

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Scripture* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_scripture-01.php

THE HARBOUR PHOENIX

THAT St. Luke is a keen observer and reliable historian may be taken as a fact largely accepted among New Testament scholars. I have endeavoured to sum up the evidence in my introduction to the Acts of the Apostles in the second volume of the Westminster Version. In particular his account of St. Paul's sea-voyage from Palestine to Rome at the end of the Acts is generally recognized as the vivid and accurate narrative of an eyewitness, and is probably the best single source for our knowledge of ancient navigation.

There is a difficulty, however, about the harbour Phoenix (Acts xxvii, 12), the name of which is almost certainly preserved in Phineka Bay, lying north of the island Gavdo, which is generally admitted to be the ancient Clauda: such is the name in the Greek text of Acts xxvii, 16, though the Latin has Cauda. The translation of the last words of Acts xxvii, 12 is the main difficulty. The Revised Version text reads, "looking north-east and south-east," which is certainly wrong; the margin reads "looking down the south-west wind and down the north-west wind." The Westminster Version reads, "looking to the south and north of west"; I have never felt quite comfortable about this translation, and propose now to emend it. The reader is welcome to do so likewise. Mgr. Knox renders, "which faces in the direction of the south-west and north-west winds," explaining in the note that this means "down along the course of," adding, "so that the harbour would face north-east and south-east, as the modern Loutro does." I presume that he is following Field's suggestion in his *Notes on the Translation of the New Testament* (Cambridge, 1899); Field (ad loc.) follows Milner's view that the harbour must be supposed to *look*, not seaward, but towards the land. But this is not the natural sense, either in Greek or English, and it may be enough against it to refer to the new Liddell and Scott and to the Moulton-Milligan *Vocabulary of the New Testament*, both s.v. *blepo*.

Port Luto (as it is spelt in the Admiralty chart) is divided from Phineka Bay by Cape Muros, and does look north-east and south-east, but this would afford no shelter against the *Grigal* (as the Maltese call it), because it comes to them from Greece), the ENE wind, which seems to have been blowing violently right up to the time of the shipwreck. From Fair Havens the ship would coast along for about six miles to Cape Littinos, where the coast takes a sharp turn to the north. It would then stand out to sea to make Phineka Bay, and the *Grigal* probably struck it soon afterwards, threatening to drive them on to the African quicksands, and blowing almost straight up St. Paul's Bay in Malta. Phineka Bay itself looks south-west, but cannot reasonably be said to look north-west. Is it necessary so to translate the Greek, or for that

matter the Latin? I now think not. In this matter I must acknowledge my debt to that monumental work, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, and in particular to Part I, *The Acts of the Apostles*, edited by Dr. Foakes Jackson and Dr. Kirsopp Lake: Vol. V, *Additional Notes*, edited by Dr. Kirsopp Lake and Dr. H. J. Cadbury: note xxvii, *The Winds*, by the editors of the volume (hence forth quoted as *Winds*). I am also taking account of Vol. V, *English Translation and Commentary*, by Dr. Kirsopp Lake and Dr. Cadbury, with its relevant notes. A further study of this work had led me to what seems a more correct view.

This view, to put it shortly, is that *Choros* (Greek) and *Chorus* (Latin) really means the same direction as the Latin *Africus* and the Greek *Lips* (Acts xxvii, 12: *Winds*, p. 342). About *Lips* (=Africus) there seems to be no reasonable doubt: it means WSW, the direction in which Phineka Bay obviously faces, thus affording shelter from the ENE wind. The difficulty is about *Chorus*. This is really a Latin word, just as much as (*e.g.*) *kenturion* for centurion. It is not found elsewhere in Greek, apart from a passage in Galen, where it is spelt differently (*koros*: *Winds*, p. 343). Pliny's explanation would make the wind about WNW, and justify the translation "looking north of west." "But," says the footnote (*ibid.*) "numerous ancient writings identify *Caurus* or *Corus* with one of the SW rather than with the NW winds, which indeed suits better with *Lips*." These "ancient writings" are not mentioned by name, but can be found in the great *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. It is a great loss to scholarship that this work, planned on a vast scale, has been stopped by war; but fortunately it had advanced enough for the present purpose. Quotations can be found under *Caurus* in the main *Thesaurus*, with some additions in the *Onomasticon*, Vol. II, under *Corus*. The conclusion in the full treatment of the main *Thesaurus* is that usually the name stands for a north-west wind, but that it was also used for a south-west wind, several references to that effect being given, for example to Silius Italicus and Apuleius. There is a good deal of difficulty and confusion about the winds in ancient literature (*cf.* *Winds*, p. 338). And they served the purpose (but inadequately) of our points of the compass.

But why should St. Luke give *both* names in Acts xxvii, 12, if they both implied the same direction? *Chorus*, as has been said, is a Latin word, and the editors (*Winds*, p. 343) write that "the combination of Greek and Latin names in Luke's description . . . suggests the possibility that he was influenced by the mixed speech of sailors, partly Alexandrian and partly Italian." And St. Luke probably wrote the Acts at Rome during St. Paul's imprisonment, which might be another reason for adding the (perhaps) better known Latin name.

If this explanation be accepted, a nice little question arises in respect of translation. There is a somewhat similar problem in Gen. xxxi, 47,

where Laban calls "the heap of witness," by its Aramaic name, and Jacob by its Hebrew name. St. Jerome translates the two titles by different Latin words, but inserts into the text an explanation of his own, "each of them according to the propriety of his language," as the Douay Version has it. But perhaps in Acts xxvii, 12 it would be enough to say "looking towards the south-west" just once.

C. LATTEY, S.J.

Heythrop College, Chipping Norton, Oxon.

THE WILL OF MY FATHER

"The kingdom of heaven will not give entrance to every man who calls me Master, Master; only to the man who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. vii, 21).

THERE is not, in the reach and range of Scripture, a sentiment so stirring as that of the love which Jesus bore His Father. On nothing has the art of the Evangelists better been brought to bear than on the truth that Jesus lived and moved and had His very being in His Father. All the Scriptures bear this out; it is writ large on their every page. While yet the Old Law held its own, king David had made prophecy and song; "In the head of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O Lord" (Heb. x, 7). And so, from the very outset, the human will of Jesus was given over in selfless dedication to His Father's. His own words, from first, when He asked in innocent surprise: "What reason had you to search for me? Could you not tell that I must needs be in the place which belongs to my Father" (Luke ii, 49), to last, when, with the prayer: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke xxiii, 46) on His lips, He yielded up His soul, one and all tenderly bring home to us how Jesus had made His Father's will the whole quest of His heart. Indeed, there has never yet stood forth a man who has so altogether made his own those holiest words of the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with the love of thy whole heart, and thy whole soul, and thy whole strength, and thy whole mind" (Deut. vi, 5).

"My meat," He once made clear to them, "is to do the will of Him that sent me" (John iv, 34). Wherever in the Gospels we have sight of Jesus, or are bound by the spell of His words—in the desert, at the Temple, by the seashore, on the Cross—He is always on the errand of His Father. He is for ever engaged, by deed and word, in scattering broadcast the seed of God. His Father's interests are all in all to Him. "I always do those things that are pleasing to Him" (John viii, 29).