

### C. THE MARTYRDOM OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL.

Under this title Lipsius published for the first time (*Acta Apocrypha*, I, 102-117) the Greek text according to an Athos and Patmos manuscript, together with a Latin translation according to three Munich manuscripts. The Coptic (Schmidt, *Acta*, p. 83-90) is in rather a bad state, only a part is preserved.

I. Luke who had come from Gaul, and Titus who had come from Dalmatia, expected Paul at Rome. When Paul saw them, he rejoiced and rented a barn outside of Rome, where he and the brethren taught the word of truth. He became famous, and many souls were added to the Lord, so that it was noised about in Rome, and a great many from the house of the emperor came to him, and there was much joy.

A certain Patroclus, a cupbearer of the emperor, who had come too late to the barn and could not get near to Paul on account of the throng of the people, sat on a high parapet, and listened how he taught the word of God. As Satan, being bad, became jealous of the love of the brethren, Patroclus fell down from the parapet and died; speedily it was reported to Nero. Paul, however, having learned it by the Spirit, said to his hearers, "Men, dear brethren, the evil one has obtained room, that he may tempt you; go forth and ye will find a boy

---

Amen.—Another authority reads: peace, grace and love, Amen.

which had fallen down and is about dying. Lift him up and bring him hither." This they did. When the people saw him, they were frightened. Paul said to them, "Now, dear brethren, show your faith. Come, let us cry to our Lord Jesus Christ, that the boy might live and we remain unmolested." When all began to lament, the boy took breath; and having put him on a beast of burden, they sent him away alive with all those which were of the emperor's house.

2. And Nero, having heard of Patroclus's death, became very sad, and as he just came in from his bath, he ordered another one to be appointed for the wine. But his boys said, "Emperor, Patroclus is alive, and stands at the sideboard." When the emperor heard that Patroclus was alive, he was frightened and would not come in. But after having come in, and seeing Patroclus, he cried out, "Patroclus, thou livest?" He answered, "(Yea,) I am alive, Cæsar." Who said, "Who is he that made thee alive?" And the boy, being carried away by a mind of faith, said, "Christ Jesus, the King of the ages." The emperor asked in dismay, "Is he to be King of the ages and destroy all kingdoms?" Says Patroclus to him, "Yea, he destroys all kingdoms under the heaven, and he alone shall remain in all eternity, and there will be no kingdom which escapes him." And he slapped his face, and cried out, "Patroclus, thou also art fighting for that king?" He answered, "Yes, my lord and Cæsar, for he has raised me from the dead."

And Barrabas Justus the flat-footed, and Urion the Cappadocian, and Festus of Galatia, the first men of Nero, said, "And we, too, fight for him, the King of the world." After they were terribly tortured, he had them imprisoned, whom he greatly loved, and ordered that the soldiers of the great King be sought, and issued an edict that all Christians and soldiers of Christ that were found, should be executed.

3. And in the multitude Paul also was brought in fetters. Those that were imprisoned with him looked at him, so that the emperor knew that he was the leader of the soldiers. And he said to him, "Man of the great King, now my prisoner, what induced thee to come secretly into the Roman empire and to enlist soldiers in my territory?" But Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, said in the presence of all, "Cæsar, we enlist soldiers not only in your territory, but in all lands of the earth. For thus we are commanded to exclude none who wishes to fight for my King. If it seemeth good to thee to serve him <thou wilt not regret it. Moreover, think not that> <sup>1</sup> riches or that which glitters in this life will save thee; but if thou becomest his subject and ask him, thou shalt be saved. For on one day he will destroy the world."

Having heard this, Nero commanded to burn all prisoners with fire, but to behead Paul in accordance with the law of the Romans. And Paul was not silent, but communicated the word to Longus the

---

<sup>1</sup> Following the Latin.

prefect and Cestus the centurion. And Nero being instigated by the evil one (raged) at Rome, and had many Christians executed without being judged, so that the Romans stood before the palace and cried, "It is enough, Cæsar; these men are ours; thou destroyest the strength of the Romans." Being thus convinced, he desisted <having issued an edict> not to touch any Christian till his case had been investigated.<sup>2</sup>

4. After the issuing of the edict, Paul was brought before him, and he insisted that he should be executed. And Paul said, "Cæsar, I live not merely for a short time unto my King; and if thou have me executed, I shall do the following: I will rise again and appear unto thee, for I am not dead, but live unto my King Christ Jesus, who shall come to judge the earth."

And Longus and Cestus said to Paul, "Whence have you this King that you believe on him, without changing your mind unto death?" And Paul answered and said, "Ye men, being ignorant and in error, change your mind and be saved from the fire which comes over the whole earth. For we fight not, as you suppose, for a King who is from the earth, but who is from heaven for the living God, who comes as judge because of the righteousness, which takes place in this world. And blessed is he who will believe on him and live in eternity when he shall come with fire to purge the earth." And

---

<sup>2</sup> Here endeth the Latin.

they besought him and said, "We pray thee, help us and we will release thee." But he answered <with a smiling face> <sup>3</sup> "I am not a deserter of Christ, but a faithful soldier of the living God. If I knew that I should die, I would do it, Longus and Cestus; but since I live to God and love myself, I go to the Lord that I may come (again) with him in the glory of his Father." And they said unto him, "How can we live after thou hast been beheaded?"

5. And while they were speaking Nero sent a certain Parthenius and Pheretas to see whether Paul had already been beheaded. And they found him still alive. He summoned them beside him and said: "Believe in the living God, who will raise me, as well as all those that believe on him, from the dead." But they said, "We will now go to Nero, but when you have died and have been raised up, we will believe in thy God."

But when Longus and Cestus continued to ask <sup>4</sup> about their salvation, he said to them, "In the early dawn come quickly to my grave, and you will find two men at prayer, Titus and Luke; they will give you the seal in the Lord." <sup>5</sup>

And turning toward the east, Paul lifted up his hands to heaven and prayed much; and after having conversed in Hebrew with the fathers during prayer, he bent his neck, without speaking any more. When the lictor cut off his head, milk splashed on the dress

---

<sup>3</sup> So Codex Athos.

<sup>4</sup> Coptic: asked.

<sup>5</sup> Coptic: omits: in the Lord.

of the soldier. And the soldier, and all who stood near by, were astonished at this sight and glorified God, who had thus honored Paul. And they went away and reported everything to Cæsar.

6. When he heard (of it), he was much amazed, not knowing what to say. While many philosophers and the centurion were assembled with the emperor, Paul came about the ninth hour, and in the presence of all he said, "Cæsar behold, here is Paul, the soldier of God; I am not dead, but I live in my God. But upon thee, thou miserable one,<sup>6</sup> many evils and great punishments<sup>6</sup> will come, because thou hast unjustly shed the blood of the righteous, not many days hence." And after having spoken thus, Paul departed from him.<sup>7</sup> When Nero had heard (this), he commanded that the prisoners be released, Patroclus as well as Barsabas with his friends.

7. And as Paul had told them, Longus and Cestus the centurion, came very early to the grave of Paul, trembling. And when they came near, they found two men in prayer and Paul with them, so that they became frightened when beholding the incredible miracle, whilst Titus and Luke, being afraid at the sight of Longus and Cestus, turned to run away.

But the persecutors said to them, "We persecute you not in order to kill you, ye blessed men of God,

---

<sup>6</sup> Coptic omits: thou miserable one and great punishments.

<sup>7</sup> This clause omitted in the Coptic.

as you suppose,<sup>8</sup> but in order to live, that ye may do unto us<sup>9</sup> as Paul promised to us, whom we have just seen in prayer beside you." Upon hearing this, Titus and Luke<sup>10</sup> gave them joyfully the seal in the Lord, glorifying God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be honor for ever and ever. Amen.<sup>11</sup>

The Coptic has the statement: "the Acts of Paul according to the Apostle," i.e. according to Paul himself. As the fragment which thus concludes is the story of Paul's martyrdom, we have a parallel here to the conclusion of the Pentateuch with the story of Moses' death. Probably the good people of the second century found no more difficulty in attributing the account of his own death to St. Paul than many devout Christians have in attributing Deut. XXXIV to Moses.—

---

<sup>8</sup> Coptic omits: ye . . . suppose.

<sup>9</sup> Coptic: but that ye give unto us the life.

<sup>10</sup> Coptic omits: Titus and Luke.

<sup>11</sup> Coptic: glorifying the.