commendation to God: causing great joy  
to them. It shews that the mind of the  
church was with *them*, not with the Judaizers. This was also the case in Phœnicia and Samaria, as is shewn by “*all the  
brethren*.”

**4.**] On their arrival at  
Jerusalem, there seems to have taken place  
an official reception of them and their  
message, *in public*. There they *related*—as a most important element for the determination of the question—*God’s dealings  
with them* (see on ch. xiv. 27), and recounted  
the places where churches of believing  
Gentiles had been founded. This having  
taken place, a *protest* was entered on the  
part of the Pharisee believers—in no way  
doubting the truth of these conversions,  
nor in any way disparaging the ministry of  
Paul and Barnabas,—that it was necessary  
to circumcise *them*, i.e. *those of whom they  
had spoken*, and to command them to keep  
the law of Moses.—It may be objected,  
that this view would not be consistent  
with Paul’s statement, Gal. ii. 2, *I communicated unto them that Gospel which I  
preach among the Gentiles, but privately  
to them which were of reputation*. But I  
cannot see any inconsistency, if the words  
used in both cases be accurately weighed.  
To the *church and apostles and elders*,  
Paul and Barnabas gave a simple *recital* of  
how God had dealt with them among the  
Gentiles: but Paul did not lay before the  
whole assembly the *Gospel which he  
preached among the Gentiles*, viz. the indifference of the Mosaic law to their salvation  
(Gal. i. 7–9), for fear of its being hastily  
disparaged or repudiated, aud so his work  
being hindered: “*lest by any means I  
should run, or had run, in vain*,” Gal. ii. 2.  
But, in private interviews with the chief  
Apostles, James, Peter, and John (Gal.  
ii. 9), he *did unfold the whole freeness  
of this Gospel*, and so effectually, us to  
prepare the way for their full and public  
accordance with him at the council.

**6.**] *The Apostles and elders only* are mentioned as having assembled: in which case  
“*all the multitude*” (ver.12) must mean  
that of the elders, and the decision of  
ver. 22 must have been arrived at *in a  
larger assembl*y. But most probably the  
deliberation of the Apostles and elders  
implied the presence of the brethren also,  
who are intended by “*all the multitude*”—and there was *but one assembly*. The  
objection, *that no one place could have held  
them*, is nugatory: the *official presence  
of all* is assumed continually in such cases,  
where the assembly is *open to all*.

**7.**] A promiscuous debate, not perhaps  
without some angry feeling, ensued on their  
first coming together,—and among the  
*multitude*, as is implied in ver. 12,—man  
disputing with man.

**Peter**] Partly  
on account of the universal deference paid  
to him, but principally because of his  
peculiar fitness to open the apostolic decisions on the subject, from having been  
made the instrument of the *first public and  
approved reception of the Gentiles.*

**ye** (emphatic) **know**] In Peter’s speeches  
in ch. x., this phrase occurs at the beginning of a sentence, ver. 28, and ver. 37:  
and we have traces of the same way of  
expressing the personal pronoun in his  
speeches, ch. ii. 15; iii. 14, 25. Such  
notices are important, as shewing that  
these reports are not only according to the  
*sense* of what was said, but the words  
spoken, *verbatim*.

**a good while ago**]  
literally, “*from ancient days*.” In regard  
to the whole time of the Gospel up to that  
day (about 20 years), the date of the conversion of Cornelius, *at least fifteen years*before this (compare Gal. ii. 1), would very  
properly be so specified. The length of  
time elapsed is placed by Peter *in the*