

***“Paul’s Second Letter to Timothy —  
The Great Transition, The Glorious Sweep of God’s Abundant Grace — Part 16  
God’s Blessings Abound in Corinth, for Jews and Gentiles”***

***Review: “The Second Missionary Journey: Paul in Athens, Pagan Capitol of the Gentiles — Part 3”***

- ***God’s Witness Dispensationally Considered — In the Creation Itself***
  - ***This emphasis on the testimony of creation is common to Paul’s other witnesses to the Gentiles. We could spend some time looking at all these Biblical references. But instead let’s just select a few. We begin where we were several studies back in chapter 14 of the Acts, where Paul preached in Lystra beginning with his reminder of what everyone there already knew (if they were honest, that is), that all were accountable before Almighty God, the Creator: :***
  - ***Now we proceed to see much further Biblical proof as to how the Lord God the Creator of all things had revealed himself to his creation. For this we consider the best for all witnesses, the man Job, who lived probably in parallel with the sons of Jacob and who may in fact be the son of Issachar as Gen. 46:13 indicates:***

***Job 9:6-10***

***6 Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble.***

***7 Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and seaeth up the stars.***

***8 Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea.***

***9 Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south.***

***10 Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number. [This presumes that Job already knew all of this!]***

***Job 38:31-33 [Again, this presumes that Job already knew this well!]***

***31 Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?***

***32 Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?***

***33 Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?***

- *Here we see something of the so-called Zodiac [the Mazzaroth in verse 32], although the understanding of that from both ancient and modern history is clouded by the satanically inspired religious system called astrology. Of course satan took every opportunity to pervert the witness of God in the heavens of his creative, sustaining, and redemptive powers and plan.*
- *Job takes us by necessity back further in God's word to the very beginning, back to Genesis 1. For if Job knew all about God through his creation with its clear testimony concerning its creator, what did Adam and his descendants know? Even more perhaps?*

*Gen. 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:*

- *So the Lord God, the Creator, had revealed himself in his creation! And there may be much more to this than we see at first glance. We shall see!*
- ***God's Witness Dispensationally Considered — Through His Servants***
  - *Through his servants ... Now who were his servants? That is easy to answer when we think of Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and the prophets, for much is written in God's word considering this great question of "what did they know ... ?" But what about pre-flood, the antediluvian patriarchs, so-called? What did they know? Little is written of them except in Genesis (see though concerning Enoch in Jude 14-15 for another reference and Hebrews 11:5!!)*
  - *This surely is for all mankind for this revelation of God's handiwork is there in his creation to be known by all, not only to the Jews to whom David is writing here in the Psalms. He is writing about it to the Jews but the presence of this truth in the creation itself is clearly there for all to know, even to those that have no knowledge of this Psalm. Really, we may ask, how can this be?*
  - *And now we come to the greatest section of God's word that addresses this in Ps. 19 where these questions are answered:*

*Ps. 19:1-6 [The gospel in the stars — see also Psalm 8:1-4]*

**1 To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.**

**2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.**

**3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.**

**4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun,**

**5 Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.**

**6 His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.**

- ***This passage has captured the attention of many commentators down thought the years ...***
  - ***Verse 1: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork”: This is so wonderful indeed, isn’t it? There is so much more here than we might have thought. There are many interpretations but what David is doing is opening a little the curtain that our fallen natures have placed between us and that great truth God has provided — that some light may come into this heart of darkness all share from father Adam. The very glory of God is “declared” or “announced” in his creation itself!***
  - ***Verses 2-4: “Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. “Their line” (verse 4) = “Their writing”, see Is. 28:13 to see the parallelism here with these words referring to the writing that is described by “their words” to the end of the world” next. These are all special words here, “speech”, knowledge”, “language”, “voice”. But he is writing of what we see in the heavens here! There is no place on earth when those truths are not revealed. That is Paul’s meaning here.***
  - ***Much more could be said about the witness in Creation still valid today, though the revelation there is greatly diminished today.***
- ***In the next verses the author refers specifically to the Law given to Moses. This is the revelation of God that was written on stone and given specifically to his people Israel. That Law was “added” as Paul***

*mentions in Gal. 3, added to what though is a good question. Well, it was added to the previous dispensational plan of God already revealed which was added to that given before.*

- *We do not have the time today to look back to the times of Noah or Abraham or Jacob to see if there is Biblical evidence that God's witness in the creation was supplemented by additional revelation. But we know that it was and the example of Moses and the Law is clear thorough Paul's teaching. We also know that what was added may be removed (also known through Paul's teaching) as God raises up his spokesmen to deliver his message including the changing of the "guard", as it were, and also the message of salvation.*
- *But one thing remains constant no matter what the dispensational program may be: Faith*
- *God's Witness Dispensationally Considered — Its Essence and Sufficiency:*
  - *So Psalm 19 portion of God's word is a critical section for our understanding as it gives the basis for holding all accountable before a holy and sovereign creator, God Almighty. The apostle Paul makes a significant reference to it in Romans for that reason and draws an "application" :*

*Rom. 10:17-18*  
17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.  
18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.
  - *Again, Paul is our teacher, he is our interpreter of scripture. Here he quotes from Ps. 19:4 appropriately, since his point is that Israel had no excuse before the Creator, before Almighty God. So it is even more difficult to comprehend that they still refuse the truth of the gospel even though Christ is risen indeed.*
  - *Rejecting the truth presented is the response of so many. But in every dispensational context faith is always essential, although its object may change with something added or something removed as the dispensational plan of God advances. Paul illustrates that here in Romans 10 by referring back to that essential Psalm #19. He reasserts there the accountability of all sinners to their creator as the witness in the creation clearly reveals. But he adds the necessity to believe the gospel of God's grace.*

- *So, there was dry ground in Athens except for a few who believed. There is no record of a church being founded there either. But now we move along to Paul's next stop on this amazing missionary journey, the city of Corinth. And the differences in fruit bearing here will be so manifest. Why the great difference, one might ask? Well, one thing is clear: Athens was dominated by the philosophers. Corinth was not. Could that have made the difference?*

**Our Outline Today: “God’s Blessings Abound in Corinth, for Jews & Gentiles”**

- *Paul’s Departure from Athens Reaps Benefits Untold in Corinth*
- *Paul Testifies to the Jews Who Resist and He Departs from the Synagogue to the Gentiles*
- *The Corinthian Church is Founded on the Faith of a Leading Jew & Gentile*
- *Another Leading Jew in Corinth Also Believes Expanding the Church*
- *After Visiting Ephesus, the Second Missionary Journey Ends Triumphantly*

**I. Paul’s Departure from Athens Reaps Benefits Untold in Corinth:**

- *Awaiting the arrival of Timothy and Silas who he had left behind in Macedonia, Paul ministers over a period not mentioned (but a number of weeks as indicated) in the synagogues. There is no reference to fruit bearing however, at least not here. But when they do arrive everything’s moves ahead quickly as Luke relates it here, and this is his style, isn’t it?*

*But there was a miracle of faith happening nevertheless as indicated in our verses here.*

**[READ ] Acts 18:1-3**

***1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;***

***2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.***

***3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.***

- *Paul departs from Athens and finds fellow tentmakers, the Jews Aquila & Priscilla. The trials of this world for Aquila and Priscilla reaped untold benefits for them and for Paul and the ministry of God’s abundant grace! Expelled from Rome but ushered into*

***salvation and eternal life. They are mentioned three times in these chapters and also in Romans 16 and 1 Corinthians 16 as his close and dear fellow workers.***

- ***What an unanticipated blessing indeed this was for Paul and what a benefit for the advance of the gospel and its ministry. But God knew all along!***

## **II. Paul Testifies to the Jews Who Resist and He Departs from the Synagogue to the Gentiles:**

- ***Paul ministers in the synagogue on the Sabbaths and is embolden there when Silas and Timothy arrive preaching that Jesus is THE MESSIAH. The result is much like in other cities — the Jews seem unified in rejecting their own long awaited but expected Messiah.***

***[READ ] Acts 18:4-6 [Jews reject their Messiah but rulers of the synagogue believe]***

***4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.***

***5 And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews *that* Jesus was *[the]* Christ.***

***6 And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook *his* raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I *am* clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.***

- ***To the Jew first, was Paul's mission. This encounter is emblematic of his missionary journeys as he first goes into the synagogues preaching the resurrected Christ as Israel's Messiah. The leaders generally resist at which point, the apostle of the Gentiles leaves them behind and goes to the Gentiles.***
- ***We need to compare this with other similar situations. Paul went into the synagogues and preached the resurrected Christ. When the Jews opposed their Messiah, he left the synagogue and pronounced on many occasions a curse upon them. See Acts 13 for this and then the most significant example being found in Acts 28.***

***Acts 13:46-47***

***46 Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.***

47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, *saying*, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

**Acts 19:9** But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

**Acts 28:23-29**

23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening.

**24** And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

**25** And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers,

**26** Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

**27** For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

**28** Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and *that* they will hear it.

**29** And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.

- *These all illustrate a major theme here, that Paul was being used by the Lord to set apart Israel, step by step, city by city, synagogue by synagogue. When they resisted, he left and went to the Gentiles as here in Corinth so clearly seen. One practical conclusion from this might be that much of the Lord's work involves separation. Another would be that there are critical turning points in God's dealings with mankind. Neither of these are welcomed by many Christian leaders today where the message is unity even with unbelievers and those representing other religions.*

*Dispensationally, as we Rightly Divide the Word of Truth (and the understanding of that is our main objective in our review of the Book of Acts these weeks), these chapters illustrating that theme are very*

***important. The Acts is the book of transition as we have been seeing. From the preaching of the coming promised Kingdom for the Jews to the preaching of the grace of God toward sinners, Jew and Greek. Here in Corinth there was rejection of the message in the synagogue although there were nevertheless leading Jews saved, even the rulers of the synagogue themselves and another, Justus, who lived next store. They were the foundation of the church in Corinth. But Paul departed to minister directly to the Gentiles and the rest of the Jews were left behind with those memorable words: "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."***

**III. The Corinthian Church Is Founded on the Faith of a Leading Jew & Gentile:**

- ***So great fruit was gained for Christ in those days in Corinth and some names of the saved go down in history:***

***[READ ] Acts 18:7-11***

**7** And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

**8** And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

**9** Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:

**10** For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city.

**11** And he continued *there* a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

***Yes, these names do go down in history. See 1 Cor. 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; For Gaius, see Acts 19:29; 20:4; Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:14***

- ***Justus may be a Jewish proselyte, a Gentile who has believed. Since his house was right next to the synagogue, it is clear that he was a godly Gentile and the description "one that worshipped God" also indicates that as we have already seen in Acts 16:14 with Lydia.***
- ***Even the ruler of the synagogue was saved, Crispus! All these names go down in history. But God is not finished yet in Corinth. Many were saved and though Paul was fearful of his own life, he was encouraged. The Lord had many there [a reference to election,***



*perhaps] and Paul stayed 18 months, a very long time indeed. What happens next was also unexpected but glorious:*

**IV. Another Leading Jew in Corinth Also Believes Expanding the Church:**

***[READ ] Acts 18:12-17.***

**12** And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat,

**13** Saying, This *fellow* persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.

**14** And when Paul was now about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you:

**15** But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such *matters*.

**16** And he drave them from the judgment seat.

**17** Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those things.

- *The same history was repeated here as the Jews are unified against their Messiah and against Paul and the disciples who represented him there in the great Roman but pagan city. A growing ministry with many saved leads finally to Paul being dragged it seems to the governmental authorities. He is charged with that the Roman deputy considered merely matters of the Jewish religion and he rejects the charges and sets Paul free. Then the Greeks (the Gentiles of Corinth) used this commotion to take some revenge beating the new ruler of the synagogue outside the judgment seat where Gallio ministered what justice there was there and he allowed this gross departure from true justice!*
- *The new ruler of the synagogue, Sosthenes, having taken the place of Crispus, it seems, after being beaten by the Greeks, himself becomes a believer! So Jews and Gentiles are the founders of the church there in Corinth, a center of Greek pagan worship. He also becomes a devoted servant and co-minister with Paul as we see in the introduction to the first letter to the Corinthians:*

***[READ ] 1 Cor. 1:1-3***

**1** Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

***2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:***

***3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.***

***V. After Visiting Ephesus, the Second Missionary Journey Ends Triumphantly:***

***Acts 18:18-21***

***18*** And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn *his* head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

***19*** And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

***20*** When they desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not;

***21*** But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.

- ***We will begin here next time, Lord willing. Paul has made a vow as he has stated he will become all things to all men, in this case for the sake of the Jews, that many might be saved.***