

PAUL: LUCAS GROLLENBERG. 1977. (trans. 1978)

Jesus' ministry = 'an explosion of humanity', Kingdom like a magnetic field to which you let yourself be drawn into the power of which Jesus was full. A poet of rural background, Galilee the size of Nottingham county.

Paul is different as an educated city theologian.

Wrote 8 letters: Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, 1 Thessalonians, Philippians, Philemon

Luke's Acts of Peter & Paul

Literary education. Hellenistic not to show sources (what were his?)

1. Spirit takes initiative. 2. 12 apostles are pillars, 3. Paul instructed in Jerusalem, 4. Christianity not a danger to state, 5. Gospel is preached to end of earth (Rome)

Alexander wanted Greek language but became Koine.

On papyrus and parchment (Pergamum)

Jewish mercenaries on island of Elephantine on Nile.

Diaspora:

Four to six million across Empire, two million in Palestine. 10% total popn!
Ptolemies and Seleucids: wars drove Jews to safer places like Antioch and Alexandria. Regarded children as blessing (Hellenes would leave kids to die)
Recruited new Jews esp from poor: exotic eastern religion, strong belonging, certain tax privileges, but circumcision and disliked.

Baptism purified and died to old faith and community.

God-fearers would avoid impurities, join in services, celebrate and study.

Jerusalem central – all would have to pay Temple-tax after twenty.

They formed synagogues with links to homeland when they lived in Jerusalem. Paul's family came and he studied under Gamaliel?

Torah:

with God before he created the world – like Wisdom (Proverbs 8)

God studied the Torah daily.

At Damascus Paul saw light of Jesus who was God's new way to all

Humankind – Jesus had said Kingdom was available to those outside Torah (lepers, blind, etc.)

Seven bear Greek names so were diaspora Jews. Stephen spoke of Torah being subsumed. Stoning comprised standing naked on 10ft wall, witness threw first, second witness caved in chest, others finished.

Pharisee Paul accepted resurrection of Messiah who had brought new Kingdom, new Creation.

Life accounts, Luke and Letters:

Paul says went to Arabia = Transjordan a prosperous city region around and to south of Damascus. Then to Jerusalem to meet Peter. Fourteen years later went to Jerusalem second time to be assured of mission to Gentiles. No strings Luke says no Arabia, Barnabas, Paul supervised by the 12! Comes next to J to bring monies. Chapter 15: four precepts of idol meat; blood; strangled; incest. Antioch bust up, then Paul works alone deeper into Asia Minor.

Wives?:

Contemporary texts: “The one who is unmarried mutilates God's image. Heaven places a curse on the man who has no wife. If a man is not married by his twentieth year then God says, may his spirit vanish.”

Jesus replies that a man may make himself a eunuch for the KgdM of God
Matt 19

Letter to Thessalonica

Oldest Christian doc. 50AD. Luke tells story of Macedonian 'help us'.

Had broken with Barnabas, using Silas (Silvanus) & Timothy. Went from Philippi on Via Egnatia to port of Thessalonica (had been trouble). Trouble here too so he leaves for Beroea to Corinth, S & T joining him later. Then writes letter to his newly formed group in Thessalonica.

Greeting and extended Thanksgiving:

Thessalonica was a market place of religions at a price: 'we never charged'
Patient with difficulties: Jm murdered prophet. He wants to visit them.

Body of letter:

Sexual purity

Love for one another even to Gentiles Christians

Don't worry about those who have died, even though it will happen soon.

Arrives Corinth:

Largest city in Greece, all newly built under Julius 44. Two parts of Empire met here. Trade, banking, metal and pottery. Isthmian Games – very Roman. Artemis Temple with thousand prostitutes. After Athens where no converts to speak of.

Work and Accommodation with Aquila and Prisca (Priscilla) who were Jews who had escaped Rome after Chrestus uprising 49 put down by Claudius. Christians' names of all social strata.

Letter from Ephesus to Galatians:

Had been East meets West before Corinth was built. Heraclitus born here. Artemis fertility goddess.

Writes Galatians from here or on his way from here. Celts. Bithynia on Black Sea to Russia but does not mention any city in particular. Driven there through sickness? On second return learnt of Judaisers. Greeting is not followed by thanksgiving but astonishment. 14 yrs before Jerusalem Council, Antioch problems. Tortuous arguments will be understood by Judaisers. Break one of 613 commands cursed. Dies on tree to save all cursed. Law to keep us in check until messiah would fulfil Abrahamic promise. Abba. Jews are Hagar's slave children. People of flesh.

Letter to the Philippians

Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander. Luke speaks of success, Lydia and other converts. Paul speaks of suffering. Thanks them for helping financially while now in prison – why is he there and locals won't help him? Epaphroditus brings gifts but gets ill. This is a receipt letter.

Philippians' account is in credit! Sacrifice. Life is relationships so beyond death relationship with Christ, so Death is gain. 'death on a cross'. There were some Judaisers, and advice to friends. So much garbage.

I Corinthians:

Church in First flush of youth – enthusiasm. Spirit essential feature. Proud they had it! Put possessions at service and ate what they liked and tongues. Exciting Apollos moved from Alexandria, they saw Peter as Rock.

Chloe reports factions. Also society dinner/agapes.

Letter talks of ecclesia, holiness, living together in Christ, crucifixion as radically different from philosophy, community of saints, will judge soon so don't use law courts, prostitutes are against Christ's body, celibacy and divorce, ecstasy or building the church, love above all. Resurrection of body,

2 Corinthians:

collection of several letters.

Chapters 1-9: Violent conflict with Corinthian Christians issues in a letter written in tears which we do not have: missionaries (not Judaisers?) accused Paul of being wet, did they have knowledge, enthusiasm? Gave letter to Titus and escapes Ephesus for Troas, but remains unsettled. Titus returns and says the Corinthians deeply moved by letter. So he writes again and send Titus and others to take it. This is chapters 1-9.

Thanks, comfort, deal gently with Mr Nasty, How to recognise a true apostle. Victory procession incense, being 'in Christ' as Elijah says, 'YHWH in whose presence I stand!' They had been changed by his teaching with a new heart, new covenant, of the Spirit Body of Christ.

Do not be partnered wrongly is strong insertion of different style (Essene Darkness and Light Christian?) Maccabees saw suffering as sign of election and endgame before restoration.

Chapters 8-11: commends the collection.

Romans:

Secretary Tertius during last days in Corinth. If he is to go to Spain he will need support of Roman church (he has not founded it!) as he had from

Antioch. He therefore explains his thesis and ministry here. Address section therefore top heavy. God intends to give his righteousness to all nations.

Day of Atonement: not a salvation history but Abraham and Jesus with a section of waiting in between. Abraham had faith before circumcision and on that basis received promise. Also Adam.

Chapter Eight:

Flesh and spirit contrast since flesh-life is ended in death. Perfected when whole self filled with presence of God as was Jesus. Sighs and groans to Spirit Nothing can separate us.

Chapters 9-11: Promise that whole Israel comes to glory after it is the light to the nations so Paul is opening gate to Israel by proselytising Gentiles.

Ends with praise of mystery of God and bits of advice. Obey state.