

90// HERE BEGINNETH THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE AND DOCTOR

THE PERSECUTIONS OF ST. PAUL

St. Paul the apostle, after his conversion, suffered many persecutions, the which the blessed Hilary rehearseth shortly, saying:

Paul the apostle was beaten with rods at Philippi, he was put in prison, and by the feet fast set in stocks, he was stoned in Lystra. In Iconia and Thessalonica he was pursued of [by] wicked people. In Ephesus he was delivered to wild beasts. In Damascus he was let by a lepe down of [freed by leaping down from] the wall. In Jerusalem he was arrested, beaten, bound, and awaited to be slain. In Cæsarea he was enclosed and defamed. Sailing towards Italy he was in peril of death, and from thence he came to Rome and was judged under Nero, and there finished his life.

This saith St. Hilary.

HIS MIRACLES

Paul took upon him to be apostle among the Gentiles. In Lystra was a contract [paralytic] which he lost and redressed [made to stand up]. A young man that fell out of a window and died, he raised to life, and did many other miracles.

At the Isle of Melita a serpent bit his hand, and hurted him not, and he threw it into the fire. It is said that all they that came of the progeny and lineage of that man that then harboured Paul may in no wise be hurt of no venomous beasts, wherefore when their children be born they put serpents in their cradles for to prove if they be verily their children or no.

Paul is as much to say as the mouth of a trumpet or of sense; or marvellously chosen, or a miracle of election. Or Paul is said of pause, that is rest, in Hebrew, or it is said little, in Latin. And by this be understood six prerogatives which Paul had before the other apostles. The first is a fruitful tongue, for he replenished [spread?] the gospel from Jerusalem to Jericho, and therefore he is said the mouth of a trump. The second was virtuous charity, for he said: "Who is sick, and I am not sick?" and therefore he is said mouth of sense or understanding. The third is conversion much marvellous, and therefore he is said marvellously chosen, for he was marvellously chosen and converted. The fourth is the hand working, and therefore he is said marvellous of election, for it was a great miracle when he chose to get his dispenses with the labour of his hands, and to preach without ceasing. The fifth was contemplation delicious, for rest of thought is required in contemplation, for he was ravished unto the third heaven. The sixth was humility virtuous, and therefore he is said little. Of this name, Paul, be three opinions. Origen saith that he hath always two names, and was called Paulus and Saulus. And Rabanus saith that he was called Saulus, and that was after Saul the proud king, but after his conversion he was called Paul, as it were little and humble of spirit, and therefore he said: I am least of all the apostles. And Bede said that he was called Paul of Sergius Paulus proconsul, whom he converted to the faith. And Linus the pope writeth his passion.

In some place it is said that Paul is less than Peter, otherwhile more, and sometimes equal and like, for in dignity he is less, in preaching greater, and in holiness they be equal.

Haymo saith that Paul, from the cock-crow unto the hour of five, he laboured with his hands, and after emended to preaching, and that endured almost to night, the residue of the time was for to eat, sleep, and for prayer, which was necessary.

ST. PAUL IN ROME

He came to Rome when Nero was not fully confirmed in the empire, and Nero hearing that there was disputing and questions made between Paul and the Jews, he, recking not much thereof, suffered Paul to go where he would, and preach freely. Jeronimus [St. Jerome] in his book, *De viris illustribus*, {says} that the thirty-sixth year after the Passion of our Lord, second year of Nero, St. Paul was sent to Rome bound, and two years he was in free keeping and disputed against the Jews, and after, he was let go by Nero, and preached the gospel in the west parts. And the fourteenth year of Nero, the same year and day that Peter was crucified, his head was smitten off. *Hæc Jeronimus*. [St. Jerome said these things.]

The wisdom and religion of him was published over all, and was reputed marvellous. He get to him many friends in the emperor's house and converted them to the faith of Christ, and some of his writings were recited and read tofore the emperor, and of all men marvellously commended, and the senate understood of him by things of authority.

NERO'S BUTLER WITNESSES TO CHRIST

It happed on a day that Paul preached about evensong time in a loft, a young man named Patroclus, butler of Nero, and with him well-beloved, went for to see the multitude of people, and the better for to hear Paul he went up into a window, and there sleeping, fell down and died, which when Nero heard he was much sorry and heavy therefor, and anon ordered another in his office.

Paul, knowing hereof by the Holy Ghost, said to them standing by him that they should go and bring to him Patroclus, which was dead, and that the emperor loved so much. Whom when he was brought, he raised to life and sent him with his fellows to the emperor, whom the emperor knew for dead, and, whiles he made lamentation for him, it was told to the emperor that Patroclus was come to the gate. And when he heard that Patroclus was alive he much marvelled, and commanded that he should come in.

To whom Nero said: Patroclus, livest thou?

And he said: Yea, emperor, I live.

And Nero said: Who hath made thee to live again ?

And he said: The Lord Jesu Christ, king of all worlds.

Then Nero being wroth [angry] said: Then shall he reign ever and resolve [dissolve] all the royaumes [kingdoms] of the world?

To whom Patroclus said: Yea, certainly, emperor.

Then Nero gave to him a buffet, saying: Therefore thou servest him.

And he said: Yea, verily, I serve him that hath raised me from death to life.

Then five of the ministers of Nero, that assisted him, said to him: O emperor, why smitest thou this young man, truly and wisely answering to thee? Trust verily we serve that same King Almighty.

And when Nero heard that he put them in prison, for strongly to torment them, whom he much had loved.

PAUL'S DISCOURSES WITH NERO

Then he made to enquire and to take all Christian men, and without examination made them to be tormented with overgreat torments. Then was Paul among others bound and brought tofore Nero, to whom Nero said: O thou man, servant of the great King, bound tofore me, why withdrawest thou my knights and drawest them to thee?

To whom Paul said: Not only from thy corner I have gathered knights, but also I gather from the universal world to my Lord, to whom our king giveth such gifts that never shall fail, and granteth that they shall be excluded from all indigence and need; and if thou wilt be to him subject, thou shalt be safe, for he is of so great power that he shall come and judge all the world, and destroy the figure [form] thereof by fire.

And when Nero heard that he should destroy the figure of the world by fire, he commanded that all the Christian men should be burnt by fire, and Paul to be beheaded, as he that is guilty against his majesty. And so great a multitude of Christian people were slain then that the people of Rome brake up his palace and cried and moved sedition against him, saying: Cæsar, amend thy manners and attemper thy commandments, for these be our people that thou destroyest, and defend the empire of Rome.

The emperor then dreading the noise of the people, changed his decree and edict that no man should touch ne hurt no Christian man till the emperor had otherwise ordained, wherefore Paul was brought again tofore Nero, whom as soon as Nero saw, he cried and said: Take away this wicked man and behead him, and suffer him no longer to live upon the earth.

To whom Paul said: Nero, I shall suffer a little while, but I shall live eternally with my Lord Jesu Christ.

Nero said: Smite off his head, that he may understand me stronger than his king, that when he is overcome we may see whether he may live after.

To whom Paul said: To the end that thou know me to live everlastingly, when my head shall be smitten off, I shall appear to thee living, and then thou mayest know that Christ is God of life and of death.

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. PAUL

And when he had said this he was led to the place of his martyrdom, and as he was led, the three knights that led him said to him: Tell to us, Paul, who is he your king that ye love so much that for his love ye had liefer [rather] die than live, and what reward shall ye have therefor?

Then Paul preached to them of the kingdom of heaven and of the pain of hell, in such wise that he converted them to the faith, and they prayed him to go freely whither he would.

God forbid, brethren, said he, that I should flee, I am not fugitive, but the lawful knight of Christ. I know well that from this transitory life I shall go to everlasting life. As soon as I shall be beheaded, true men shall take away my body; mark ye well the place, and come thither tomorrow, and ye shall find by my sepulchre two men, Luke and Titus, praying. To whom when ye shall tell for what cause I have sent you to them, they shall baptize you and make you heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

And whiles they thus spake together, Nero sent two knights to look if he were slain and beheaded or no, and when thus St. Paul would have converted them, they said: When thou art dead and risest again, then we shall believe, now come forth and receive that thou hast deserved.

And as he was led to the place of his passion in the gate of Hostence, a noble woman named Plautilla, a disciple of Paul, who after another name was called Lemobia, for haply she had two names, met there with Paul, which weeping, commended her to his prayers. To whom Paul said: Farewell, Plautilla, daughter of everlasting health, lend to me thy veil or keverchief [kerchief] with which thou coverest thy head, that I may bind mine eyes therewith, and afterwards I shall restore it to thee again.

And when she had delivered it to him, the butchers scorned her, saying: Why hast thou delivered to this enchanter so precious a cloth for to lose it?

Then, when he came to the place of his passion, he turned him toward the east, holding his hands up to heaven right long, with tears praying in his own language and thanking our Lord, and after that bade his brethren farewell, and bound his eyes himself with the keverchief of Plautilla, and kneeling down on both knees, stretched forth his neck, and so was beheaded. And as soon as the head was from the body, it said, "Jesus Christus!" which had been to "Jesus" or "Christus," or both, fifty times. From his wound sprang out milk into the clothes of the knight, and afterward flowed out blood. In the air was a great shining light, and from the body came a much sweet odour.

Dionysius, in an epistle to Timothy, saith of the death of Paul thus:

In that hour full of heaviness, my wellbeloved brother, the butcher saying, “Paul, make ready thy neck,” then blessed Paul looked up into heaven, marking his forehead and his breast with the sign of the cross, and then said anon, “My Lord Jesu Christ, into thy hands I commend my spirit, etc.” And then without heaviness and compulsion he stretched forth his neck and received the crown of martyrdom, the butcher so smiting off his head.

The blessed martyr Paul took the keverchief, and unbound his eyes, and gathered up his own blood, and put it therein and delivered to the woman. Then the butcher returned, and Plautilla met him and demanded him, saying: Where hast thou left my master?

The knight answered: He lieth without the town with one of his fellows, and his visage is covered with thy keverchief.

And she answered and said: I have now seen Peter and Paul enter into the city clad with right noble vestments, and also they had right fair crowns upon their heads, more clear and more shining than the sun, and hath brought again my keverchief all bloody which he hath delivered me.

For which thing and work many believed in our Lord and were baptized.

And this is that St. Dionysius saith.

APPARITIONS AND MIRACLES OF ST. PAUL

The Apparition to Nero

And when Nero heard say this thing he doubted him [was afraid], and began to speak of all these things with his philosophers and with his friends. And as they spake together of this matter, Paul came in, and the gates shut, and stood tofore Cæsar and said: Cæsar, here is tofore thee Paul the knight of the king perdurable [eternal], and not vanquished. Now believe then certainly that I am not dead but alive, but thou, caitiff [wretch], thou shalt die of an evil death, because thou hast slain the servants of God.

And when he had said thus he vanished away. And Nero, what for dread and what for anger, he was nigh out of his wit, and wist not what to do. Then by the counsel of his friends he unbound Patroclus and Barnabas and let them go where they would.

The Apparition to Nero’s Knights

And the other knights, Longinus, master of the knights, and Accestus, came on the morn to the sepulchre of Paul, and there they found two men praying, that were Luke and Titus, and between them was Paul. And when Luke and Titus saw them they were abashed [amazed] and began to flee, and anon Paul vanished away, and the knights cried after them and said: We come

not to grieve you, but know ye for truth that we come for to be baptized of you, like as Paul hath said whom we saw now praying with you.

When they heard that they returned and baptized them with great joy.

The Miracle of St. Paul's Head

The head of St. Paul was cast in a valley, and for the multitude of other heads of men that were there slain and thrown there, it could not be known which it was.

It is read in the epistle of St. Dionysius that on a time the valley should be made clean, and the head of St. Paul was cast out with the other heads. And a shepherd that kept sheep took it with his staff, and set it up by the place where his sheep grazed; he saw by three nights continually, and his lord also, a right great light shine upon the said head. Then they went and told it to the bishop and to other good Christian men, which anon said: Truly that is the head of St. Paul.

And then the bishop with a great multitude of Christian men took that head with great reverence, and set it in a tablet of gold, and put it to the body for to join it thereto. Then the patriarch answered: We know well that many holy men be slain and their heads be disperpled [scattered] in that place, yet I doubt [am uncertain] whether this be the head of Paul or no, but let us set this head at the feet of the body, and pray we unto Almighty God that if it be his head that the body may turn and join it to the head.

Which pleased well to them all, and they set the head at the feet of the body of Paul, and then all they prayed, and the body turned him, and in his place joined him to the head, and then all they blessed God, and thus knew verily that that was the head of St. Paul. This saith St. Dionysius.

The Man That Fell in Despair

And St. Gregory telleth that there was a man that fell in despair in the time of Justin the emperor, and made ready a cord to hang himself, and always he cried on St. Paul, saying: St. Paul, help me.

Then came there a black shadow, saying to him: Hie thee, good man, make an end of that thou hast begun.

And he alway made ready the cord, saying: Most blessed Paul, help me. And when all was ready there came another shadow, as it had been of a man that said to him that stirred him: Flee hence, thou most wretched, for Paul the advocate is come.

Then the foul shadow vanished away, and the man coming again to himself, and casting away the cord, took condign penance for his offence and trespass.

THE LAMENT OF ST. DENIS

In the same epistle aforesaid, St. Denys bewailed the death of his master Paul with mild words, saying:

Who shall give tears to mine eyes, and to my brows a fountain of water, that I may weep day and night that the light of the church is extinct. And who is he that shall not weep and wail and clothe him with clothes of mourning and sorrow, and in his mind be greatly abashed? Lo, Peter the fundament [foundation] of the church and glory of saints and holy apostles is gone from us, and hath left us orphans. Paul also, the teacher and comforter of the people, is failed to us, and shall no more be found, which was father of fathers, doctor of doctors, pastor of pastors, profoundness of wisdom, a trump sounding high things, and a preacher of truth.

I say verily, Paul to be most noble of the apostles, and never weary of preaching of the Word of God; he was an earthly angel, an heavenly man, image and similitude of divinity, and hath us all forsaken, needy and unworthy in this despised world, and is gone unto Christ his God, his Lord and friend.

Also my brother Timothy, best beloved of my soul, where is thy master, thy father and lover? From whence shall he greet thee any more? Lo, thou art made an orphan and remainest alone. Now he shall no more write to thee with his own hand, "my dearest son." Woe to me, my brother Timothy! What is happed to us of heaviness, of darkness, and harm! Because we be made orphans, now come not his epistles to thee, in which he wrote, "Paul the little servant of Jesu Christ." Now he shall no more write to the cities saying, "Receive ye my well-beloved son." Shut, my brother, the books of the prophets and clasp them, for we now have none interpreter of the parables ne paradigmes, ne their dictes [maxims].

David the prophet bewailed his son and said: "Woe to me! who shall grant me to die for thee my son?" And I may say, "woe to me, master mine, verily woe to me." Now the concourse [assemblage] of thy disciples coming to Rome and seeking, ceaseth and faileth. Now no man saith, "Let us go and see our doctors, and ask we them how us behoveth to rule the churches to us committed, and shall interpret and expound to us the sayings of our Lord Jesu Christ and of the prophets." Verily, woe to these sons, my brother Timothy, that be deprived of their spiritual father. And also to us that be deprived of our spiritual masters which gathered together understanding and science of the old and new law and put them in their epistles.

Where is now the renewing of Paul and the labour of his holy feet? Where is the mouth speaking, and the tongue counselling, and the spirit well pleasing his God? Who shall not weep and wail? For they that have deserved glory and honour towards God be put to death as malefactors and wicked men. Woe to me that beheld in that hour his blessed body all bewrapped in his innocent blood. Alas,

my father and doctor, thou wert not guilty of such a death! Now whither shall I go for to seek thee, the glory of Christian men and praising of good, true men? Who shall stint thy voice that sounded so high in the church in preaching the Word of God? Lo, thou hast entered in to thy Lord and thy God, whom thou hast desired with all thine affection.

Jerusalem and Rome be evil friends, for they be equal in ill. Jerusalem hath crucified our Lord Jesu Christ, and Rome hath slain his apostles. Jerusalem serveth him that they crucified, and Rome in solemnising, glorifieth them that it hath slain.

And now, my brother Timothy, these be they whom thou lovedst and desiredst with all shine heart, like as Saul and Jonathan that were not departed in life ne in death, and so I am not departed [separated] from my lord and master, but when ill and wicked men depart us. And the separation of one hour shall not be always, for his soul knoweth them that love him though they speak not to him which now be far from him. And at the day of the great resurrection they shall not be departed from him.

Hæc [These things were said by] Dionysius.

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S PRAISE OF ST. PAUL

St. John Chrysostom saith in the book of praising of St. Paul, and commendeth this glorious apostle much, saying:

St. Paul's Sacrifices

What is founder sufficient in commendation of him, sith all the goodness that is in man the soul possesseth it only, and hath it in him, and not only of a man, but also of the angels? And in what manner we shall say to you hereafter, Abel offered sacrifice, and of that he was praised, but we shall show thee the sacrifice of Paul, and it shall appear greater, inasmuch as heaven is higher than the earth.

For Paul sacrificed himself every day, and offered double sacrifice in heart and in body, which he mortified. He offered not sheep ne meat, but he sacrificed himself in double wise, and yet that sufficed him not, but he studied to offer to God, all the world. For he environed [traveled about through] all the world that is under heaven and made angels of men. And moreover men that were like fiends he changed them to angels.

Compared to Abel

Who is he that is found pareil [anything similar] or like to this sacrifice, which Paul with the sword of the Holy Ghost offered up to the altar which is above heaven? Abel was slain by treason of his brother, but Paul was slain of

them whom he desired to withdraw and save from innumerable evils. His deaths were so many that they may not well be numbered. He had as many as he lived days.

Compared to Noah

Noah, as it is read, kept himself; his wife, and his children in the ark, but Paul in a more perilous and older flood, in an ark not made with boards, with pitch and glue, but with epistles made for boards, delivered and saved the universal world from the floods of error and of sin. This ark or ship was not borne to one place, but it was sent through the universal world, ne limed with pitch ne glue, but the boards thereof were anointed with the Holy Ghost. He took them that were worshippers of reasonable beasts, almost more fools than unreasonable beasts, for to be the followers of angels. He overcame that ark in which was received the crow, and sent him out again, and closing a wolf therein whose woodness [madness] he could not change. But this Paul took falcons and kites, and made of them doves, and excluded all woodness and ferocity from them, and brought to them the spirit of meekness.

Compared to Abraham

Some marvel of Abraham that at the commandment of God left his country and kindred, but how may he be compared to Paul, which not only left his country and kindred, but also himself and the world also. He forsook and despised all things and required to have but one thing, and that was the charity and love of Jesu Christ. Ne he desired things present, ne things to come, etc. But Abraham put himself in peril for to save his brother's son, but Paul sustained many perils for to bring the universal world from perils of the devil, and brought others to great surety with his own death. Abraham would have offered his son Isaac to God, but Paul brought neither friend nor neighbour, but offered himself to God a thousand times.

Compared to Isaac

Some marvel of the patience of Isaac, for he suffered the pits that he made to be stopped, but Paul not beholding the pits stopped with stones, ne his own body beaten only, but them of whom he suffered great pains he studied to bring to heaven, and the more this well was stopped, so much the more it flowed out streams in shedding of water of scripture, of meekness and of patience.

Compared to Jacob

Of the patience of Jacob scripture marvelleth, which abode seven years for his spouse, but who hath that soul of an adamant [hard stone] that may follow the patience of Paul ? For he abode not only seven years for Christ his spouse, but all his lifetime. He was not only burnt with the heat of the day, ne suffered only the

frost of the night, but suffering temptations, now with beatings, now stoned with stones, and always among his torments caught the sheep and drew them to the faith from the mouth of the devil.

Compared to Joseph the Patriarch

And also he was made decorat and made fair with the chastity of Joseph. And here I doubt lest some would take it for a leasing [lie] for to praise here Paul, which crucifying himself, not only the beauty of men's bodies, but all such things that were seen to be fair and clear that he beheld, set no more by them than we do by a little ashes or filth, and abode unmovable as a dead man to a dead man.

Compared to Job

All men wonder at Job, for he was a marvellous champion, but Paul was not only troubled by months, but many years enduring in agony, and always appeared clear. He put not away the woodness [madness] of his flesh with a shard or shell, but he ran daily, as the understanding mouth of a lion, and fought against innumerable temptations, which were more tolerable than a stone. Which not of three or four friends, but of all men and of his brethren he suffered opprobrium, and was confused and cursed of them all, and he took everything meekly and patiently. Job was a man of great hospitality, and had care of poor people, and that he did was to sustain the filth of the flesh. But St. Paul laboured to help the sickness of the souls. Job opened his house to every man that came, but the soul of Paul showed him to the universal world. Job had sheep and oxen innumerable, and of them he was liberal to poor men. Paul had no possession save his body, and with that he ministered sufficiently to them that had need, which in a place saith, "Unto my necessities, and to them that were with me, these hands have ministered." And to holy Job were given worms, wounds, and sores, which did to him much pain and sorrow; but an thou wilt consider Paul, thou shalt see betimes hunger, chains, and perils that he suffered of his known men and of strangers. He suffered of all the world, business for the churches, and burning for slanders. Thou mayst see that he was harder than any stone, and his soul overcame with infirmity, iron, and adamant. What Job suffered with his body, that Paul sustained with his mind, which is more grievous than any worm. And oft his eyes flowed of tears, not only on days, but also on nights. He was more tormented than a woman in the birth of her child, wherefore he said: "My little children, whom yet I bring forth."

Compared to Moses

Moses chose to be defaced out of the book of life for the health of the Jews, and offered himself to perish with others; but Paul would not only perish with his kindred, but, that all other should be saved, would be cast down from everlasting joy. And Moses repugned against Pharaoh, and Paul against the devil

every day. He for one people of the Jews, and Paul fought for all the universal world, not by sweat, but by blood.

Compared to St. John the Baptist

St. John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey, but Paul in the middle of the world was as straight in his conversation as St. John was in desert. Not only he was fed with locusts and wild honey, but with much fouler meat [food] he was content. For oft he left his necessary meat for the fervent study that he had to preach the Word of God. Truly there appeared in St. John great constancy in preaching against Herodias; but Paul, not one, ne two, ne three, but he corrected innumerable men set up in high power, and also older tyrants.

Compared to the Angels

It resteth now that we compare Paul to angels, in which we shall preach a great thing, for with all charge, they obey unto God, which David saith, marvelling that they be mighty in virtue, and ever do the commandments of God. And also the prophet saith that he maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers fire burning. And all this we may find in Paul, that like to fire and a spirit he hath run throughout all the world, and with his preaching hath purged it. And yet he hath not sorted heaven, and that is wonderful, for he conversed such as in heaven, and was yet environed with his mortal flesh.

Compared to Us, His Fellow Men

Ah, Lord! How much be we worthy damnation, when we see all good things to be assembled in one man, and we study not to follow the least part of them! Ne he had in this world none other thing, ne none other nature, ne none other soul dissemblable [unlike] to us, ne dwelling in none other world, but in the same earth, and the same region, also under the same laws nourished, and manners; and he surmounteth all men, that now be or have been, by virtue of his courage. Ne this thing is not to be marvelled in him only, that for the abundance of devotion he felt no pain, but he recompensed in him the virtue for his reward. And when he saw that his death approached, he called others to the delight of his joy, saying, "Make ye joy and rejoyce ye with me."

His Embrace of Injuries and Travails

And certainly he hasted [hastened] more to wrongs and injuries which he suffered for his true preaching, and was gladder thereof than he were bidden to a feast of great joy. For he desired more death than bodily life, and he desired more poverty than riches, and travail than rest, for in his rest he chose rather weeping than rest. He used to pray more for his enemies than others do for their friends. And above all other thing he dreaded the wrath of God, and had none other desire,

but only to please God. And he forsook not only all present things, but all things that be for to come.

He refused all prosperities that ever were or ever shall be on earth, and if we shall speak of heavenly things, thou shalt see the love of him in Jesu Christ. And with this love he thought himself blessed. He coveted not to be fellow with angels ne archangels, ne with none order of angels, but he coveted more with the love of God to be least of them that be punished, than without his love to be among sovereign honours, and that was to him most greatest torment, for to depart from his love, for that departing should be to him a hell and pain without end. And on that other side, for to use the charity of Christ was to him life, world, and promission [promise] and all goods without number. And so he despised all that we dread, like as we despise a herb putrified and rotten.

He reputed [considered] the tyrants conspiring their fury into the apostles, like as bitings of fleas, and he reputed death, cruelty, and a thousand torments, but as a play or game of children whilst he suffered them for Christ's sake. He thought he was made more fair with binding of chains than he had been crowned with a diadem. For when he was constrained to be in prison, he thought he was in heaven, and he received more gladlier beatings and wounds, than others victories. He loved no less sorrows than meeds [financial gains], for he reputed those sorrows instead of rewards. And such things that be to us cause of sorrows were unto him great delight, and was ever embraced with great weepings. Wherefore he said: Who is slandered and I burn not? and who can say: I delight in sorrowing?

Many be wounded with the death of their children and take comfort when they may weep enough, and it is most grievance to them when they be restrained from their weeping. In like wise Paul night and day had consolation of his tears and weeping. There could no man weep ne bewail his own defaults as he bewailed other men's defaults, for like as thou weenest [expect] him to be in torment that weepeth the perishing for his sins, the which desired to be excluded from the joy of heaven, to the end that they might be saved, for he felt as much the perishing of other souls as he felt or trowed himself to perish.

To what thing may he then be likened, to what iron, or to what adamant? For he was stronger than any adamant, and more precious than gold or gems. That one matter he overcame with strength, and that other with preciousness. Then we may say that Paul is more precious than all the world and all that is therein, for he flew, as he had wings, through all the world in preaching, and he despised all labours and perils as though he had been without body. And like as he possessed heaven, so he despised all earthly things; and like as iron that is laid in the fire is made all fire, right so Paul, embraced with charity, was made all charity.

Common Father of All the World

And right as it had been a common father of all the world, so he loved all men, and surmounteded all other fathers, bodily and ghostly [spiritually], by curiosity and pity, and desired and hasted him to yield all men to God and to his kingdom, as though he had engendered them. all.

This holy Paul that was so simple, and used the craft to make baskets, came to so great virtue, that in the space of thirty years he converted to the Christian faith the Persians and Parthians, them of Media, the Indians, the Scythians, the Ethiopians, and the Saromates and the Saracens, and moreover all manner men. And like as fire put in straw or in tow wasteth [destroys] it, right so wasted Paul all the works of the fiend. And when he was led through the great sea, he joyed him as greatly as though he had been led to see an empire. And when he was entered into Rome, it sufficed him not to abide there, but he went into Spain, and was never idle ne in rest, but was always more burning than fire in the love to preach the Word of God, ne dreaded no perils, ne had no shame of despites, but was ever ready unto battle, and anon showed himself peaceable and amiable. And when his disciples saw him bound in chains, for all that he ceased not to preach whilst he was in prison. Wherefore some of the brethren considering his teaching, took the more strength to them, and were more constant against the enemies of Christ's faith.

And all this, and much more saith St. John Chrysostom, which were overmuch to write here, but this shall suffice.

Then let us pray unto Almighty God, that by the merits of St. Paul we may have forgiveness of our sins and trespasses in this present life, that after the same we may come to everlasting joy in heaven.

The [iconography of St. Paul](#) is available at the [Christian iconography website](#).

For other saints, see the [index to this Golden Legend website](#).

Scanned by Robert Blackmon. bob_blackmon@mindspring.com.

This text was taken from the [Internet Medieval Source Book](#). The Sourcebook is a collection of public domain and copy-permitted texts related to medieval and Byzantine history.

Permission is granted for electronic copying, distribution in print form for educational purposes and personal use. If you do reduplicate the document, indicate the source. No permission is granted for commercial use.

E-text © Paul Halsall, September 2000
halsall@fordham.edu

Reformatted with paragraphs, rubrics, italics, and explanatory insertions by Richard Stracke, rstracke@aug.edu