

of all the Apostles, nor even of all the labours of any one of them, during the time embraced in his narrative. If he had designed such a thing, he fell far short of it: for of the Apostles, except Peter and Paul, he says but little; and even of the last mentioned, though more minute in his history, he narrates, comparatively, but a few transactions.— Though somewhat particular in detailing his journies by land, and voyages by sea, yet he omits several of his voyages, and is altogether silent on the incidents of his journey into Arabia. Nor does he appear to have designed to write a history of the foundation of the Christian communities in the different countries of the world in which he laboured, during the thirty years embraced in his history; for he says nothing of the foundation of the first Christian community in the city of Rome, in Babylon, in Egypt, and in many other places of note alluded to in the Epistles. Nor can it be gathered from his narrative that he intended merely to relate such things as he was an eye-witness of, or a party concerned in; for he is not full in recording even these, and tells of many other things of which he was not an eye-witness. What, then, was his design?

There are *two* things on which he fixes the attention of the reader with more than ordinary care. The *first* of these is the opening of the Reign of Heaven amongst the Jews on Pentecost, and the wonderful display of heavenly influences attendant on that glorious event. He narrates no more of the history of the first congregation in Jerusalem than is necessary to give a correct view of the commencement of Messiah's reign over the literal descendants of Abraham. This occupies about one-fourth of his whole narrative.

While he follows the order of the commission, beginning at Jerusalem, proceeding to Samaria, and thence to the uttermost parts of the earth, in giving a brief account of the establishment of Christianity; the *second* object, which seems pre-eminently to engross his attention, is the commencement of the reign of Messiah over the Gentiles. Hence we find the calling of the Gentiles, and all the events connected with it more fully and circumstantially related than any thing else. Of the occurrences in Jerusalem, at the time of the meeting of the Apostles, and of the labours of Paul in all his journeys, those things are particularly told which concerned this event. These considerations suggest to us that, while Luke designed to give a brief account how the Apostles executed their commission in general in Judea and Samaria, his grand design in writing was to establish in the minds of all Christians of that age, with a reference also to future times, the just claims and inalienable rights of the Gentiles to be considered and treated as God's people; to become members of the Christian communities, on the same footing with the Jews. Doubtless this was his grand or chief design in writing this history. The plan he pursued was not to settle the controversy by argument, as Paul does in some of his epistles, but by recording what God had done for this people, by simply showing that he had done every thing for them which he had done for the Jews, and had made no difference between Jews and Gentiles under the Reign of his Son.

Admitting this to have been his chief design in writing his narrative, how suitably does it account for his minuteness in describing the