

repaired "to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them." With one heart and voice the assembled brethren poured out thanksgivings unto God, the Maker of the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is, who had already so controlled and overruled the rage of both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel against His holy servant Jesus, as by means of it to accomplish whatever His hand and counsel had determined should be done; entreating Him to look upon the threatenings which were being hurled against His servants, and to grant unto them power to speak the Word with boldness, while He Himself stretched forth His hand to heal, and "signs and wonders" were done through the name of His holy servant Jesus; and scarcely had their supplication ceased when its answer came—"The place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness."

The significance for the Church and the world of this striking passage in Apostolic history can hardly be overestimated. In the first place, the *miracle* was a signal attestation of Christ's continued presence with the Apostles, and therefore a confirmation of the reality of Christ's resurrection, which was then the principal theme of Apostolic preaching, as it ought still to be of the Christian ministry. The historicity of the record it is idle with Gfrörer to challenge. The reality of the good deed done upon the impotent man it is vain to dispute. The sole question open to the most advanced criticism is as to whether the effect was produced by natural or supernatural means. On this point the words of Keim⁸ relative to the "healings" of Jesus may be cited. "These works first of all were no mere more or less medicinal cures brought about by actual medical skill on the part of Jesus, similar to that practised by the Essenes, as Rationalism is anxious to prove; or by magical jugglery and Egyptian sorcery, as Celsus, the Talmudists, and to some extent also

⁸ *Jesus of Nazara*, vol. iii. p. 191.