

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## Paul's Mission to the Gentiles



And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

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.

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

And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium.

And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

—*The Acts* 13:44-52.

The power of Paul's "silver tongue," magnified by a heart flaming with the zeal of his cause, brought numerous converts in the city of Antioch. His previous years of study and training with some of the best Jewish teachers of the time, along with a burning conviction of the truth and need for his message, made it possible for him to awaken a response in a multitude of listeners. Among these were many of his Jewish brothers and sisters, but there were also many of his fellow Jews who, enslaved by their Race Spirit, remained unmoved by his words. "They were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by

Paul."

However, opposition never discouraged the dauntless Paul! On the contrary, it usually seemed but to whet his determination to make known his message to all. More than once he boldly told his Jewish listeners of their error in having refused to accept the Messiah, and how he had consequently been sent particularly to the gentiles. His experience on the road to Damascus had convinced Paul that the Messiah had come, had been crucified and resurrected, and that he, Paul, had been divinely appointed to preach the gospel to the gentiles of all the world. Henceforth, he was "a man with a mission," and he lived continually in that consciousness until his martyrdom.

The way of the pioneer is never easy, and who among mankind is a better example of this than the indomitable Paul? Handicapped to some extent by an unprepossessing physical appearance, and beset on all sides by ignorance, superstition, intolerance, and bigotry, his was anything but an easy path. Paul's very nature undoubtedly made his way doubly difficult, for he was not by nature gentle and patient. The fire of accomplishment burned brightly within him, and he was often impatient with the blindness and stupidity (to him) of his listeners and co-workers. His outspoken manner often incurred the hatred and opposition of the very ones he wished to convert to his cause, and brought dissension and strife into his own groups. However, when persecution waxed too strong, he and his companions "shook off the dust of their feet" and sought another place where they continued to publish "the word of God." High moments of reward came in which they "were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost."