, some of the Jews kept opposing and abusing him. So he told them, from now on I will go to the Gentiles. He went to the house of a man named Titus Justus which was next door to the synagogue. Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, eventually became a believer along with his household and many others. Paul received a revelation from God that no man would assault or harm him and sure enough, Paul stayed in Corinth a year and six months. He witnessed and taught in the houses as well as the stoas and colonnades of the Agora in Corinth. (FIGURE 8) The Agora in Corinth was the size of a typical mall of today.

While in Corinth, he wrote the letter to the Thessalonians. This was the first of many Paul would write back to the ekklesia-churches that began because of his preaching and instructing about the workings of the Holy Spirit. ***AB Thes 1:1. Paul, Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy to the assembly (church) of the Thessalonians in God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah: Grace (spiritual blessing and divine favor) to you and heart peace.*** Silas and Timothy had joined him and he wished Grace on the Thessalonians. When Paul or Luke said Grace they meant spiritual blessings. Paul went on to tell them to keep going with the works of the Holy Spirit that he had shown to them. ***AB Thes 1:5-7. For our (preaching of the) glad tidings (the Gospel) came to you not only in word, but also in (its own inherent) power and in the Holy Spirit, and with great conviction and absolute certainty (on our part). You know what kind of men we proved (ourselves) to be among you for your good. As you (set yourselves to) become imitators of us and (through us) of the Lord Himself, for you welcomed our message in (spite of the) much persecution, with joy (inspired) of the Holy Spirit; So that you (thus) became a pattern to all the believers-those who adhere to, trust in and rely on Christ Jesus-in Macedonia and Achaia (most of Greece).*** The word we brought to you came with power and in the Holy Spirit. He indicated that they had witnessed manifestations of that power. Paul said like a father, I exhort you. ***AB Thes 2:12-14. To live worthy of God, Who calls you into His own kingdom and the glorious blessedness (into***

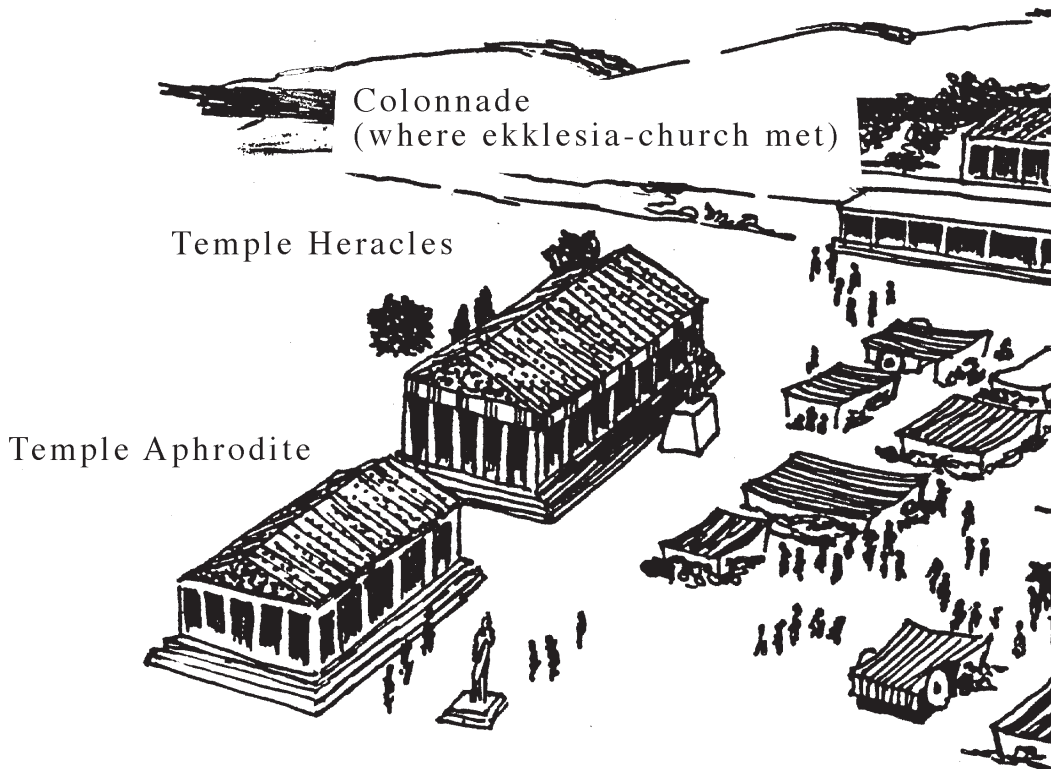


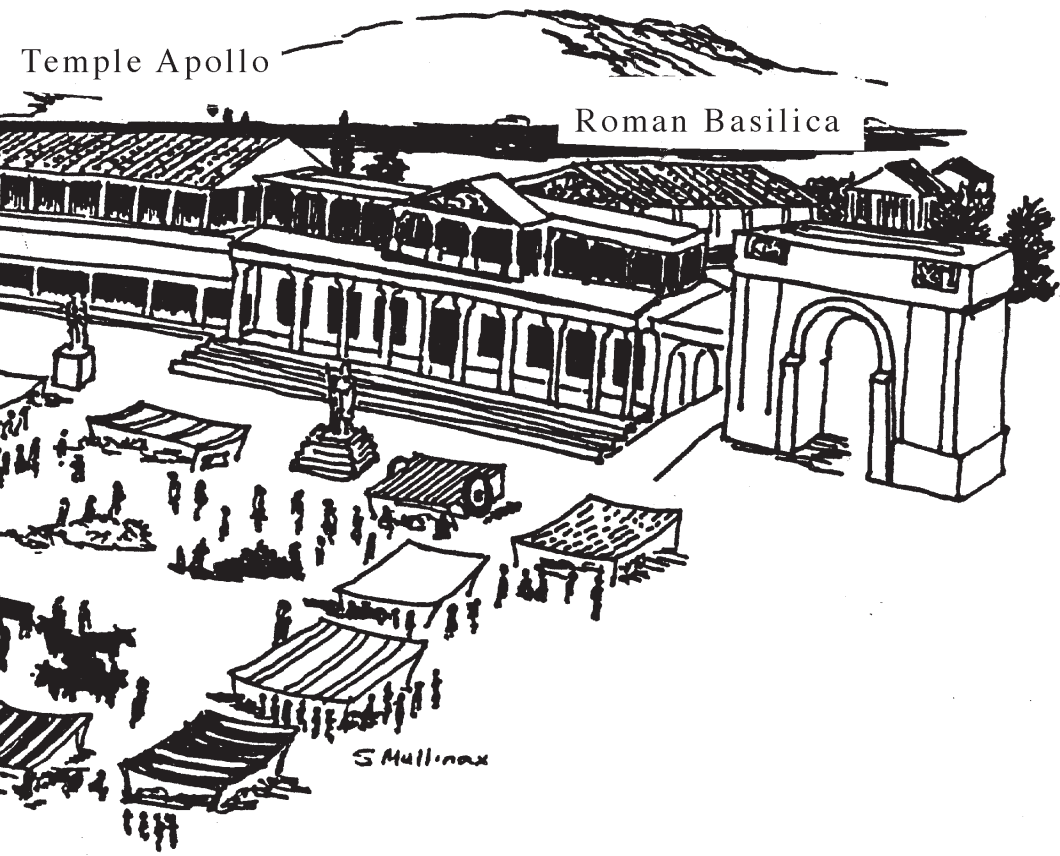
Figure 8 AGORA OF CORINTH DURING PAUL'S TIME

Acts 18:9-11 And one night the Lord said to Paul in a vision, Have no fear, but speak and do not keep silent; For I am with you, and no man shall assault you to harm you; for I have many people in this city. So he settled down among them for a year and six months, teaching them the Word of God (concerning the "attainment through Christ of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God.)

Acts 18:28 (Apollos in Corinth) For with great power he refuted the Jews in public (discussions), showing and proving by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah.

Temple Apollo

Roman Basilica



S Mullinax

*which true believers will enter after Christ's return). And we also (especially) thank God continually for this, that when you received the message of God (which you heard) from us, you welcomed it not as the word of (mere) men but as what it truly is, the Word of God, which is effectually at work in you who believe-exercising its (super-human) power in those who adhere to and trust in and rely on it. For you, brethren, became imitators of the assemblies (churches) of God in Christ Jesus which are in Judea, for you too have suffered the same kind of treatment from your own fellow countrymen as they did (who were persecuted at the hands) of the Jews.* You Thessalonians exercised this power and you became imitators of the ekklesias in Judea. Paul gave to them what he had seen and experienced in Antioch and other places.

Paul also told them God has not called us to impurity but the Spirit He gave you is holy, pure and chaste. ***AB 1 Thes 4:9-10. But concerning brotherly love (for all other Christians), you have no need to have any one write you, for you yourselves have been (personally) taught of God to love one another. And indeed you already are (extending and displaying your love) to all the brethren throughout Macedonia. But we beseech and earnestly exhort you brethren, that you excel (in this matter) more and more; AB 1 Thes 5:11. Therefore encourage (admonish, exhort) one another and edify-strengthen and build up one another, just as you are doing.*** This sounded like a true democratic ekklesia; however, Paul then became very specific. ***AB 1 Thes 5:19-21. Do not quench (suppress or subdue) the (Holy) Spirit. Do not spurn the gifts and utterances of the prophets-do not depreciate prophetic revelations nor despise inspired instruction or exhortation or warning. But test and prove all things (until you can recognize) what is good; (to that) hold fast.*** Here he told them to stay with the Gifts and go with the utterances of the prophets. Obviously the Gifts of the Holy Spirit were active among the Thessalonians. The ekklesia-church was to be run by the revelations from God and this happened in the ekklesia-churches that Paul started in his ministry.

As we read various letters of Paul we must know that what he instructed the recipients of the letters was happening in the ekklesia-church from where he wrote the letters. So at this time we know the workings

of the Holy Spirit were active in the ekklesia-church at Corinth. The Jews in Corinth finally made enough trouble for Paul that he was brought before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia. (I have stood at this judgment site in Corinth) **AB Acts 18:12-13. But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia (most of Greece), the Jews unitedly made an attack upon Paul and brought him before the judge's seat, Declaring, This fellow is advising and inducing and inciting people to worship God in violation of the Law (of Moses).** This charge showed that Paul was teaching and proclaiming Jesus in the public, probably in the stoas and colonnades of Corinth. Gallio disgustingly threw out the case and drove the Jews away from the judgment seat. Paul must have had a good reputation in Corinth because after this some Greeks beat up on the leader of the synagogue.

By 54 A.D. the ekklesia-church in Corinth was moving in the Spirit so Paul decided to go back to his home ekklesia in Antioch. Some of his friends including Priscilla and Aquila accompanied him as far as Ephesus. Paul caught a ship to Caesarea and from there went up to Jerusalem and saluted the ekklesia-church. From there he went down to Antioch and remained there a while with his home ekklesia-church.

Meanwhile, Priscilla and Aquila, who probably had a Body of Christ in their home in Ephesus, met a man named Apollos. He was an eloquent speaker and a Jew from Alexandria in Egypt. He was well-versed in the Scriptures because he was one of the highly educated Jews from that town. Remember in 275 B.C. the Jews in Alexandria made the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, called the Septuagint. Apollos began to speak freely in the synagogues about the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. He was convinced this man Jesus was the man; however, he was only acquainted with the baptism of John the Baptist. Priscilla and Aquila took him aside. **AB Acts 18:26. He began to speak freely-fearlessly and boldly-in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him with them and expounded to him the way of God more definitely and accurately.** Here again we see an understatement of Luke. They preached to Apollos that Jesus had died for his sins and prayed that he might be filled with the Holy Spirit. After this Apollos wanted to go to Corinth and the brethren including Priscilla and Aquila wrote to the

Temple Domitian  
(81 - 96 A.D.)

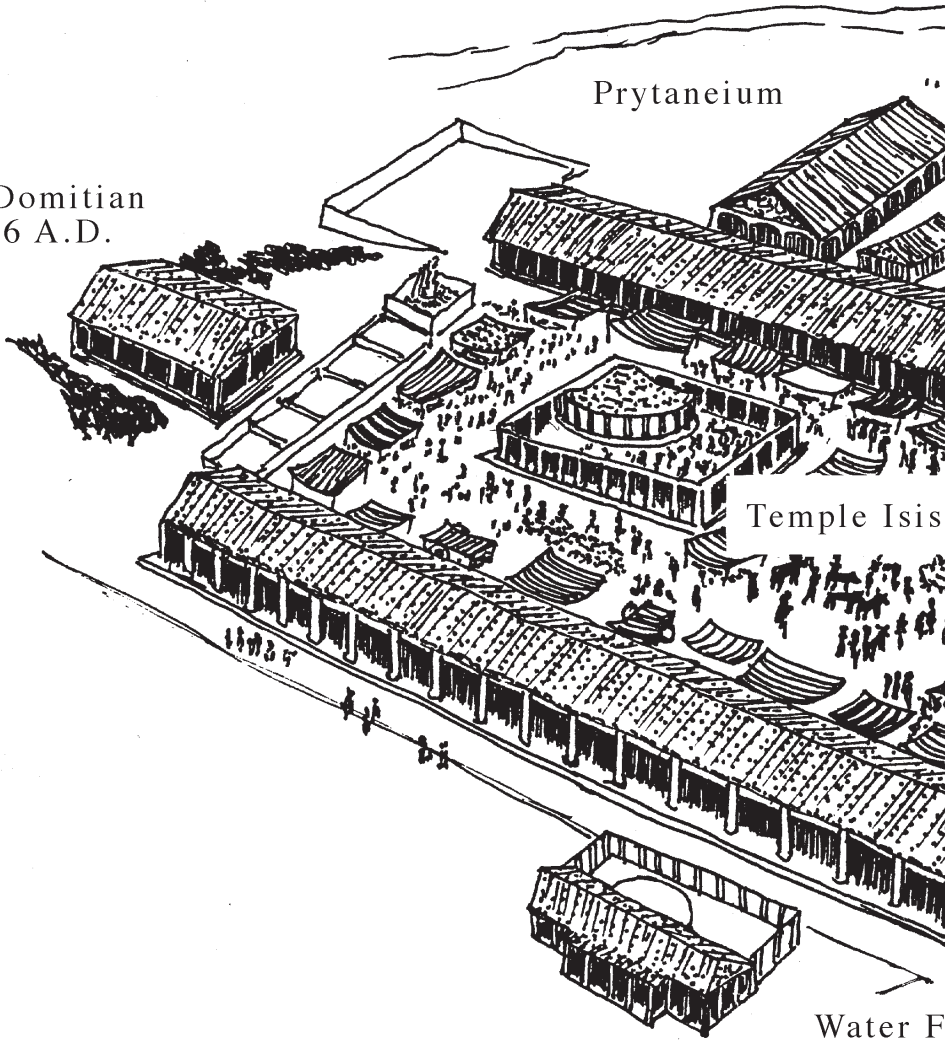
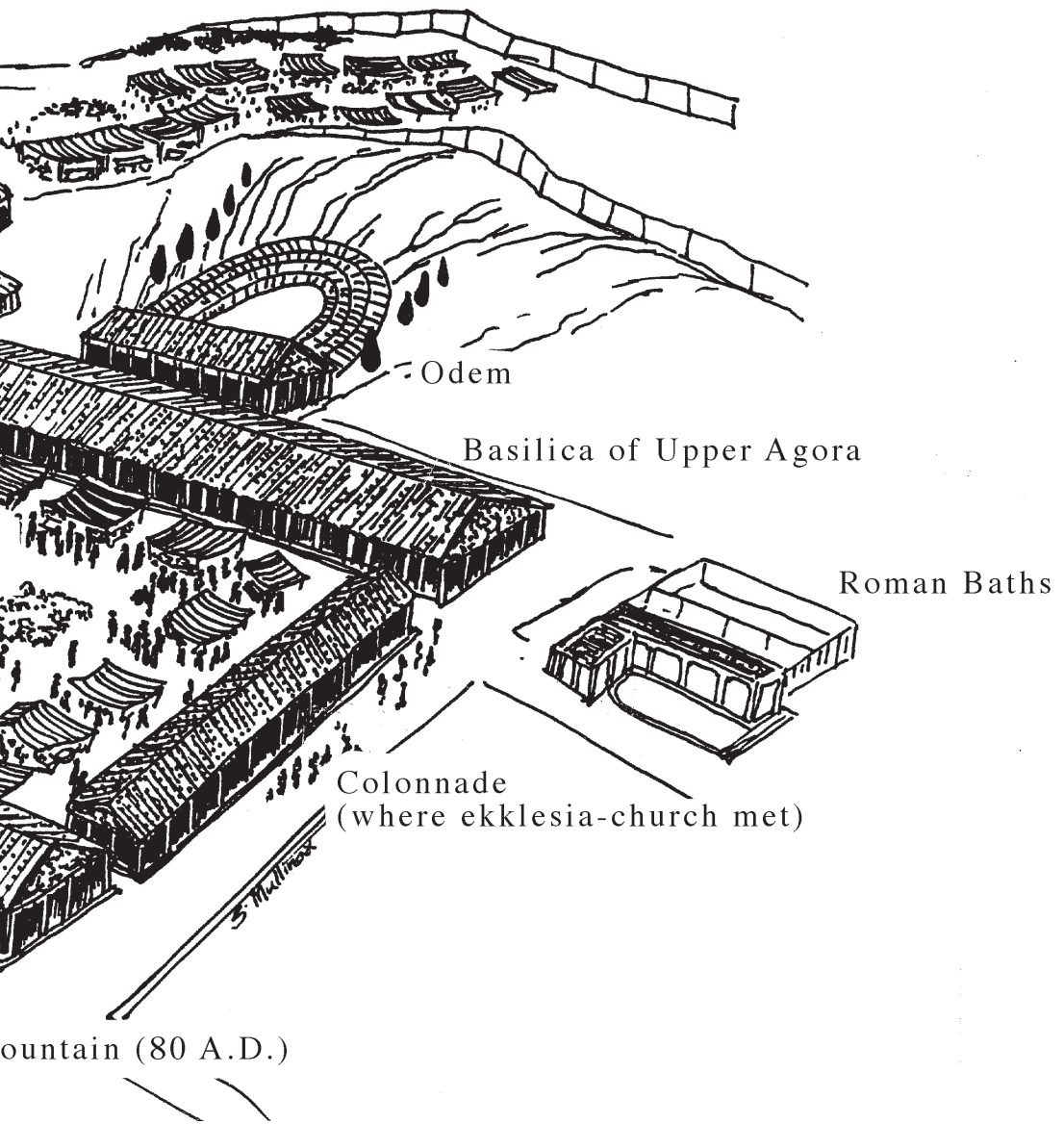


Figure 9 UPPER AGORA AT EPHESUS DURING PAUL'S AND JOHN'S TIME

AB Acts 19: 10-11 This continued for two years, so that all the inhabitants of (the province of) Asia, Jews as well as Greeks, heard the Word of the Lord (concerning the attainment through Christ of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God.) And God did unusual and extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul



Mountain (80 A.D.)

AB Acts 20:20-21 How I did not shrink from telling you anything that was for your benefit , and teaching you in public meetings and from house to house, But constantly and earnestly I bore testimony both to Jews and Greeks, urging them to turn in repentance (that is due) to God and have the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (that is due Him).

disciples in Corinth encouraging them to accept and welcome him. **AB Acts 18:28.** *For with great power he refuted the Jews in public (discussions), showing and proving by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah.* Now, Apollos had great power to refute the Jews by public debate in the colonnades in Corinth.

Paul left Antioch and journeyed through Phrygia and Galatia establishing disciples and giving new strength through the Holy Spirit. He came down to Ephesus on the coast of Asia. Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. It was a harbor town with a long and varied history. When Alexander the Great conquered the town, he established democracy whereby the citizens could rule themselves. In 133 B.C. Ephesus came under Roman rule. North of the main town stood the Temple of Artemis, being almost twice the size of the Parthenon in Athens. The city was located around the harbor at first, but as the sea retreated, the newer part was up the hill, to get away from the invading marsh. The upper Agora was built about the same time as the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Markings and designs on the stones indicated the same stone masons were used on both projects. (FIGURE 9)

Paul arrived in Ephesus in the latter part of 54 A.D. and there he found some disciples. By saying disciples, Luke meant they believed on Jesus **AB Acts 19:1-3.** *While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul went through the upper inland districts and came down to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he asked them, Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed (on Jesus as the Christ)? And they said, No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit. And he asked, Into what then were you baptized? They said, Into John's baptism.* These disciples were similar to Apollos, who was lacking in something and that something was probably the Holy Spirit. He quickly rectified that situation. **AB Acts 19:4-7.** *And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, continually telling the people that they should believe in the One Who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus (having a conviction full of joyful trust that He is Christ, the Messiah, and being obedient to Him). On hearing this they were baptized (again, this time) in the name of the Lord Jesus. And as Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they*

**spoke in foreign languages and prophesied. There were about twelve of them in all.** After Paul spoke with Priscilla and Aquila about Apollos, I'm sure he wondered where these people were coming from, believing on Jesus but never having heard about the Holy Spirit.

In Ephesus Paul again tried the synagogue, but that lasted only three months until he moved to Tyrannus Hall a lecture room in the colonnades of the upper Agora. The ekklesia-church of Ephesus began at this point. He later told the Ephesians in Acts 20:20, "I taught you publicly and from house to house".

Sometime during Paul's ministry in Ephesus, he heard some very disturbing news about the believers in Galatia. It was probably Timothy who had been visiting his family in Lystra that told him the Jewish Christians of the circumcision were polluting the ekklesia-churches in Galatia with their beliefs. I'm sure Paul thought he had put this behind him with the council in Jerusalem in 50 A.D. Suddenly he knew what was wrong with Apollos and the disciples he had first met at Ephesus. They were probably taught by the Judaizers. Paul had to be infuriated as these Galatians were his children. They were the ones that believed what he taught and acted on that belief as when Paul was healed after being stoned in Lystra. At any rate, Paul fired off the letter to the Galatians.

In the area of Galatia, there was a strong and militant Jewish crowd who had been influenced by the Judaizers from Jerusalem. Somehow they had been cajoled to go back to the traditions of the Jews. Paul and the brethren who were with him appealed to the Galatians. **AB Gal 1:2-3, 6. And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia: Grace and spiritual blessing be to you and soul peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah . . . I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you by the grace (unmerited favor) of Christ, the Messiah, (and that you are transferring your allegiance) to a different, even an opposition gospel.** Doing the will of God with the ekklesia-Body of Christ was very hard. It took a boat load of faith. You had to step out in faith and believe the Holy Spirit would reveal His revelations to you. It was much easier to say, I

believe on Jesus and retreat back into the Temple-synagogue environment where you had known traditions and followed known leaders. This was not the ekklesia-church of Jesus. His ekklesia was run by the revelations from God through the Holy Spirit.

Paul told the Galatians about the council four years before in Jerusalem where the Jews of the circumcision pressed that all Christians including the Gentiles be under the Law of Moses. Paul referred to these people as Christians in name only and they had been smuggled into our brotherhood (Gal 2:4) He told the Galatians, we did not yield submission for a moment, that the Gospel might be preserved for you. Paul met privately with the pillars of the ekklesia-church in Jerusalem and they, James the brother of Jesus, Peter and John decided that he would carry the Gospel to the Gentiles and Peter would do the same for the circumcised Jews (Gal 2:9).

Then Paul told about Peter falling back when some Jews from James in Jerusalem came to Antioch. Peter was there and withdrew from eating with the Gentile converts. Paul let Peter have it with both barrels when he said, "how dare you force these Gentiles to comply with ritual of Judaism especially after what you (Peter) proclaimed at the council (in Jerusalem)". ***NIV Gal 2:15-16, 19-20. We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not be observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified . . . For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*** I'm sure Peter, Barnabas and all the others at Antioch at that time were impressed by the sermon. Paul now hoped the Galatians would also be impressed by his words. This showed what a pull the Temple and ritualistic Law had on all the Jews.

Paul then reminded the Galatians, how powerful and active the ekklesia-church had been with the workings of the Holy Spirit. ***AB Gal 3:2-5. Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the (Holy)***

***Spirit as the result of obeying the Law and doing its works, or was it by hearing (the message of the Gospel) and believing (it)?-Was it from observing a law of rituals or from a message of faith? Are you so foolish and so senseless and so silly? Having begun (your new life spiritually) with the (Holy) Spirit, are you now reaching perfection (by dependence) on the flesh? Have you suffered so many things and experienced so much all for nothing-to no purpose? if it really is to no purpose and in vain. Then does He Who supplies you with His marvelous (Holy) Spirit, and works powerfully and miraculously among you, (do so on the grounds of your doing) what the Law demands, or because of your believing and adhering to and trusting in and relying on the message that you heard?*** Paul forced the Galatians to look at the spiritual happenings in their ekklesia-churches. The Holy Spirit had worked powerfully and miraculously among them. He asked were they willing to give all this up for some rituals?

In all probability, it was the militant Jews in Antioch-Pisidia and Iconium who withdrew from the ekklesia-church and workings of the Holy Spirit in favor of the synagogues and traditions of the Jews. It reminds one of the Jews who wanted Moses to talk to God because they were afraid of his manifestations.

Paul went on to teach about the law. ***AB Gal 3:24-27a, 28. So that the Law served (to us Jews) as our trainer-our guardian, our guide to Christ, to lead us-until Christ (came), that we might be justified (declared righteous, put in right standing with God) by and through faith. But now that the faith has come, we are no longer under a trainer-the guardian of our childhood. For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many (of you) as were baptized into Christ. . . There is (now no distinction), Neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is not male and female for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*** He told them we no longer need a trainer, we have Jesus in us. We are all one in Jesus, neither male nor female. With us in Him and Him in us, we now go by the revelations from Him. ***AB Gal 5:5a, 6. For We (not relying on the Law), through the (Holy) Spirit's (help) by faith anticipate and wait for the blessing and good for which our righteousness and right standing with God . . . For (if we are) in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircum-***

***cision counts for anything, but only faith activated and energized and expressed and working through love.*** Because we have Jesus in us we have this energized faith that conforms to His will. This was the freedom taught by Jesus. ***AB Gal 5:16 But I say, walk and live habitually in the (Holy) spirit-responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit; then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh.*** If we are guided by the Holy Spirit we are living by his revelations and have Jesus in us. Paul went on to explain the effect on the believer. ***AB Gal 5:22-23, 25. But the fruit of the (Holy) Spirit, (the work which His presence within accomplished)-is love, joy, (gladness), peace, patience (an even temper, forbearances), kindness, goodness, (benevolence), faithfulness; (Meekness, humility) gentleness, self-control (self-restraint, continence). Against such things there is no law (that can bring a charge) . . . If we live by the (Holy) Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit-If by the (Holy) Spirit we have our life (in God), let us go forward walking in line, our conduct controlled by the Spirit.*** With our conduct controlled by the Holy Spirit we are free, now we have a new birth, and a new nature from Christ Jesus the Messiah. This was the fruit of our relationship with Jesus. This should have convinced the Galatians they had no need for the circumcision party (Judaizers)

After Paul wrote his letter to the Galatians, he had to be very perplexed about the Judaizers. He recalled Apollos and the disciples he met as he arrived at Ephesus, all of whom were believers but had not heard of the Holy Spirit. He also remembered the council in Jerusalem where it appeared he had won the day; however, the party of the circumcision (Judaizers) seemed to have their own agenda and he was concerned about their influence on the ekklesia-church. And, now the Judaizers were infiltrating his converts in Galatia. They were not just a problem in Jerusalem but were a problem for the whole ekklesia-church. They didn't teach about the workings of the Holy Spirit because they depended on keeping the Law and continued their sacrifices in the Temple. Had they forgotten the veil of the Holy of Holies had been torn from top to bottom at the death of Jesus on the cross?

At this point, Paul decided to write his letter to the Corinthians. He thought it time to put down in writing a dissertation about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Body of Christ. That was why in verse one of Chapter twelve (I Cor 12:1) he said, "I don't want you to be misinformed". In the Corinthian letters, Paul instructed the Christians about the Body of Christ and how the Gifts of the Holy Spirit were manifested in the ekklesia-church throughout the land. By this time, 55 A.D., the Gospel of Mark and Paul's letters to the Thessalonians had been copied and distributed to the various ekkleisa-churches.

Notice Paul's introduction to the Corinthian letter. ***NIV I Cor 1:2-3. To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ-their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*** His letter was addressed not only to the saints in Corinth, but to all those who called on the name of Jesus. If Paul's main object of the Corinthian letters had been to chastize the aberrant members he would not have addressed the letter to all Christians everywhere. He wanted these instructions about the Holy Spirit to be read in all the ekklesia-churches.

Paul asked for grace to be bestowed on them in Christ Jesus. ***AB I Cor 1:7. That you are not (consciously) falling behind or lacking in any special spiritual endowment or Christian grace (the reception of which is due to the power of divine grace operating in your souls by the Holy Spirit, while you wait and watch (constantly living in hope) for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and (His) being made visible to all.*** Here again, Paul and Luke both used grace and the Spiritual Gifts, interchangeably in their writings. Paul remembered how it was when he first proclaimed the Gospel and the workings of the Holy Spirit to the Corinthians. ***NIV 1Cor 2:4-5 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.*** Paul said, "it wasn't by my enticing words, but by the manifestations of His power, so don't fall back on the wisdom of man. ***AB I Cor 2:7-8. But rather what we are setting forth is a wisdom of God once hidden (from the human understand-***

*ing) and now revealed to us by God; (that wisdom) which God devised and decreed before the ages for our glorification (that is, to lift us into the glory of His presence). None of the rulers of this age or world perceived and recognized and understood this; for if they had, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory.* This power from the Holy Spirit to the ekklesia-church was the mystery devised by God. If the rulers of this age (Satan) had known this, then he would not have crucified Jesus. Here we see what Jesus said in (John 14:17) when He spoke of the Holy Spirit and said, "I am with you now and I will be in you later on". This ekklesia-church was the personification of Jesus. What was created at Pentecost was a distribution plan for a lot of Jesus' around the world. This was explained more fully by Paul. ***NIV I Cor 2:10-14. But God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.*** Paul related the Gifts as coming from the Holy Spirit Who is from God. But natural man does not accept these revelations because they are folly to him. This was what Jesus told Nicodemus (John 3:6). This is a spiritual thing and these Gifts and revelations are not for some worldly organization. Here we see the results of what Jesus originally said about his ekklesia in Matt 16:18. The revelations will come from God and on those revelations, He said, "I will build my ekklesia".

Paul described the ekklesia-church as God's Temple and collectively He dwells in you. ***AB I Cor 3:16. Do you not discern and understand that you (the whole church at Corinth) are God's temple (His sanctuary), and that God's Spirit has His permanent dwelling in you-to be at home in you (collectively as a church and also individually)?*** The external temple was no longer needed in their relationship with

God. Because of these revelations to the individuals, the ekklesia, collectively has the power from God. This makes no one more important. **AB 1 Cor 3:21-23.** *So let no one exult proudly concerning men (boasting of having this or that man as a leader), for all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas (Peter), or the universe or life or death, or the immediate and threatening present or the (subsequent and uncertain) future; all are yours, and you are Christ's and Christ is God's.* That corporate entity would operate because it belongs to all of you collectively not some organization. You have the power necessary for this because of the Holy Spirit, use it and don't worry about the organization. This reminded me of Jesus when He said, "Call no man Father, you already have a Father Who is in heaven". (Matt 23:9)

Now Paul described the nature of Jesus' ekklesia. It was a public meeting and that's why He selected the ekklesia in the first place. He wanted to show God's power in a public way through the believers. Paul told them it was hard being exposed in public. **AB 1 Cor 4:9.** *For it seems to me that God has made an exhibit of us apostles, exposing us to view last (of all, like men in a triumphal procession who are) sentenced to death (and displayed at the end of the line). For we have become a spectacle to the world-a show in the world's amphitheater-with both men and angels (as spectators).* The public Stoa's contained the needful people for God's salvation and power. They had to have the courage to take the Gifts to the people in the public places.

God's people were free to do all things but all things were not edifying or constructive especially in the public places. **AB 1 Cor 12:23-24.** *All things are legitimate-permissible and we are free to do anything we please; but not all things are helpful (expedient, profitable and wholesome). All things are legitimate, but not all things are constructive (to character) and edifying (to spiritual life). Let not one then seek his own good and advantage and profit, but (rather let him seek the welfare of his neighbor) each one of the other.* A person must not seek his own welfare but the welfare of others in the public meetings.

Then in Chapters twelve and fourteen of the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul went into great detail about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they should be presented to the public. The main job for the ekklesia was worshipping God in the public places. **AB 1 Cor 14:19. Nevertheless, in public worship, I would rather say five words with my understanding . . .** The public worship was the reason for the ekklesia of Jesus. When we study 1 Corinthians, we must realize there were no church buildings. The Christians either met as the ekklesia in public or in each other's homes. Paul's instructions were not meant to curtail their freedom but rather a common sense approach to use in the very public ekklesia-church. The public ekklesia-church with the attendant Gifts of the Holy Spirit was the main evangelistic tool to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul made sure there was no question about the Gifts. **NIV 1 Cor 12:1. Now about the spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.** These were the revelations from God, Jesus was referring to in Matthew 16:18 when He said, "On this huge rock (revelations from God) I will build my ekklesia-church". There were varieties of these revelations. **AB 1 Cor 12:4. Now there are distinctive varieties and distributions of endowments (extraordinary powers distinguishing certain Christians, due to the power of divine grace, operating in their souls by the Holy Spirit), and they vary, but the (Holy) Spirit remains the same.** The Gifts were distributed among the members by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit remained the same whereby Jesus was in each one of them. Each one received a manifestation for the good of the group. **AB 1 Cor 12:7-10. But to each one is given the manifestation of the (Holy) Spirit-that is, the evidence, the spiritual illumination of the Spirit-for good and profit. To one is given in and through the (Holy) Spirit (the power to speak) a message of wisdom, and to another (the power to express) a word of knowledge and understanding according to the same (Holy) Spirit; to another, (wonder-working) faith by the same (Holy) Spirit, to another the extraordinary powers of healing by the one Spirit; to another the working of miracles, to another prophetic insight-that is, the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose; to another the ability to discern and distinguish between (the utterances and true) spirits (and false ones), to another various kinds of (unknown) tongues, to another the ability to**

**interpret (such) tongues.** These Gifts or manifestations from God were all manifested in Jesus. They are the reasons Jesus told the disciples, "greater things than these will you do". This was why He prayed to God and said, "You in Me and I in them". He told the disciples, "I will be in you", I will be operating through you.

Just imagine if you will, being a part of a group that exhibited these gifts. It would be like having Jesus beside you at all times, a source of wisdom, a source of knowledge, a source of healing, a source of prophetic insight into the divine will of God, a source of distinguishing true spirits, and a spiritual language and their interpretation. Remember in Luke 10:21 when Jesus told God after the seventy returned, "I thank you Father, You have revealed this to babes and not the learned". ***AB I Cor 12:11-12 All these (achievements and abilities) are inspired and brought to pass by one and the same (Holy) Spirit, Who apportions to each person individually (exactly) as He chooses. For just as the body is a unity and yet has many parts, and all the parts, though many, form (only) one body, so it is with Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One.*** This was why Jesus didn't want the disciples to be concerned about who would lead them. The Holy Spirit would lead them. The Spirit apportions as He chooses. All of these verses point out the workings of the Holy Spirit. Paul wanted the Christians of the ekklesia-Body of Christ to know how the manifestations from God should work among them in their meetings. The ekklesia-Body of Christ Paul described as he wrote this from Ephesus was normal for those ekklesias he originated or had some hand in their activity.

This ekklesia-Body of Christ was prophesied many times by the Old Testaments Saints. Moses prophesied about the coming Body of Christ in Deut 29:29 when he said, "the secret things belong unto the Lord". Indicating there was more to come. Isaiah prophesied about the coming Messiah and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Isa 11:1-2. He said the Spirit shall rest on Him and listed the Gifts. Jeremiah prophesied about the ekklesia or public meeting with the Gifts in Jer 3:16. . . He will show Himself present throughout the city . . . Ezekiel prophesied about the coming ekklesia and its leadership in Ezek 21:26-27 . . . Remove the High Priest head and take off the king's crown . . . the

low will be exalted. Ezekiel also prophesied how the Holy Spirit would be in charge in Ezek 36:26-27 . . . I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes . . . A prophesy about the mystery, the Body of Christ-ekklesia came from Isaiah 48:6 . . . I show you specified new things from this time forth, even hidden things kept in reserve which you have not known. Then Isaiah predicted He (Jesus) would see His spiritual offspring . . . which would be those filled with the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ (Isa 53:10).

Jesus told the Samaritan woman (John 4:4) God was a Spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and Truth. Receiving the revelations from God through the Gifts was an active worship of God. Jesus said in Matt 7:11-12, God would give good and advantageous things to those who keep asking Him. In this case Jesus was probably prophesying about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Body of Christ-ekklesia would feed off Him (John 6:63) Jesus told them the Spirit gave life . . . the words I have been speaking to you are spirit and life . . . then Jesus was definitely prophesying about the coming ekklesia-Body of Christ when He said in Matt 16:18 . . . on this the big rock (the revelation from God) I will build My ekklesia--church - Body of Christ. Jesus then prophesied and explained the advantage of the ekklesia--Body of Christ in AB **Matt 16:19 . . . whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven.** . . . Because the ekklesia operated on the revelations from God, the ekklesia would agree with God in heaven. Jesus could see this agreement because the revelations would come to the childish and untaught and not the learned ones (Luke 10:21). God didn't need any rulers like the Gentiles (Mark 10:42-45). He said those that are great are your servants. His ekklesia-Body of Christ was to be a true democracy and not some set of leaders. In Matt 23:8-12 Jesus said for them not to call anyone father because they had one Father Who was in heaven.

To really show the disciples what the Holy Spirit was all about, Jesus told them in John 14:17 the Holy Spirit and I are one, so by the Holy Spirit, I will be in you. Jesus prophesied about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in John 16:13. He said the Holy Spirit would give the message given to Him and would tell things that are to come (prophesy and word of Wisdom and Knowledge).

On the day of Pentecost when the empowering Holy Spirit came to the disciples of Jesus, Peter recalled the prophesy of Joel 2:28 which said. . . I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy . . . So now we see, some twenty-seven years after Pentecost, the ekklesia-Body of Christ was an integral part of God's plan to redeem man back to Himself. It was prophesied about by the Old Testament saints, and Jesus said it belonged to Him and He demonstrated how it would work. The disciples recognized it at Pentecost and continued to be active in its operation. This democratic ekklesia was guided by the revelations from God in the form of Gifts of the Holy Spirit for the Body of Christ. This demonstrated "What The Church Ought To Be". I hope this does not ruffle too many feathers in Christendom but that's just the facts as they were presented to the disciples.

In Chapter thirteen Paul described Jesus' agape love. Without the love Jesus showed them, there was no meaning or results. Love for each other and their fellow man made the ekklesia effective and their existence worthwhile.

Then Paul got down to the practical application of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to the ekklesia-Body of Christ. In Chapter fourteen of I Corinthians, Paul laid out in detail the instructions for the ekklesia-Body of Christ. These meetings were in the open under the colonnades where passer by's could stop and listen to the speakers or hear them singing praises to Jesus. It was the same as Jesus in the Temple Mount area in Jerusalem where He preached and taught the Jews.

First, Paul discussed the most controversial of the Gifts, tongues. ***AB I Cor 14:22-23. Thus (unknown) tongues are meant for a (supernatural) sign, not for believers but for unbelievers (on the point of believing) . . . Therefore, if the whole church assembles and all of you speak in (unknown) tongues, and the ungifted and uninitiated or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are demented?*** He told them tongues would get their attention but do not over do it. On the other hand, it would be great if all would prophesy. ***AB I Cor 14:24-25. But if any prophesy-giving inspired testimony and inter-***

***preting the divine will and purpose-and an unbeliever or untaught outsider comes in, he is told of his sin and reprovved and convicted and convinced by all, and his defects and needs are examined (estimated, determined), and he is called to account by all, The secrets of his heart are laid bare; and so, falling on (his) face, he will worship God, declaring that God is among you in very truth.*** As long as they were speaking revelations from God, great things would be revealed. He then recommended some limit on both tongues and prophetic utterances. ***AB I Cor 14:27a-29. If some speak in a (strange) tongue, let the number be limited to two or at the most three . . . So, let two or three prophets speak--those inspired to preach or teach-while the rest pay attention and weigh and discern what is said.*** Next, he told them the secret to the success of the Body of Christ and Jesus' ekklesia. ***AB I Cor 14:30-31. But if an inspired revelation comes to another who is sitting by, then let the first one be silent. For in this way you can give testimony-prophesying and thus interpreting the divine will and purpose-one by one, so that all may be instructed and all may be stimulated and encouraged;*** All the saints must be free to express themselves, if inspired by a revelation from God, even if he was not on the program . Jesus' ekklesia was based on the testimonies of its members. These revelations were meant to come to all so that all would be stimulated and encouraged in their walk with the Lord. Under these spiritual conditions, there was not room for an overlord, ruler or organization. The "Gates of Hades" were kept at bay.

Now we come to the verses about a woman keeping quiet in the ekklesia. This was the original reason I considered writing this book in first place. Once I got into the research, I realized before you could discuss women speaking in church you had to know or have a reasonable idea of what the ekklesia-church was and what happened to it in history. ***AB 1 Cor 14:34-35. The women should keep quiet in the churches, for they are not authorized to speak, but should take a secondary and subordinate place, just as the Law also says. But if there is anything they want to learn, they should ask their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to talk in church (that is, for her to usurp) and exercise authority over men in the church).*** The citizen's ekklesia had no women members. They could attend and lis-

ten but only the members were allowed to speak to the group. If a woman spoke at a public meeting, that meeting would not be considered an ekklesia. At first glance, people would probably assume it was some sort of business meeting or banquet hosted by the notorious Hetairai or public women. Paul was only interested in protecting the evangelistic outreach of the ekklesia-church or Body of Christ in public places. Anything that detracted from this outreach would not be tolerated by Paul.

The Christians met in homes as the Body of Christ. When they met in homes, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit were manifested and were for the enrichment of the Christians. The women prophesied and participated in all the Gifts because how else could Phillip's four daughters be known as prophetess (Acts 21:9)

Paul summarized about the public ekklesia-church. ***AB 1 Cor 14:39-40. So (to conclude), my brethren, earnestly desire and set your hearts on prophesying-on being inspired to preach and teach and to interpret God's will and purpose-and do not forbid or hinder speaking in (unknown) tongues. But all things should be done with regard to decency and propriety and in an orderly fashion. He told them all things should be done in an orderly fashion.*** This public ekklesia was a highly effective tool for God. By these Gifts, Jesus' ekklesia-church spread rapidly throughout the Roman Empire.

For almost three years, Paul and the ekklesia-church ministered in the lecture room of Tyrannus or other public places in Ephesus. Most of Asia heard the word of the Lord and many miraculous events happened at the hands of Paul (Acts 19:10-11). The ekklesia met and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit described in Paul's letter to the Corinthians were manifested in Ephesus. There were many healings and demonic spirits were exorcised to the point where people destroyed their books on magical arts.

As evidence of the effectiveness of this ministry, some silversmiths protested that Paul and his group caused a large decrease in the demand for the silver icons of the pagan god, Artemis. They protested so much, the town clerk called a meeting. Of interest here, this meet-

ing was called an ekklesia. **NIV Acts 19:39-41.** *"If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it". After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.* The Greek word ekklesia was translated "church" one hundred and fifteen times in the New Testament, but in these two instances, the word ekklesia is translated "assembly". This meeting was the citizen's ekklesia of the democracy which had been in existence for over five hundred years. We see from this, the citizen's ekklesia remained viable during Paul's time.

Paul chose this near riot as a time to leave Ephesus and go on to Jerusalem through Macedonia and Corinth. While in Macedonia, he wrote the 2nd Corinthian letter to the saints in Achaia. Paul discussed the Body of Christ. **AB 2 Cor 1:21-22.** *But it is God Who confirms and makes us steadfast and established us (in joint fellowship) with you in Christ, and has consecrated and anointed us—enduing us with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. (He has also appropriated and acknowledged us as His), putting His seal upon us and giving us His (Holy) Spirit in our hearts as the security deposit and guarantee (of the fulfillment of His promise).* The Lord gave them the authority by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as a security deposit for what they would have in the hereafter. For now, they were to use those Gifts to defeat Satan here on this earth. These verses are very similar to Ephesians 1:13.

These Gifts were not to be considered some law or obligation. **NIV 2 Cor 4:15.** *All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.* The Gifts were for the sake of the disciples and the more the grace extended to more people, the more thanksgiving went to God. This is one of the reasons I wrote this book to illustrate the more one is involved in the Gifts of the Spirit (spiritual blessings) the more one's thanksgiving increases to God.

In the winter of 57 A.D., Paul went from Macedonia to Corinth. **AB Acts 20:2.** *Then after he had gone through those districts and had warned and consoled and urged and encouraged the brethren with*

***much discourse, he came to Greece.*** Along the way I'm sure he warned the disciples about the Jewish Christians of the circumcision who had tormented the ekklesias in Galatia. These people in Philippi and Thessalonica were among his favorites. He had shown them the Gospel not only in word but in the power of the Holy Spirit. Although Paul only stayed in Corinth for three months, while he was there, he wrote the letter to the Romans. Priscilla and Aquila have by this time moved back to Rome from Ephesus, and have an ekklesia-Body of Christ in their home (Romans 16:3). In all probability they got word to Paul that his teachings were needed in Rome. The Jewish Christians of the circumcision may have made some inroads among the Christians in that great city.

Rome was of course the center of the universe at that time. Just about everybody in the known world were subject to the decrees, laws and soldiers originating from this place. The city stood on the banks of the Tiber River some sixteen miles up river from the coast and covered not only the traditional Seven Hills but stretched far beyond in all directions. The Colosseum had not been built but the Circus Maximus was there and some two hundred thousand fans could watch the chariot races. The population was about one million five hundred thousand and Nero the despot was the Emperor. Fortunately he was still under his mother's control at that time. The people of Rome probably hadn't heard much about Christianity; however, not too many years later, Nero would blame the big fire of Rome on these poor Christians.

In Paul's other letters, he was very familiar with the people on the receiving end; however, the Romans were different. He was neither acquainted with them personally or with the strength of their spirituality. Nevertheless he felt compelled to write them a long and thorough letter expounding his beliefs and in a subtle way warned them of the Jewish Christians of the circumcision. Paul wanted desperately to go to Rome; however, at this time, he was receiving hints from the Holy Spirit that trouble was brewing in Jerusalem. In fact he prophesied about going to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22) and that imprisonment awaited him (Acts 20:23). I felt he wrote this letter in case he never made it to Rome where he could personally preach and instruct the

people about Jesus' ekklesia-church along with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Paul began his letter to God's beloved in Rome and didn't address it to the ekklesia-church as a whole. **NIV Rom 1:7-8, 10-13** *To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world . . . in my prayers at all times; and I pray that now at last by God's will, the way may be opened for me to come to you. I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong---that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.* Paul wanted desperately to see them so he could impart to them some Spiritual Gift. They would both be strengthened and encouraged by coming together in the ekklesia-church. Paul had to start from scratch with these people. **NIV Rom 1:15-16.** *That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome. I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes; first for the Jews, then for the Gentile.* He then told them they were justified before God because of their faith in Jesus Christ. **NIV Rom 5:1-2.** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.* God's love was in their hearts through the Holy Spirit. **AB Rom 5:5.** *Such hope never disappoints or deludes or shames us, for God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.* Being able to love mankind comes from being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Because of the previous trouble with the Jewish Christians of the circumcision (Judaizers), Paul began to teach them about the Law and the Holy Spirit. **AB Rom 7:6.** *But we are discharged from the Law, and have terminated all intercourse with it, having died to what once*

***restrained and held us captive. So now we serve not under (obedience to) the old code of written regulations, but (under obedience to the promptings) of the Spirit in newness (of life).*** These promptings of the Holy Spirit were the revelations from God related by Jesus when He said, "on this Big Rock (revelations from God) I will build My ekklesia". (Matt 16:18) Then Paul told them how the ekklesia-Body of Christ worked through the Spirit and not the Law. Paul wanted the Christians at Rome to be well versed on the Holy Spirit and the Law. He knew the Judaizers were spreading their beliefs about being justified by keeping the Law. ***NIV Rom 8:1-6. Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.*** This short sermon by Paul contrasted the things of the flesh verses the things of the Holy Spirit. We are to lead spiritual lives and participate in the things of the Spirit (Gifts). We are not to live our lives by sense and reason without the Holy Spirit for that only gratifies the flesh. This was the same as Jesus told Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman. "This is a Spiritual Thing", not some set of rules or place of worship. He told them the Holy Spirit was to help them. ***AB Rom 8:26-27. So too the (Holy) Spirit comes to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groaning too deep for utterance. And He Who searches the hearts of men knows what is in the mind of the (Holy) Spirit-what His intent is-because the Spirit intercedes and pleads (before God) in behalf of the saints according to and in harmony with God's will.*** The reason for tongues was to bring man's will into subjection to His will. With the Holy Spirit in them, they had no

need for the High Priest or the old traditions. I'm sure the Judaizers did not comprehend praying in tongues. Again, Paul aimed at the Christians who were holding onto the Law. ***AB Rom 10:4. For Christ is the end of the Law-the limit at which it ceases to be, for the Law leads up to Him Who is the fulfillment of its types, and in Him the purpose which it was designed to accomplish is fulfilled.-That is, the purpose of the Law is fulfilled in Him-as the means of righteousness (right relationship to God) for everyone who trusts in and adheres to and relies on Him.*** He then, reiterated the simplicity of salvation. ***AB Rom 10:9. Because if you acknowledge and confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and in your hearts believe (adhere to, trust in and rely on the truth) that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.***

Paul described the reason for the ekklesia-Body of Christ to the Romans regardless whether they be Jew or Gentile. ***AB Rom 12:2. Do not be conformed to this world-this age, fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs. But be transformed (changed) by the (entire) renewal of your mind-by its new ideals and its new attitude--so that you may prove (for yourselves) what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the things which is good and acceptable and perfect (in His sight for you).*** They were to renew their minds and have a new attitude by the grace (unmerited favor of God). With this new attitude, those of the Body of Christ would have the Gifts revealed to them by God. ***AB Rom 12:5-6. So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ, the Messiah, and individually we are parts one of another-mutually dependent on one another. Havings gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) given us, let us use them: (He whose gift is) prophesy, (let him prophesy) according to the proportion of his faith;*** He then listed things people could do that were not necessarily revelations from God. ***AB Rom 12:7-8. (He whose gift is) practical service, let him give himself to serving; he who teaches, to his teaching; (He who exhorts, encourages), to him exhortation; he who contributes, let him do it in simplicity and liberality; he who gives aid and superintends, with zeal and singleness of mind; he who does acts of mercy, with genuine cheerfulness and joyful eagerness.*** These come as a result of this new attitude (renewing of the mind). Paul told them to do all things with zeal and love for one

another (Romans 12:10-11). He went on and told them to be a good person and show everyone love and hope in the Christian brotherhood.

Paul in the letter to the Romans was the first to implore Christians to be subject to government authorities (Romans 13). This was important because both Peter and James confirmed this later in their writings. Politically, the Jews are becoming more and more militant against the Romans. I believe Paul as well as the other leaders in Christendom viewed the Romans as protectors of the ekklesia-church. The ekklesia was a legal entity during these times and the Romans encouraged the public meetings. For the sake of the ekklesia-church, Paul and the others were concerned about the militancy of the Jews because the Romans thought the Christians were a part of Judaism.

The Judaizers were using the Jewish traditions as a crutch to their faith. They didn't trust Jesus to completely take care of their salvation. They came in all shades of gray and some were hung up only on meat sacrificed to idols while others believed they had to go through the Temple rites. In most cities I'm sure it was hard to know the origin of the meat in the marketplace. In Rome, if you wanted to eat beef, the beefs in the market place were probably sacrificed to some pagan god; however, in Jerusalem, the beefs probably came from the Temple and had been sacrificed to Jehovah God by the Jews. Sometimes when a rich man sacrificed several beef animals, he would donate the excess meat to the poor and this was the only time a poor person was able to eat beef.

Because of this, Paul at first took a somewhat charitable approach to the problem of the Judaizers in Rome. In his letter to the Galatians, he got after them about this matter because he knew them. Paul berated them for not knowing better; however, with the Romans, he used kid gloves. ***AB Rom 14:1-2. As for the man who is a weak believer, welcome him (into your fellowship), but not to criticize his opinions or pass judgment on his scruples or perplex him with discussions. One (man's faith permits him) to believe he may eat anything, while a weaker one (limits his) eating to vegetables.*** He told those who were not hung up on Jewish tradition to be loving and not to pass judgment

on the weaker believers. Paul told them the kingdom of God was not about food. ***AB Rom 14:17. (After all) the kingdom of God is not a matter of (getting the) food and drink (one likes), but instead, it is righteousness-that state which makes a person acceptable to God-and heart-peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*** They should build up those that were spiritually weak. ***AB Rom 15:1-2. We who are strong (in our convictions and of robust faith) ought to bear with the failings and the frailties and the tender scruples of the weak.-We ought to help carry the doubts and qualms of others-and not to please ourselves. Let each one of us make it a practice to please (make happy) his neighbor for his good and true welfare, to edify him---that is, to strengthen him and build him up spiritually.*** In other words, Paul told them if you can get these people filled with the Holy Spirit, they will forget all about these old traditions.

In closing the letter, Paul told them God would fill them with hope by the Holy Spirit. ***AB Rom 15:13. May the God of your hope so fill you with all joy and peace in believing-through the experience of your faith-that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound and be overflowing (bubbling over) with hope.*** He went on to tell them he had confidence they could admonish, council, and instruct one another (Rom 15:14). This showed they had a true ekklesia in Rome with no dominate leader. He told them his preaching had been accompanied by signs and wonders. ***AB Rom 15:19. (and as my preaching has been accompanied) with the power of signs and wonders, (and all of it) by the power of the Holy Spirit. So that starting from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the Gospel-faithfully executing, accomplishing, carrying out to the full the good news-of Christ, the Messiah, in its entirety.*** These things happened because of the power of the Holy Spirit and Christ Jesus did these things through Paul.

After writing his letter to the Romans, Paul had more trouble with the Jews in Corinth (Acts 20:3). He decided at this time to go back to Syria through Macedonia, but somewhere between Assos and Miletus, Paul decided to go on to Jerusalem.

This trip to Jerusalem was a lamentable journey from the beginning. He stopped in Miletus and summoned the elders of the ekklesia in Ephesus to meet him. ***AB Acts 20:20-23. How I did not shrink from telling you anything that was for your benefit, and teaching you in public meetings and from house to house, But constantly and earnestly I bore testimony both to Jews and Greeks, urging them to turn in repentance (that is due) to God and have the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (that is due Him). And now, you see, I am going to Jerusalem, bound by the (Holy) Spirit, and obligated and compelled by the (convictions of my own) spirit, not knowing what will befall me there; Except that the Holy Spirit clearly and emphatically affirms to me in city after city that imprisonment and suffering await me.*** He lamented how he had struggled to bring the Gospel to them and how he taught in both public meetings in from house to house in Ephesus. The Ephesian elders had in all probability read his letters to the Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans and they were also well aware of the Judaizer problem. He told them even though the Holy Spirit had told him "suffering and imprisonment awaits me", he had to go to Jerusalem. Paul and the elders sensed that he would not return to Ephesus. He told the elders to watch out for the flock and for these false teachers even from among yourselves. Everyone wept freely as he continued on toward Jerusalem.

Paul and his group went on to Cos, then Rhodes and from there to Tyre. In Tyre, Paul met with the disciples and they prompted by the Holy Spirit told him not to set foot in Jerusalem.

From Tyre they went down to Caesarea, where Philip lived with his four daughters who had the Gift of Prophecy. ***AB Acts 21:8-11. On the morrow we left there and came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven (first deacons), and stayed with him. And he had four maiden daughters who had the gift of prophesy. While we were remaining there for some time, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to (see) us, he took Paul's belt and with it bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus says the Holy Spirit, The Jews at Jerusalem shall bind like this the man who owns this belt, and they shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles (heathen).*** Again the Holy

Spirit told Paul through Agabus not to go to Jerusalem. Here we see Paul who had always obeyed the Holy Spirit showed signs of stubbornness. In fact Luke himself had something to say about this situation. ***AB Acts 21:14-15. And when he would not yield to (our) persuading, we stopped (urging and imploring him), saying, The Lord's will be done! After these days we packed our baggage and went up to Jerusalem.*** Paul had been hurt personally by these Judaizers and he probably wanted to confront them in Jerusalem. From this point on, Paul was like a lot of us at times, he was on his own.

When they arrived in June 58 A.D., Paul and the group went to see James and the elders of the ekklesia-church. ***AB Acts 21:19-20. After saluting them, Paul gave a detailed account of the things God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And upon hearing it, they adored and exalted and praised and thanked God. And they said to (Paul), You see, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews and all of them are enthusiastic upholders of the (Mosaic) Law.*** What Paul heard was a real shocker, "there are thousands of Jews who believe in Jesus but are still holding on to the Law". Don't you know he gulped when he heard those numbers? This confirmed all the spiritual warning signs he had observed, such as the Judaizers trying to influence his Galatian converts, the absence of the Holy Spirit in Apollos and the disciples in Ephesus who had not even heard there was a Holy Spirit. And now there were thousands who believed that way and were going back to the Temple to obtain forgiveness for their sins. These Judaizers believed Jesus was the Messiah and some even believed He rose from the dead but because they did not believe He saved them from their sins, they were nonbelievers. When people believed this way, they had nothing whatsoever to do with the Holy Spirit. It's like Jesus told Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman at the well, this is a spiritual thing, not something you do at the Temple.

Paul remembered, he and Peter had agreed at the Council meeting in 50 A.D. that he would go to the Gentiles and Peter would go to the Jews. Evidently many thousands of Jews chose not to listen to Peter and neither Peter or John were present in Jerusalem at this time. Possibly they were discouraged by these Judaizers. What had hap-

pened to the ekklesia-church in Jerusalem in the twenty nine years after it had stood Jerusalem on its ear with signs and wonders? Paul knew the Judaizers were a problem but he had no idea it was of this magnitude. At this point I think it would be helpful to review the Judaizers and what they had done within Christianity.

Judaizers weren't orthodox Jews and they weren't orthodox Christians. They were somewhere in between. They were traditionalists to the core and wouldn't give up the Temple, Laws, or their synagogues. The Temple, of course, was the brand new edifice that Herod the Great had built on the Temple Mount. This was a very impressive sight to the Jews in Jerusalem, for they looked at it every day. The Laws were the measuring stick as to their piety and the Scribes and Pharisees eagerly pointed out everybody's shortcomings. The synagogues, and there were many, served as a haven of rest for the Jews in the midst of their captivity, whether in Babylon or in their own land under the Romans. They came together to bask in the bygone days of the kings and prophets and to discuss the Laws.

Here comes this Man proclaiming to be the Son of God, the Messiah. He backs this up with many signs and wonders. This Man is killed but arose on the third day in April of 29 A.D. Many people saw Him before He went back to the Father. After this the Holy Spirit came to His disciples, accompanied by many signs and wonders. They even had meetings in the colonnades and stoas where they preached about the Son of God dying for their sins. If they believed this, they would have eternal life. They called these meetings, the ekklesia of Jesus, and they seemed to have directions from God which they called the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Judaizers believed most of this; however, as time went on, they began to drop away and go back to the Temple for the Temple rites and to obey the Law in order to attain righteousness before God. We observed this reluctance to change during Jesus' ministry when after He had healed the mature blind son of a couple, they were afraid to admit they knew Jesus (John 9:19-22). This mother and father were afraid they would be excluded from their synagogue by the Jews. Another time, some leaders of the Jews, believed and trusted in Jesus, but would not confess it for fear they would be expelled from the synagogue (John 12:42).

In 41 A.D. almost twelve years after Pentecost, Peter went to Cornelius, a Gentile, to tell them about Jesus. Cornelius and his whole family believed and trusted in Jesus and were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Judaizers in Jerusalem, called the circumcision party of the Jewish Christians, were hostile toward Peter for going to the uncircumcised men (Gentiles) (Acts 11:2-3). These people were a part of the ekklesia in Jerusalem but had disregarded all prophecies about the Gentiles coming to the Lord. In 50 A.D., nine years later, Paul and Barnabas had returned to Antioch from their successful missionary journey where many Gentiles became Christians and were filled with Holy Spirit just like Cornelius in 41 A.D. This time, the Judaizers the men from Judea, came to Antioch and said, "Unless you are circumcised you cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). In 54 A.D. Paul remembered this same incident to the Galatians, when he called the Judaizers "Christians in name only who wanted to again bring us under bondage under the Law of Moses (Gal 2:4). As a result of the Judaizers coming to Antioch, a council was called in Jerusalem to consider this matter in 50 A.D.

At this meeting, Paul told them all that had been accomplished through their efforts. The Judaizers spoke first and Luke told us in Acts 15:5, some who acknowledged Jesus as their Savior, belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, rose up and said, "It is necessary to circumcise the Gentile converts and charge them to obey the Law of Moses". These Pharisees had obviously discussed this among themselves. Where did they discuss this? Certainly not in the ekklesia in Jerusalem. In response to the Judaizers Peter proclaimed, "Men and brethren, you know that quite a while ago (9 years), God made a choice from among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the Word of the Gospel, (Acts 15:7) and that we believe we are saved by grace. . . just like they are (Acts 15:9). The ekklesia in Jerusalem sent a letter to the ekklesia in Antioch that stated, some of our number have disturbed you, but we gave them no express orders (Acts 15:24). What this means, the ekklesia in Jerusalem was unaware of the demands made by the Judaizers. So they must have had their own meetings separate from the ekklesia. Apollos and the disciples at Ephesus who had not heard there was a Holy Spirit probably were a

part of meetings not related to the ekklesia because they had no experience with the Holy Spirit.

Meanwhile back in Jerusalem in June 58 A.D. the Judaizers had become the dominate party among the Christians. Mainly because of this, the disciples who knew better, began to make mistakes in bunches. James and the elders prevailed on Paul to participate in a Temple rite inside the Jewish Temple. This would show the Jews he was a practicing Jew. ***NIV Acts 21:21-24. They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. Takes these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law.*** This was a monumental mistake as they should not have asked Paul to do this and he should not have agreed to go against his own preaching. This showed that neither Paul nor James were perfect as their Father was perfect.

Paul went on with the purification rites and while he was in the Temple some Jews from Asia spotted him and accused him of polluting the Temple with Gentiles. They dragged him out of the Temple and tried to kill him. The commandant of the Roman garrison in the Antonio Fortress rescued Paul from the mob. He put Paul under arrest and the crowd said the same as they had said about Jesus, "Away with him". For Paul things could not have been worse. I'm sure about this time he thought of all those previous prophecies warning him about Jerusalem.

Paul asked the commandant for permission to address the crowd. He agreed and Paul spoke to them in Hebrew. This quieted the crowd for a little and he gave his whole testimony. Paul related how he had been a prosecutor of the Jewish Christians and forced them out of their synagogues. In fact, he was on his way to Damascus to do that very thing when he and those with him, were struck down by a brilliant

light. This was his encounter with Jesus, the Messiah. When he reached the end, he told them how God had sent him to the Gentiles and when he mentioned Gentiles, the crowd went wild and said, "Away with Him, he is not fit to live". (Acts 22:22)

The commandant took Paul to the Antonia fortress on the northwest corner of the Temple Mount and ordered him to be scourged. Paul who was a bit testy by now said, "Can you flog a man who is a Roman citizen without a trial?" This changed everything. They let him defend himself before the Sanhedrin but because of a threat on Paul's life, removed him from Jerusalem to Caesarea. There he languished for two years waiting on the Roman officials. I'm sure Paul was totally frustrated by these events and Luke was probably at his side saying, "I told you so". But God in his loving way gave Paul a vision. ***AB Acts 23:11 And (that same) following night the Lord stood beside Paul and said, Take courage, Paul, for as you have borne faithful witness concerning Me at Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.*** This showed God was always there to make something good out of a bad situation.

