BIBLE CHARACTERS MENTIONED IN THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BIBLE LESSON

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SUBJECT: Matter

SECTION III: The Gadarene Demoniac (Mark 5: 1-15)

“man with an unclean spirit”

TIME LINE: The Year of Popularity and Fundamental Principles (2nd year of Jesus’ ministry) @28 CE in the autumn near Gergesa.

This story is told Matthew, Mark and Luke. Mark omits the contrast between Jesus’ teaching and that of the scribes. Matthew drastically abbreviates it and yet makes it the story of two demon-possessed men instead of one. Capernaum lay on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee and was the center of much of Jesus’ activity. The foundation of an ancient synagogue has been excavated, perhaps on the site of the one visited by Jesus.

The story of the Gadarene demoniac teaches the reader the same basic truth about Jesus as the account of the stilling of the storm. Both the howling wind and the howling demon are subject to the Son of God.

A striking point in this miracle is the testimony of the demon to Christ’s Messiahship, which, however, he refused to accept. The demon seeks to gain power over Jesus or at least to neutralize Jesus’ advantage by the ancient practice of pronouncing an opponent’s name. If the possession was real, the demon’s confession of Christ as “the Holy One of God” was probably extorted by fear. If the possession was not real, but imagined by the insane man, the confession was probably due to the man’s instinctive sense that a person with supernatural powers was present, ready to heal him. The battle lines are drawn, the man convulses, and the demon is exorcised. All the witnesses are amazed at the power of Jesus’ word, and the news spreads rapidly.


The demon-haunted man, when Christ passed by,
Cried with a piteous voice, “What can there be
Of kinship, Son of God, for me and thee,—
I the most low, and thou from the Most High?”
Then by his lips the legion lusts made cry,
“Before the time art come to torment me?”
The Jesus spake; and, from delusions free,
In his right mind the man, redeemed, drew nigh.

To-day’s outcries proclaim the demon fears
Lest Truth’s flame touch the unfinished warp of lies
Where malice hastes to weave in ill surmise:
“Leave us alone! our malice-work of years
If touched by Truth would pass to smoke wind-blown,
And nothing leave for hate to call its own.”
Tutt, Dr. J.M., MD (CSB and Lecturer), “‘My name is Legion: for we are many’,” Christian Science Journal (December 1985), p. 752. (Reprinted from Christian Science Journal (June 1910)

--It is recorded in the fifth chapter of Mark’s Gospel that Jesus on one occasion approached a man possessed of “an unclean spirit.”

• And the man, perceiving Jesus afar off, ran and worshipped him.  
  ---Mrs. Eddy tells us that Jesus saw clearly “the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals.” (Science and Health, p. 476), and he said: “Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.”

• The he asked him, “What is thy name?”
  ---And the reply was, “My name is Legion: for we are many.”

--We read further that when the man had been healed, he was found, “sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.”

• When the Christ came, the unclean spirit was cast out; the man was no longer naked, but found himself clothed and mentally sound.
  ---The taking away of the false did not deprive him of anything, nor did he suffer loss of mind, body, or soul; but to him came the realization of man as the image and likeness of God, the only Mind,—hence “his right mind,”—the Mind of man.

SECTION IV: A Deputation from John the Baptist (Luke 7: 19-23); and The Beelzebub Controversy (Luke 11: 14-20)

John (the Baptist)

TIME LINE: @5 BCE-28 CE

John the Baptist was the cousin and forerunner of Jesus; a moral reformer, and preacher of Messianic hope. According to Luke, Elisabeth and Mary, the mothers of John and Jesus, were either blood relatives or close kinswomen. As is true of Jesus, practically nothing is known of John’s boyhood. The silence of his early years was broken by his loud call to repentance shortly before Jesus began his ministry. Matthew reports that John preached in the wilderness of Judea [central Israel]; he also probably preached at Perea [West of Amman, Jordan], east of the Jordan River which was in the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas, who arrested and imprisoned him in the fortress of Machaerus on the lonely hills east of the Dead Sea, and had him executed at the whim of his daughter.

If John was born of priestly parentage, he must have abandoned the priesthood and taken up an ascetic mode of life in the Judean wilderness, where he subsisted on locusts and wild honey. In the prophetic tradition he appeared out of the wilderness, heralding the coming of the Messiah and proclaiming the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. He felt called to take on Elijah’s mantle. Not only did he dress like Elijah, but he also understood his ministry to be one of reform and preparation.

John’s baptism was a washing, symbolizing moral regeneration, administered to each candidate only once. He had a burning awareness of one who was to come after him.
John was a forerunner of Jesus, not only in his ministry and message, but also in his death.

Early tradition has always represented the place where Jesus was baptized by his cousin John as being the spot shown today: the ford at Hajlah. At the River Jordan, he recognized Jesus as the Messiah, baptized him, and pointed him out to his own disciples as “the lamb of God.” The story of John the Baptist is the drama of a young man aware of his own mission and greatness, yet willing to step aside and act as a signpost to one even greater than himself. It seems that John lived for some time beyond Jordan, perhaps to avoid the authorities of Judea and Jerusalem, perhaps because of the regular and clean flow of the Wadi el-Kharrar from the east into Jordan.

While in prison, John must have grown disillusioned by his own failure and the developing failure he sensed in Jesus’ mission. Perplexed and impatient at Jesus’ method of developing his work, and perhaps feeling that he was forgotten while others were helped, he sent two of his disciples to ask “Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” (Matt 11: 3).

Gilmore, Albert F. (CSB and Editor), “‘He that should come,’” EDITORIAL, Christian Science Journal (February 1928), p. 609.

--The two disciples whom John the Baptist sent to the Master faced him with eager inquiry, “Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?”
  • The implication plainly is that the Messiah had long been expected; and because of the marvelous works Jesus was performing, his fame had reached John, who, desirous of learning the Master’s true status, sent to inquire.
--The hope of Israel for a Messiah who should come in the fullness of anticipated glory had long persisted.
  • In the book of Genesis the Messianic hope is expressed thus: “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come.”
  • As recorded in the book of Numbers, the prophet foresaw the coming thus: “A Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab.”
  • In Deuteronomy the prophecy took this form: “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee…; unto him ye shall hearken.”
  • In definite terms Isaiah and Malachi foretold the coming of the Messiah, who should establish a kingdom of glory.
  ---Yet none, it seems, foresaw the form and manner of the coming.
  • Many who observed the works of Jesus were convinced that at last the ancient Messianic hope had been fulfilled, even though the manner of that fulfillment was very unlike the traditional concept.


--John, like Elijah of old, was fearless and faithful in calling his countrymen to repentance.
--John called his hearers’ attention to the coming kingdom.
--not long after…John was imprisoned by Herod Antipas, in the Castle Machærus, because John had censured him publicly fro marrying his sister-in-law, Herodias, the faithless wife of Herod Philip.
  • At her solicitation, in reward for a dance by her daughter, her husband ordered John’s execution. (Matt 14: 1-12/Luke 3:19)
  ---It was during this imprisonment that John sent messengers to Jesus, to ask if were certainly the Messiah. (Matt 11: 1-19)
  • After this leader’s death John’s disciples formed themselves into a sect, under the name of the Christians of St. John.

**Beelzebub**/Baal-zebub/Gr. Beelzebul [Bee el’zi buhb]
“A god worshipped by the Philistines at Ekron. The original form and meaning of the term are unclear. Originally, it may have meant ‘lord of the lofty abode’: then, because this god was considered by the Hebrews to be an unworthy rival to Yahweh, it may have been revised to ‘lord of the flies.’ Later, it was altered even further to Beel-zabul, meaning ‘lord of dung.’ In the intertestamental period, when numerous names were used to designate the leader of the forces of evil, one of the names selected was Baal-zebub.” (Achtemeier)

Beelzebub is a name found only in the New Testament, given to Satan. In the Gospels, Jesus denies that he casts out demons by “Beelzebub the chief of the devils.”

Eddy, Rev. Mary Baker G., “Bible Lessons: ‘He was casting out a devil, and it was dumb’,” Christian Science Journal (May 1885), p. 36.

"And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake.” (Luke 11:14)

--The meaning of the term “devil” needs yet to be learned.
  • Its definition as one individual, is too limited and contradictory.
    ---When the Scripture is understood, the spiritual signification of its terms will contradict the interpretations that the senses give them, and be found to include the inspired meaning.
  --In the Hebrew, devil is Abaddon; in Greek Apollyon, serpent, liar, “the god of this world,” etc.
    • The apostle Paul refers to this personality of evil as the god of this world and then defines this god as "dishonesty, craftiness, handling the word of God deceitfully."
    --Our text refers to the devil as dumb.
    • But the original texts define him as an "accuser," a "calumniator;" which were impossible if he were speechless, and could only be possible to him as a writer, or a mental malpractitioner.


--When Christ Jesus healed a man who was dumb, there were people who wondered how he did it.
  • They even accused him of casting out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.
    ---But Jesus assured them that his healing works were not done through mortal means but through divine power—a power that would bring them much more than mere physical relief.
    • He said, “If I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.”
    --God’s touch had long been recognized as an inspiring as well as a healing power—a touch that not only would heal but would also spiritualize human thought and lead to the Promised Land.
    • According to the magicians of Pharaoh it was by the finger of God that Moses performed miracles in Egypt (see Ex. 8:19).

SECTION V: The Second Imprisonment of Peter and John (Acts 5: 12-29, 40-42)

Peter

[Pe’ter] (Gr. “rock”)

TIME LINE: - 65 CE
  This event: @30 CE in Jerusalem
Jonah [Jonas/John] (father)

Simon Peter [Cephas/Petros] = Unknown (Gospels refer to mother-in-law)

Andrew

The original name of this disciple was Simon. According to the Gospels, Jesus gave him the name Peter, the Greek translation of an Aramaic word “Cepha(s)” meaning “stone, rock.” Simon Peter was the most prominent of Jesus’ twelve apostles. The Bible gives a more complete picture of Peter than any other disciple, except Paul. He is often considered to be a big, blundering fisherman and is attractive for his constant mistakes and forgiveness, his boisterous and impetuous enthusiasm, and for his good intentions and self-confidence that so soon seemed to disappear. He became one of Jesus’ closest friends and was the first to recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

He was a native of Bethsaida (modern Golan Heights of Syria), and his family probably lived at Capernaum [on Lake Galilee]. They were fishermen; Peter was even referred to as a master fisherman. Living in the district of Galilee [modern northern Israel] surrounded by Gentiles, Peter may have spoken colloquial Greek, but his native language would be Aramaic and his Galilean accent was quite obvious in Jerusalem at the trial of Jesus. Both Peter and his brother Andrew were followers of John the Baptist before knowing Jesus. Peter was married, because the Gospels mention that Jesus healed his mother-in-law. Peter’s house at Capernaum became the headquarters of Jesus’ lakeside ministry, and Peter’s boat was always at his disposal.

Peter is the first named in every list of the twelve Apostles, and was apparently the strongest individual in the group. With James and John, Peter formed an inner circle of three, who alone were allowed to accompany Jesus into the house for the raising of Jairus’ daughter, to witness the transfiguration, and to share the agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. All three Synoptics credit Peter with a speaking role at Jesus’ transfiguration (Mark 8:29; Matt 16:16; Luke 5:10). He was always a man of action, but from his calling by Jesus to his denial of Jesus he was a man of impulse and aggressive energy, of childlike simplicity and daring, alternating with a weak and cowardly instability. It was not surprising that he was the first ready to walk to Jesus on the water. He is particularly remembered for his three-fold denial of Jesus, his repentance, and his three-fold commission by Jesus to “feed my sheep.” He was the first to witness Jesus’ resurrection—to see the risen Lord—and to recognize him as the Messiah.

In John 21 we have the account of a full re-instatement into the place of an apostle. From this time he became what his name signified, a rock—and his boldness in the face of persecution formed a sharp contrast with his previous timidity.

After Jesus’ ascension, at which he “sent out” his apostles into the world, Peter at once assumed the leadership of the apostles. He suggested the choice of a replacement for Judas. The first 11 chapters of Acts are built around the activity of the Apostle Peter. He was the first of the apostles to perform a miracle in the name of Jesus—healing the cripple at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple. He conducted the defense of John and himself before the Sanhedrin, and pronounced the condemnation of Ananias and Sapphira.

It was Peter who healed Aeneas, the paralytic at Lydda [modern Lod], and he raised to life Dorcas, the woman of many good works in Joppa [modern Jaffe, close to Tel Aviv]. He proclaimed salvation to the churches and preached the gospel to the Gentiles. We know little of Peter’s work outside Palestine, but he continued the healing ministry of Jesus throughout the Middle East.

After remaining for some time at Caesarea, he returned to Jerusalem, where he defended his conduct with reference to the Gentiles. Next we hear of his being cast into prison by Herod Agrippa; but in the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison gates, and he went forth and found refuge in the house of Mary.
Although there is no evidence directly linked to the event, it is highly probable that Peter was martyred in Rome at 65 A.D., when Nero made the Christians the scapegoats for the burning of Rome, which he had himself initiated. According to early Christian tradition, Peter, as an old man, suffered martyrdom by crucifixion head downwards.

Many believe that Mark wrote his Gospel under the teaching of Peter, or that he embodied in that Gospel the substance of our apostle’s oral instruction. Authentic history adds but little to our knowledge of Peter’s life beyond what we glean from the New Testament. The only written documents which Peter has left are the First Epistle—about which no doubt has ever been entertained in the Church—and the Second, which has been the subject of earnest controversy.


AWAKE! The message rang in the prison cell;
   And lo, the darkness fled and “there was light”!
From off his limbs the binding fetters fell,
   He saw a perfect freedom, man’s own right,
As he responded to the call, “Arise.”

No rock-hewn walls were there to opened eyes,
But straight before him was an unbarred door
Through which he passed, a freeman, bound no more.

And we like Peter, too, from sleep must rise,
   In swift obedience don faith’s armor bright.
No darkness dense is here to unclosed eyes;
   An angel guide is leading in the light.
We, too, can find the ever open door—
   The Christ, which frees us now and evermore.


--In the fifth chapter of Acts is given an account of Peter’s healing work, an account which contains a demonstration of understanding that is among the greatest recorded as having been performed by the apostles.
   • It states that the multitudes “were healed every one,” and that the effect of this wonderful work upon that entire community was very great.
     ---So great was the impression made upon the people of that time that the record goes on to say the indignation or envy of the sect of the Sadducees was excited, and they placed the apostles in the common prison.
   • The Sadducees were then the so-called aristocracy of the church, opposed to the Pharisees’ methods and doctrines, believing neither in the resurrection nor in any teaching which did not definitely originate with Moses.

   John (the Apostle)

TIME LINE: 3-98 A.D.

Zebedee (father) ⇔ Salome (sister of Mary?)
   James (older brother)

   John
John, an abbreviated form of the Semitic Johanan, was a common name in the century before Jesus. In the New Testament, those with this name include

- John the Baptist
- John, the father of Simon Peter
- John, from the family of the high priest
- John Mark
- John, the son of Zebedee (the beloved Disciple)
- John, the author of the Book of Revelation

The two sources of knowledge concerning him are the New Testament and traditions. The authorship of the fourth gospel has traditionally been assigned to John the disciple, who was with Jesus at the transfiguration and during the struggle of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

John and his father and brother were fishermen, and lived in Capernaum, possibly Bethsaida [Golon Heights of Syria], on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. He seems to have been in comfortable circumstances, for he owned a boat and employed men to assist him (Matt 4:21; Mark 1:20), and Salome, his wife, the other of John, was one of the band of women who ministered to Jesus (Mark 15:40; 16:1). Although it is not certain that Salome and Mary were sisters, if it were so it would make James and John cousins of Jesus. Luke describes John and James as partners with Peter and Andrew. John, James, and Peter formed the inner circle of the disciples of Jesus. This special position seems to have caused some envy among Jesus’ other followers.

Both James and John responded to the call of Jesus after his baptism. When James and John asked Jesus to reserve for them the seats of honor on either side of him at his Messianic banquet in heaven, Jesus asked if they knew what they were asking for, and rebuked them with the admonishment that it was not his to grant.

John was present when Jesus healed the daughter of Jairus; he witnessed his transfiguration and his agony in Gethsemane; and was entrusted, with Peter, for preparation of the Passover supper. Many thought John was Jesus’ favorite disciple. On the Lake of Galilee after a fruitless night’s fishing with Peter and the others, as they bring the boat into the north shore, a voice calls, “Cast the net on the right side.” They do so and get so vast a haul of fish that they cannot even land it. At that moment “the disciple whom Jesus loved” said to Peter: “It is the Lord!”

John is mentioned twice in the Acts as accompanying Peter, and he continued to work with Peter after the ascension as the most prominent disciples both in healing and in confirming the faith of the primitive church. He was present when Peter healed the lame man in the Temple. He is also one of the three “pillars of the Church” whom Paul met at Jerusalem.

In all likelihood, he moved to Ephesus, and was later banished to the island of Patmos, before returning to Ephesus where he died sometime after Trajan became emperor in A.D. 98.

Historically, John has been credited with five chapters of the Bible: John, I John, II John, III John, and Revelation. The book of Revelation calls itself an apocalypse or revelation, which Jesus gave, for his servants, through his angel to John, but it begins in letter form, “John to the seven churches that are in Asia, grace to you and peace, and ends like a Pauline letter with the “grace.”

More recent researchers have reached an assessment that he did not write Revelation and that he probably didn’t write the Gospel of John either, but that it was written by someone who later became a follower of Jesus, not an eyewitness. Revelation is a rereading of Biblical tradition in the light of the death of Jesus, and though no doubt Jewish, the author is also a citizen of the Greco-Roman world and knows its myths and astrology.

--The disciples certainly understood that their preaching must be emphasized by demonstration of God's power and presence; that they must confirm the word with signs and wonders following.
--Because signs and wonders attended them, after them, as after Jesus, the people flocked.
  • They were persecuted, as he had been, because of miracles performed.
    ---Following upon the healing of the man lame from his mother's womb, when exception to Peter's and John's healing and preaching had been taken by the chief priests and elders, and the announcement made that, though a notable miracle had been done, nevertheless such work should proceed no further, this prayer was offered by the Christians: "And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus."


--This apostle has been given several titles.
  • He is known as “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” as “John the Divine” and as the “Apostle of Love.”
--Perhaps few things about him are more spiritual than his discernment of the origin and nature of the Christ.
  • In other words, he defines as the other evangelists do not the character and power of the Word.
    ---He actually states the eternality of the Christ in the first chapter of his Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
--John was Jesus’ constant companion
--Nothing in the Scriptures outside of the words of Jesus excels the profundity and the simplicity of his metaphysics.
  • They are never intellectual, but always divine or spiritual.
    ---Sometimes in his epistles it is almost as if a child were speaking.

SECTION VI: St. Paul at Corinth; Apollos at Ephesus (Acts 18: 1-8, 18-26)

Paul

TIME LINE: 30-68 CE (this event: 2nd Missionary Journey @52 CE)

Benjamin
↓
Father (a Pharisee)=Mother (unknown)
Saul (Paul)
(Sister)
(Nephew)

Paul, whose original name was Saul, was born a Roman citizen, although a Jew, in Tarsus. He was a tentmaker. All the influences about him from the beginning—Jewish, Greek, Roman—contributed, apart from any consciousness or intention on his part to fit him for the work of his life.

His Conversion. As a young man, he sought out and persecuted Christians. The conversion of Saul is regarded as a miraculous event.

Near Damascus
Saw a Great Light
Saul Was Blinded
Christ’s Rebuke
Saul’s Reply
Was Led to Damascus
Fasted and Prayed

On one of his journeys on the way to Damascus, he saw a great light, was blinded by it, heard the rebuke of the Christ, and was led to Damascus where he fasted and prayed.

Ananias Sent to Him
Was Baptized

A Christian disciple named Ananias was sent to Saul and baptized him, and from that point on he received his sight, his name was changed to Paul, and he preached Christ in the synagogues.

After Conversion.

During his missionary, Paul made three specific journeys all around the area we know today as the Middle East. Subsequently, he spent time in Jerusalem, and lived the remainder of his years in Rome, mostly in prison.

Second Missionary Journey (50-52 CE). At the beginning of the next journey came the memorable difference of opinion between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus. So, on Paul’s second missionary journey, from Antioch [Syria] through what we know today as southeastern Turkey, he journeyed to the Roman colony of Philippi [today’s Greek coast on the Aegean Sea] accompanied by Luke and Silas.

The Vision at Troas [W coast, Turkey],

The text and meaning of Acts 16 are both in dispute. According to the “North Galatian” view, Paul, Luke, and Silas now passed through the Phrygian and Galatic country after and because he was hindered by the Holy Spirit from going west into Asia to Ephesus. They instead turned north and northwest, reaching the seaport of Troas. Here Paul was told in a vision to cross the north Aegean Sea and preach the gospel in Macedonia.

At Philippi, Lydia and jailor converted

It was here that Lydia was baptized, and invited Paul to come into her house. Paul continued to preach in Philippi and was jailed with Silas by the magistrates for teaching customs which were not lawful. Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God, and a great earthquake shook the foundations of the prison, and all the doors were opened and the prisoners’ bands loosed. After converting the jailer, they continued their journey to Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens [all cities in Greece].

Athens. Sermon on Mars Hill

Some of the brethren went with him as far as Athens. Here the apostle delivered that wonderful discourse reported in Acts 17. He gained but few converts in Athens.

Corinth Vision,—Church founded

He soon took his departure and went to Corinth [SW of Athens], where he became acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla, and where Timothy joined him. The two epistles to the Thessalonians—and these alone—belong to the present missionary journey.

Ephesus.—a Brief Visit

The ship in which he sailed from Corinth touched at Ephesus [Izmir, Turkey], and he had time to enter the synagogue and talk with the Jews, but though he promised to return, he could not stay.

The Return to Antioch

He returned to Antioch [inland, Turkey]. Much of his history is found in his letters to those communities.

Third Missionary Journey (53-58 CE)
On the third missionary journey, several brethren were associated with him in this expedition, the bearers, no doubt, of the collections made in all the churches for the poor at Jerusalem.

Visits Galatia and Phrygia

His companions were sent on by sea, and probably the money with them, to Troas, where they were to await Paul. He went round by way of Philippi, where Luke joined him, to Troas where the incident of Eutychus occurred, and thence to Assos [slightly SW of Troas; today Troy]. He completed his third journey by going to Miletus [SW coast of Turkey]; through Rhodes [island, S of Turkey] and Patars [S coast of Turkey], to Tyre [N coast of Israel]; and finally through Caesarea [coastal city of Israel] to Jerusalem.

In Jerusalem (@60 BCE)

Seized by the Romans

After appearing before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, and before Felix and Festus at Caesarea, he was compelled to protest against injustice and delay (he had been a prisoner fully two years) by exercising his right as a Roman citizen to appeal to the emperor. To the imprisonment belongs the group of letters to Philemon, to the Colossians [Turkey], to the Ephesians [Turkey], and to the Philippians [Greece].

Voyage to Rome (@62 BCE)

After appearing before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, and before Felix and Festus at Caesarea, he was compelled to protest against injustice and delay (he had been a prisoner fully two years) by exercising his right as a Roman citizen to appeal to the Emperor. The voyage to Rome is told by an eye-witness.

The Storm
The Vision
The Shipwreck
On the island of Melita

Paul was a controversial figure in his lifetime, even within the Christian movement. In accordance with early Christianity, he accepted slavery without criticism, and he assumes the property right of a slave-owner; but he recognizes the slave as a brother in Christ, to whom is due not merely forgiveness but Christian fellowship. He had many opponents who disagreed with his interpretation of the message of Jesus. In the closing years of his life, when imprisonment prevented him from moving about freely, Paul’s opponents were able to make headway with their rival interpretations. However, Paul became a venerated figure. His letters, together with the Gospels, became the foundation of the Christian movement.

Aquila

[Āk′wi lá] (Lat. “eagle”)

Aquila was Jew, born in Pontus, by occupation a tent-maker like Paul (or leather-worker), whom Paul met on his first visit to Corinth. Along with his wife Priscilla he had fled from Rome in consequence of a decree (50 CE) by Claudius commanding all Jews to leave the city. Paul sojourned with him at Corinth, and they wrought together at their common trade, making Cilician hair-cloth for tents. On Paul's departure from Corinth after eighteen months, Aquila and his wife accompanied him to Ephesus, where they remained, while he proceeded to Syria. When they became Christians we are not informed, but in Ephesus they were Paul's "helpers in Christ Jesus." We find them afterwards at Rome, interesting themselves still in the cause of Christ. They are referred to some years after this as being at Ephesus. This is the last notice we have of them.

Priscilla/Prisca [Pri sil’uh]

Priscilla is the wife of Aquila, who is never mentioned without her. Her name sometimes takes the precedence of his. They came from Italy to Corinth after the emperor Claudius ordered Jews expelled
from Rome. She was a zealous advocate of the Christian cause and took part with Aquila in instructing Apollos.

Emperor Claudius
[Claw’dih us] (“lame”)

TIME LINE: 41-54 CE

Claudius was the fourth Roman emperor. He succeeded Caligula (41 CE). Though in general he treated the Jews, especially those in Asia and Egypt, with great indulgence, yet about the middle of his reign (49 CE) he banished them all from Rome. In this edict the Christians were included, as being, as was supposed, a sect of Jews. The Jews, however soon again returned to Rome.

During the reign of this emperor, several persecutions of the Christians by the Jews took place in the dominions of Herod Agrippa, in one of which the apostle James was “killed.” He died in 54 CE.

Silas/Silvanus
[Si’las] (“person of the woods”)

TIME LINE: @50 CE

Silas was a prominent and distinguished member of the early Christian church at Jerusalem, often referred to as Silvanus in Paul’s epistles. He first appears as one of the leaders of the church in Jerusalem holding the office of an inspired teacher. He was probably a Hellenistic Jew, and a Roman citizen.

He, and Judas (surnamed Barsabas), were appointed as delegates to accompany Paul and Barnabas on their return to Antioch to report the decision of the Council of Jerusalem to accept Gentile Christians into the church. He remained in Antioch after the others had returned to Jerusalem, and was selected by Paul as his companion on his second missionary journey. During their travels, Paul and Silas were imprisoned at Philippi.

At Berea he was left behind with Timothy while Paul proceeded to Athens, and we hear nothing more of his movements until he rejoined the apostle at Corinth. He is not mentioned again. The time, place, and manner of his death are unknown.

Timotheus/Timothy
[Ti moh’thee uhs] (“honored by God”)

TIME LINE: @50-60 CE

Lois (grandmother)
Eunice (Jewess mother) = Greek father
Timothy

Timothy was a young associate who was Paul’s friend, disciple, companion, and “beloved and faithful child in the Lord,” in many of his journeys. Timothy is associated with Paul in the prescripts of at least four of the apostle’s letters: I Thessalonians, II Corinthians, Philemon, and Romans; additionally he is mentioned as joint sender in those four as well as two other of Paul’s epistles: II Thessalonians and Colossians.

He was born in Asia Minor. His Jewish mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, are mentioned as eminent for their piety. We know nothing of his father but that he was a Greek gentile.
He is first brought into notice at the time of Paul's second missionary journey on his second visit to Lystra, where Timothy probably resided, and where it seems he was converted during Paul's first visit to that place. The apostle having formed a high opinion of his "own son in the faith," arranged that he should become his companion, and took and circumcised him, so that he might conciliate the Jews. He was designated to the office of an evangelist, and went with Paul in his journey through Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia; also to Troas and Philippi and Berea. Thence he followed Paul to Athens, and was sent by him with Silas on a mission to Thessalonica.

When, with Silvanus (Silas), Timothy joined Paul in Corinth, he was the bearer of good news: the Thessalonians remained steadfast in “faith and love,” and they longed to see Paul (I Thess 3:6). He passes now out of sight for a few years, and is again noticed as with the apostle at Ephesus, whence he is sent on a mission into Macedonia. He accompanied Paul afterwards into Asia, where he was with him for some time. When the apostle was a prisoner at Rome, Timothy joined him, where it appears he also suffered imprisonment. From Rome, Paul sent Timothy to Philippi to bring back word of the congregation that had supported the apostle so faithfully over the years.

During the apostle's second imprisonment he wrote to Timothy, asking him to rejoin him as soon as possible, and to bring with him certain things which he had left at Troas, his cloak and parchments. According to tradition, after the apostle's death he settled in Ephesus as his sphere of labor, and there found a martyr's grave.

Crispus
[Kris'pus] (Lat. “curled”)

TIME LINE: @60 CE

Crispus was the ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth. After listening to Paul's reasonings, he, with all his household, believed in Jesus and was converted to Christianity (Acts 18: 8). He was one of the few people personally baptized by the apostle Paul (I Cor 1: 14).

Apollos
[A pol'lus] ("destroyer")

TIME LINE: @49 CE

Apollos was a learned and eloquent Jew "born at Alexandria," a man well versed in the Scriptures. He came to Ephesus (about 49 CE), where he spoke "boldly" in the synagogue, although he did not know as yet that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Aquila and Priscilla instructed him more perfectly in "the way of God", i.e., in the knowledge of Christ. He then proceeded to Corinth, where he met Paul. He was there very useful in watering the good seed Paul had sown, and in gaining many to Christ. His disciples were much attached to him. He was with Paul at Ephesus when he wrote the First Epistle to the Corinthians; and Paul makes kindly reference to him in his letter to Titus. Some have supposed, although without sufficient ground, that he was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.


--When Paul arrived at Corinth, his next destination, his companions had not yet joined him from Berea.
- He may have been short of funds, or may have wanted to keep a low profile while he was waiting for Silas and Timothy.
---In any case, he found work and lodging with a Jewish couple, Aquila and Priscilla.
• In those days, even wealthy Jews were taught a craft, and since Paul was a tentmaker—as were Aquila and Priscilla—this arrangement met everyone’s needs.

---It’s not clear whether they were Christians when Paul found them, but before long they became his partners in evangelism.

--After Silas and Timothy arrived, bringing funds with them, Paul was able to give up manual labor and devote his full time to preaching.

• During this period, he came to feel that his work in the Jewish community had gone as far as it could and that he should focus on ministering to the Gentiles.


--From Athens Paul went to the busy commercial city of Corinth, capital of the Roman province of Achaea, situated on the narrow isthmus connecting the peninsular part of Greece to the mainland.

--At Corinth he met a Jew from Pontus in Asia Minor named Aquila, who with his wife Priscilla had been driven out of Italy because of their religion.

• They may have been Christians already when Paul met them.

---He took lodgings with them, and he and Aquila worked at their common craft of tentmaking.

• Doubtless Paul worked far into the night as he did at Thessalonica, but he still found time to teach in the synagogue every sabbath, “and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.”

--Two of his fellow missionaries, Silas and Timothy, who had remained in Macedonia while Paul was in Athens, joined him in Corinth.

• Silas may have brought one of those generous contributions that from time to time the Philippian church sent to Paul, enabling him to devote more of his time to the work of preaching.

---About this time, A.D. 50 or 51, Paul composed the first of those letters that have immortalized his name, the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

--Evidently the church [at Thessalonica] needed encouragement and counsel.

• Writing on behalf of himself and his two friends Silas (Silvanus) and Timothy, and opening with words of gratitude and praise, he remembers their work of faith, answers some of the accusations brought by his enemies against him and his teachings, encourages these new Christians in the face of persecution, and reiterates a plea for brotherly love and moral purity.


--On leaving Macedonia, Paul made his way to Greece, and after his famous address on Mars’ Hill at Athens, he settled in Corinth.

• There he remained for eighteen months, at the home of Aquila and Priscilla, who themselves had but recently arrived in the city, having been expelled from Rome as the result of an anti-Semitic decree promulgated by the Emperor Claudius (Acts 18: 1,2,11)

---Aquila was a native of Pontus, one of the northern provinces of Asia Minor, and while we are not expressly informed that his wife Priscilla came from that district, it is generally assumed that she did so.

• Not only was Priscilla Paul’s hostess during his stay in Corinth, at a time when he is believed to have written his two letters to Thessalonica, but she and her husband accompanied the apostle when he left Greece for Syria (Acts 18:18).

--As soon as his work of “strengthening all the disciples” there was completed, Paul kept his promise and returned to Ephesus.
--Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province known as Asia, but its importance and influence reached far beyond its own territory.
  • In Paul’s day it was the chief city of all Asia Minor and formed the western outpost in the larger, continental sense.
--The apostle probably reached Ephesus about the fall of 53 (see Chap. 19).
  • An enthusiastic new preacher, Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria, had already arrived in Ephesus and had gone on to preach in Corinth.


--When the liberating truth guides thought and begins to control individual life, then it reaches human institutions.
  • God is infinite Spirit, man is God’s spiritual idea.
    ---This is the firm basis on which rest the unity and equality of the human family; before it, distinctions between rich and poor, high and low, monarch and subject, peer and peasant, vanish.
  • While this great liberating and leveling truth remained unclouded in the early Church, it was causing unholy institutions to crumble.
    ---Paul directed Philemon to receive back Onesimus, his escaped slave, as a “brother beloved.”
    • Here is the death-knell of slavery; it cannot live in such an atmosphere.
      ---Gibbon says that in the time of Claudius one half the Roman empire was slave and one half free, or about sixty millions each.


Through Ephesus, Caýster River flows.
How like my life the widening current grows….

Men learned the blessed truths I came to know
On Jordan’s shores a score of years ago
When John the Baptist taught.
He said that the Messias soon would come,
That he would heal the sick, the blind, the dumb.
A radiance filled my thought.

And then Priscilla and Aquila came
To teach me in the tender Master’s name,
To lead me in the Way.
And now through Paul the perfect Truth I see;
I know the Christ is really come to me
And dwells with me today.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


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In the narratives of the Gospels regarding the "casting out of devils" a different Greek word (daimon) is used. In the time of our Lord there were frequent cases of demoniacal possession in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Mason, Frank E. (CSB and Assistant Pastor), "The Temptation of Jesus," BIBLE LESSONS, Christian Science Journal (December 1888), p. 465. Immediately after Jesus' baptism he was led into the Wilderness to be tempted. --Satan, material belief, had for thousands of years held despotic sway over mankind, oppressing them with burdensome and cruel tasks. BIBLE CHARACTERS MENTIONED IN THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE LESSON-SERMON October 30, 2005 For CSDirectory.com Compiled by C. Norman Wood, Burke, VA 22015 703-898-8818, [email protected] SUBJECT: Everlasting Punishment SECTION II: Healing Naaman the Leper (II Kings 5: 1-4, 9-14) TIME LINE: @825 BC At the point of this narrative Syria apparently controlled Israel, and the King of Syria. Elisha ministered for about 50 years in the northern kingdom of Israel, serving God during the reigns of Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Joash. Elisha's work consisted of presenting the Word of God through prophecy, advising kings, anointing kings, helping the needy, and performing several miracles.