

trate, having been overthrown by an earthquake. **Patara.** A port in the province of Lycia; now become a swamp without inhabitants.

2. Finding a ship. Here they were compelled to change ships, and were fortunate in finding one bound directly for their own destination. **To Phenicia.** The strip of territory on the Mediterranean between the Lebanon range and the sea, north of Palestine, having Tyre and Sidon as its principal cities. **We went aboard.** The apostolic company consisted of nine persons, and seven brethren named in chap. 20: 4, besides Paul and Luke.

3. Discovered. That is, passed in sight of the island, which was still a part of the ship's course. **Cyprus.** The island visited in Paul's first missionary journey, and the early home of Barnabas. It lies in the north-eastern corner of the Mediterranean. **Sailed into Syria.** The name is here used inclusive of Phenicia, which was a district in the great Syrian province. **Into should be unto,** as in Rev. Ver. **Landed at Tyre.** An ancient commercial city, once the mart of the Mediterranean, as described in Ezek. 27. Originally it stood on an island, but having been destroyed by Alexander the Great, was rebuilt on the main-land. It was still a large city in Paul's day, but is now reduced to a small fishing village, in fulfillment of prophecy. (1) *God's promises are as sure as his warnings.*

4. Finding disciples. The word employed indicates that they found the disciples as the result of a search. (2) *It is well to look for the people of God when in strange cities.* **Tarried there seven days.** While the cure was unslaking; for it would appear that they went on in the same vessel. **Through the spirit.** "The foreknowledge was inspired; the advice based upon it was a human inference."—*Jacobson.* In those early days the gifts of the Spirit were abundant in the Church. **That he should not go up.** They knew that dangers were in store for him, from the bitterness of the unbelieving, and the narrowness of the believing Jews; but they did not know that he was following a higher call in going onward. Christ's approval of Paul's conduct may be inferred from Acts 23: 11. (3) *Each disciple must be controlled by his own conscience, and not by others, in matters of duty.*

5. Went our way. "Were going on our way." The picture rises of the nine brethren, with their new acquaintances of Tyre, wending their way to the shore. **With wives and children.** The earliest definite notice of childhood in the history of the Church. These children, as well as their parents, took part in worship and in Christian fellowship. **We kneeled down.** The ordinary posture of the Jews in worship was kneeling; but in seasons of deep feeling they prayed standing. (4) *The attitude of the heart is proper is more important than that of the body.* **On the shore.** They were not ashamed to gather for prayer in a public place, nor to pray when parting from each other. (5) *Ever be willing to make public confession of Christ.*

6. Taken our leave. Though the acquaintance was short, yet the friendship was strong, for the bond that united them was a common love to Christ and a common experience of salvation. (6) *Those who love the Lord will feel an interest in all who enjoy the same privileges.*

7. Finished our course. Rev. Ver., "the voyage." The meaning is, that the sail from Tyre to Ptolemais, a run of thirty miles, completed the entire voyage from Neapolis, in Macedonia, to Palestine. The rest of the journey was made by land. **Ptolemais.** The ancient Acre, a Canaanite town on the sea-coast, eight miles north of Mount Carmel. It has returned to its ancient name, and is now known as *Acre*, or *St. Jean d'Acre*, a place of ten thousand people. **Saluted the brethren.** Probably the churches at Tyre and Ptolemais were founded through the labors of Philip the evangelist.

8. Departed. They followed the line of the coast across the plain of Esdraelon, over the brook Kishon, and around the promontory of Carmel. **Unto Cesarea.** Forty miles south of Acre or Ptolemais, and the political capital of Palestine during the apostolic age. Here Cornelius had been converted, and here Paul was soon to return a prisoner. It is now a desolate ruin.

Entered into the house of Philip. The very man who had been driven from Jerusalem to Cesarea by Saul the persecutor now receives Paul the apostle into his home! **The evangelist.** The word in the New Testament usually means a preacher of the gospel to those who have never heard it. **One of the seven.** The "seven brethren," named in Acts 6: 3, sometimes called *deacons*, though the name is not applied to them in the Scripture. They were appointed to direct the charities of the church, but at least two of them, Stephen and Philip, became eminent as preachers, and as leaders in the enlargement of the Gospel from Judaism to Gentile Christianity. Perhaps Luke obtained from Philip the account of the early Church contained in the first seven chapters of the Acts.

9. Four daughters. They are mentioned, perhaps, as having predicted Paul's sufferings. **Virgins.** That they were unmarried does not show that they were nuns, or that their virginity was at all connected with their inspiration. It is named as accounting for their still being at their father's house. According to ancient tradition, two of them were afterward married. **Which did prophesy.** Not only by giving predictions, but by speaking with direct inspiration concerning matters of faith and practice. A young lady of Cesarea enjoyed greater freedom and higher privileges than among the Greeks, and Paul's rule in 1 Cor. 14, 34, and 1 Tim. 2: 11, may not have been needed in Palestine.

10. Tarried there many days. Paul had been in haste to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost, but by favoring winds and a direct voyage had arrived at Cesarea earlier than had been expected, and now had more than a week to spare, which time he spent at Cesarea as safer than Jerusalem. **Came down.** From Jerusalem among the mountains to Cesarea on the sea-coast. **A certain prophet.** It is evident that the gift of prophecy, long lost among the Jews, blossomed anew in the early Christian Church, and showed its divine origin. **Agabus.** Probably the same man who, fifteen years before, at Antioch, foretold a great famine. Acts 11: 28. He sympathized with the broad and not the narrow Jewish view of the Gospel, and therefore felt an interest in Paul.

11. Took Paul's girdle. Employing the vivid picture-teaching so common among the ancient prophets. **Bound his own hands and feet.** He unrolled the leather girdle, wound it up tightly into a cord, and with one end tied his own feet, and then wrapped the other around his wrist: a suggestive act, of which the meaning was apparent. **Thus saith the Holy Ghost.** Answering to "Thus saith the Lord" in the Old Testament, as the Gospel is the revelation of the third person in the Trinity. **So shall the Jews.** The prediction was fulfilled in Paul's seizure by the Jews, who were compelled to surrender their prisoner to the Romans. It was given, not to prohibit his going, but to test and evince his determination and devotion to Christ.

12. Both we and they. The companions of the apostle, even the beloved Onesiphorus, joined in their entreaties with those of Philip, his daughter, and the Cesarean disciples. **Besought him not to go.** And yet they must have known that his journey was undertaken under the counsel of the Spirit, and hence was he in the right. (7) *It is not always easy for a Christian to know where the path of duty lies.*

13. What mean ye? Literally, "What are you doing? weeping and breaking my heart," etc. **I am ready.** The pronouns are emphatic: "I, for my part, am ready." There was no faltering, either in his resolution or in his consecration. **Not to be bound only.** He knew that he was in the Lord's hands, living or dying, and that he could not die until his work was done. (8) *The most tender heart may be allied with the strongest purpose.* **For the name.** That is, for the cause, or interest of. **Of the Lord Jesus Christ.** Fully consecrated, he was ready to give his life to the Lord, either in labor, in suffering, or in death. As the old soldier in battle said, "O for an hour of Dunde!" so may we cry, "O for one hour of Saint Paul!"

14. We ceased. Perhaps not quite convinced that the apostle was right, but resigning to what seemed inevitable. **The will of the Lord.** (9) *"Lay thy heart to rest in the will of God, for there is no other rest of the soul to be thought on."*—Corbet.