**Research on:**

**Eutychus and Paul**

Acts 20:7, 9-12

“The important contribution of this story (vv.7-12) is its glimpse into the community life of a primitive Christian church. The memorial Supper of the Lord was not yet made a formal sacrament. It was called *breaking bread*. It was the custom to meet on the Lord’s Day, the first of the week. The *agape* (love feast) was accompanied by a discourse, in this case preceding the breaking of bread (v.7) and also following it (v. 11b). Here the entire service was at night, no doubt because the day was a day of business and the Christian brethren met after their day’s work was done” (*Abingdon* 1124).

This event took place in Troas near Troy.

The name Eutychus in Greek is *eutychos* and it means "fortunate” (Thayer 2161).

“At Troas they met up with those who had sailed directly from Corinth. Troas was a major port that took its name from the ruins of ancient Troy further to the north. It was where Paul had first met Luke (Acts 16:8-10); Luke may have come here on medical business of some kind, or perhaps this, rather than Philippi, was his original home. Troas is the place where Paul spoke for so long that a young boy, seated in an upper window, fell asleep and fell to his death but was raised from the dead through Paul’s prayers. The believers then ‘broke bread’ together. Since Luke records that this was also ‘the first day of the week’ (that is, Sunday) this may be our first indication of what believers did in their weekly Sunday worship services” (Walker 142).

7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

“Evidently to celebrate the Lord’s Supper, to ‘break the Eucharist’. It’s possible that the apostles and early Christians celebrated the Lord’s Supper on every Lord’s day.

The fact that Paul was about to leave them on the next day, probably to see them no more, was the principal reason why his discourse was so long continued. No small part of the time might have been passed in hearing and answering questions, though Paul was the chief speaker” (Barnes 497).

(not in this week’s Lesson)

8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.

*“And there were many lights.* Why this circumstance is mentioned is not apparent. It, however, meets one of the slanders of the early enemies of Christianity, that Christians in their assemblies were accustomed to extinguish all the lights, and to commit every kind of abomination. Perhaps the mention of many lights here is designed to intimate that it was a place of public worship, as not only the Jews, but the Gentiles were accustomed to have many lights burning in such places” (Barnes 497).

9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.

The word for “sleep” in Greek is *hypnos* (Thayer 642).

“**Fallen into a deep sleep.** A common Greek phrase for being overcome by sleep. In this verse the word is used twice: in the first instance, denoting the coming on of drowsiness—*falling* asleep; and the second time, denoting his being *completely overpowered* by sleep. The mention of the causes of Eutychus’ drowsiness—the heat and smell arising from the numerous lamps, the length of the discourse, and the lateness of the hour—are characteristic of a physician’s narrative” (Vincent 1.559).

“As Paul talked on and on during the course of the discussion, Eutychus went to sleep and fell to his death. He may simply have been bored by Paul’s long discussion. Luke’s reference to many lamps ‘many torches’ in the upstairs room suggests that lack of oxygen and the hypnotic effect of flickering flames cause Eutychus’s drowsiness—thereby clearing his hero Paul of any blame. But whatever its cause, Eutychus’s fall brought the meeting to a sudden and shocking halt. They dashed down and found him dead” (*EBC* 9.509).

“Eutychus was killed by his fall and was raised from the dead by Paul, but the miracle was told in such a quiet manner that it is not surprising that others made little of it. Paul’s conduct toward the dead boy is slightly reminiscent of Elijah’s and Elisha’s” (*AB* *Acts* 200).

10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.

*“His life is in him*. It has been argued both here and at Mt 9:24 that the death was only apparent; but Luke, who was a medical man, and was present, says expressly that Eutychus was dead. We have here, therefore, a miracle of resurrection” (Dummelow 846).

“Paul also ran down. In an action reminiscent of Elijah and Elisha (I Kings 17:21; II Kings 4:34-35), he ‘threw himself on the young man and put his arms around him.’ Eutychus was restored to life. Then they returned to their third-story room where they had a midnight snack (here the compound ‘broke bread and ate,’ *klasas ton arton kai geusamenos*, signifies an ordinary meal, not the Lord’s Supper) and Paul talked on till dawn” (*EBC* 9.509).

“*Trouble not yourselves*. They would doubtless be thrown into great consternation by such an event. Paul therefore endeavored to compose their minds by the assurance that he would live. He is restored to life. This has all the appearance of having been a miracle. Life was restored to him as Paul spoke” (Barnes 498).

**“Trouble not yourselves**. *Make ye no ado*. They were beginning to utter passionate outcries” (Vincent 1.559).

12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.

“There is no hint that Paul took the incident as a rebuke for long-windedness. Nor were the people troubled by the meeting’s length. They were eager to learn and only had Paul with them a short time. It was an evening of great significance for the church at Troas: Paul had taught them, they had had fellowship in the Lord’s Supper, and they had witnessed a dramatic sign of God’s presence and power. No wonder Luke says that they ‘were greatly comforted’” (*EBC* 9.509).

*“Not a little comforted.* By the fact that he was alive; perhaps also strengthened by the evidence that a miracle had been wrought” (Barnes 498).

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Abbreviation key: