

11 : 29 ; 15 : 3. It could not have occurred at the time of Paul's first visit to Jerusalem, Gal. 1 : 21, 22. *To the Gentiles*; in fulfilment of ch. 9 : 15 and by appointment of the Holy Spirit, ch. 13 : 2. Note the three parts of Paul's message: (1) *Repent*; be sorry for and forsake sin. (2) *Turn to God*; with trust and obedience. (3) *Do works meet for repentance*. Good works are the proof of genuine repentance.

Vs. 21-23. *For these causes*; not for profaning the temple, as they alleged, ch. 21 : 28; but (1) because he reminded them of their sins and (2) especially because he preached the gospel to the Gentiles, ch. 22 : 21, 22. *The Jews caught me*. (See ch. 21 : 30-39.) This was more than two years earlier, ch. 24 : 27. *Help of God*; as in the vision of ch. 23 : 11. *Saying none other things*. Paul claimed to be in agreement with the prophets and Moses (the Jewish scriptures) when he taught (1) *that Christ should suffer* (Isa. ch. 53); (2) *rise from the dead* (Ps. 16 : 10); (3) *show light unto the people* (the Jews), and to the Gentiles, Isa. 60 : 3. The rendering of the Rev. Ver., "that he first by the resurrection . . . should proclaim," brings out the idea that it was His rising from the dead that qualified Christ to "proclaim light" to Jews and Gentiles.

II. A Violent Interruption, 24-26.

V. 24. *Festus said with a loud voice*; showing his excitement and astonishment at Paul's statements. "The ideas of fulfilled prophecy, of the resurrection of the dead and of a crucified Jew as a light to the world," seemed to the worldly Festus arrant folly.

Beside thyself. He regarded Paul's words as the product of a disordered brain. *Doth turn thee to madness* (Rev. Ver.); literally, "turn thee round." So we say of an insane person that "his head is turned."

Vs. 25, 26. *Most noble Festus*. Paul's courtesy was unfeeling. He shows no irritation at Festus' rude interruption, but addresses him with a title of respect. *Words of truth*; not shadows, but realities. *Soberness*; the opposite of the insanity with which he was charged. *Knoweth these things*. As a Jew Agrippa must have heard of the facts connected with the origin of Christianity. In his father's reign James had been executed and Peter imprisoned, and these events must have brought the new faith prominently before him. *Not done in a corner*; but publicly, in the capital of the nation.

III. An Earnest Appeal, 27-29.

V. 27. *Believest thou the prophets?* Not only were the facts stated by Paul of the most public character, but they had also been foretold by the prophets. For these two reasons the king could not question them.

V. 28. *Almost thou persuadest me*. The Revised Version translates, "with but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian." According to the common version Agrippa was sincerely touched—almost persuaded. The answer in the Revised Version is a sneer—"Do you expect in one brief speech to make me a Christian?"

V. 29. *Such as I am*; a believer in Christ Jesus. *Except these bonds*; which were hanging on his arms even as he made his defence.

APPLICATION

Not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, v. 19. There is a close connection between heavenly visions and every-day duty. It is very suggestive that, in the gospel story of the transfiguration, the glory on the mountain top and the misery on the plain are placed side by side. From the example of the Saviour Himself we learn that the strength and courage derived from communion with God are to be spent in the service of our fellow-men.

Repent and turn to God, v. 20. The yearly revolution of the earth has turned our side

of the planet towards the sun, so that it receives the rays more directly. The result is spring-time and hastening summer. In repentance we turn our hearts away from the dark and deadening influences of sin towards the quickening and enlightening energy of divine grace. The result is, that righteousness and purity, like beautiful plants, spring up in our lives.

Do works meet for repentance, v. 20. We sometimes see in an orchard, apples of the most perfect beauty and finest flavor growing