§ 11.J FOR WHAT READERS, &e. [intRODUCTION.   
   
   
 with Silas and Timothy‘, as we learn in Acts xvii. 1—9. Very little   
 is there said which can throw light on the origin or composition of the   
 Thessalonian church, The main burden of that narrative is the rejec-   
 tion of the Gospel by the Jews there. It is however stated (ver. 4)   
 that some of the Jews believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and   
 of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not   
 a few.   
 8. But some account of the Apostle’s employment and teaching at   
 ‘Thessalonica may be gathered from this narrative, connected with hints   
 dropped in the two Epistles. He came to them, yet suffering from his   
 persecution at Philippi (1 Thess. ii. 2). But they received the word   
 joyfully, amidst trials and persecutions (ib. 6; ii. 13), and notwith-   
 standing the enmity of their own countrymen and of the Jews (ii. 14 ff.).   
 He maintained himself by his labour (ib, ii. 9), although his stay was   
 so short’, in the same spirit of independence which characterized all his   
 apostolic course. He declared to them boldly and clearly the Gospel   
 of God (ii. 2). The great burden of his message to them was the   
 approaching coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus (i. 10; ii. 12, 19;   
 iii, 13; iv. 18—18; v. l—11, 23, 24. Acts xvii. 7: see also § iv. below),   
 and his chief exhortation, that they would walk worthily of this their   
 calling to that kingdom and glory (ii. 18; iv. 1; v. 28).   
 4, He left them, as we know fromr Acts xvii. 5—10, on account of   
 a tumult raised by the unbelieving Jews; and was sent away by night   
 by the brethren to Bercea, together with Silas and Timothy (Acts xvii.   
 10). From that place he wished to have revisited Thessalonica: but   
 was prevented (1 Thess. ii. 18) by the arrival, with hostile purposes, of   
 his enemies the Thessalonian Jews (Acts xvii. 13), in consequence of   
 which the brethren sent him away by sea to Athens.   
 5. Their state after his departure is closely allied with the enquiry as   
 to the object of the Epistle. The Apostle appears to have felt much   
 anxiety about them: and in consequence of his being unable to visit   
 them in person, seems to have determined, during the hasty consulta-   
 tion previous to his departure from Bercea, to be left at Athens,   
 which was the destination fixed for him by the brethren, alone, and   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 4 That this latter was with Paul and Silas, though not expressly mentioned in the   
 Acts, is inferred by comparing Acts xvi. 8, xvii. with 1 Thess. i. 1, 2 Thess. i.   
 1 Thess. iii. 1-6. .   
 \* We are hardly justified in assuming, with Jowett, that it was only three weeks.   
 For “three Sabbaths,” even if they mark the whole stay, may designate four weeks :   
 and we are not compelled to infer a Sabbath may not have passed at the heginning,   
 or the end, or both, on which he did not preach in the synagogne. Indeed the latter   
 hypothesis is very probable, if he was following the same course as afterwards at   
 and Ephesus, and on the Jews proving rebellious and unbelieving, separated himself   
 from them: at which, or something approaching to it, the words “consorted with Paul   
 and Silas” of Acts xvii. 4 may perhaps be taken as pointing.   
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