

God. Like Miriam and Deborah in the Old Testament, and Elizabeth and Mary, in the New, there were gifted women in the church whom the Holy Spirit endowed with special powers of spiritual insight. The Apostle, elsewhere, peremptorily forbids women to speak or teach in the church. This prohibition we must hold as applying to ordinary and not to special cases. The reasons on which it is based forbid us to consider the injunction as local or temporary. They apply to all time and the human race everywhere (I. Cor. 14: 34, 35; I. Tim. 2: 11, 12). That the rule did not apply to a prophetess speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit is inferred from I. Cor. 11: 5, 6, 10, 13.

10. And as we tarried there many (R. V. marg. "some") days, there came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. When Paul was at Miletus he was in haste (ch. 20: 16), but the opportune finding of the ship at Patara, and the favoring winds, had brought him on faster than he had expected, so that he had about ten (or, some say, five) days to spare before Pentecost. The word for "many," is, literally, "more"; that is, more than they expected, or more than they would have staid under other circumstances. This Agabus is probably the same as is mentioned in ch. 11: 28. He not only spoke by inspiration, but, coming from Jerusalem, he would know the bitter feelings of the Jews there against Paul.

11. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. Such symbolic actions were frequent with the Old Testament prophets (see Isa. 20: 3; Jer. 13: 5; 19: 10, 11; Ezek. 4: 1-3; 4: 1-4; I. Kings 22: 11. Compare John 21: 18). The girdle was the ample sash, or band, by which the loose oriental robe was held together around the waist. "Took" is, rather, "took up." Paul had laid aside his girdle, and Agabus took it up from where it lay. The accuracy of the language all through the narrative shows that the writer was an eyewitness. With the last clause of the verse compare Matt. 20: 19; Mark 10: 33; Luke 18: 32.

12. And when we heard these things,

both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. The impressive and authoritative manner in which this prediction was made caused Paul's companions also to waver, although they seem to have sustained his courage hitherto. They did not have Paul's inward promptings to this duty.

13. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? (R. V. What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart?) for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. By "breaking" his heart, Paul does not mean increasing his sorrow at parting, but weakening his resolution. They were making him less "stout-hearted." We are here reminded of Peter's boast (Luke 22: 33), but feel the vast difference between the two.

14. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. They were convinced that Paul had an inward conviction of duty which forbade him to consider what dangers lay in his path, so they submitted, not to his firmness, but to the divine voice which he obeyed.

15. And after those days we took up (R. V. marg. "made ready") our carriages (R. V. baggage), and went up to Jerusalem. The reading of the R. V. margin is to be preferred: they packed up their baggage. "Carriage" is an obsolete word in this sense. It was formed from "carry," like "luggage," from "lug," and "baggage," from "bag," things put in a bag. It means "things carried." (I. Sam. 17: 22; Isa. 10: 28.)

ORIENTALISMS.

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Tyre—Tyre is one of the famous cities of the world, having wielded a very great influence on the world's history. Tyre and Sidon were the two leading cities of Phœnicia. In the early ages Sidon seems to have held the first place, but in more historical times Tyre had the supremacy. Phœnicia was the most important maritime power; in fact, the only maritime commercial power we know of for several milleniums. When Sargon I. visited Cyprus (about 3800 B. C.), as it seems he did, it must have been in Phœnician bottoms. The nations around were dependent on Phœnicia