
THE FAMINE OF ACTS CHAPTER 11

Another Biblical event confirmed in the pages of history regarding Claudius is found in the book of Acts chapter 11 verses 27-28:

“And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.”

“Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that **there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.**”

The fifth century historian Orosius mentions this famine in Syria which occurred in 46 and 47 A.D. A translation of Orosius was later made by King Alfred of England during the middle ages and was quoted in what is known as “The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle”. The Chronicle lists British history from 1 A.D. to 1154 A.D. and contains the following remarks:

“A.D. 46: In this year, Claudius, the second Roman emperor to invade Britain, put much of the island under his control and added the Orkneys to Rome’s kingdom. This took place in the fourth year of his rule. **In this same year, a great famine in Syria took place which Luke mentions in his book, “The Acts of the Apostles.”** Due to his incompetence, the Emperor Claudius Nero almost lost control of the British isle.

A.D. 46: In this year, the Emperor Claudius invaded Britain and conquered much of the island. The island of Orkney was also added to his empire.

A.D. 47: In this year, the evangelist Mark began to write his gospel in Egypt.

A.D. 47: During the fourth year of his rule, **there was a great famine in Syria which Luke mentions in his book “The Acts of the Apostles.”**

Other early historians mentioned this famine which extended beyond Israel. Josephus wrote in

Antiquities 20 chapter 1.3-2.5: "Herod, the brother of Agrippa who had perished, was allowed to govern over Chalcis. He asked **Claudius Caesar** for control over the temple along with the sacred treasury, and the ability to choose the high priests, and he was given all that he had asked for."

"Around this time lived queen Helena of Adiabene, along with her son Izates. They both began to follow the Jewish way, turning away from their past lifestyle . . . **Her arrival was of great help to the masses in Jerusalem; for there was a famine in the land that overtook them, and many people died of starvation.** When it became necessary to obtain food abroad, queen Helena sent some of her attendants, with money, to the city of Alexandria to purchase as much grain as possible. She also sent others to the island of Cyprus to bring back dried figs. This whole process happened very quickly, and as soon as they had returned, they handed the provisions out to those who were in dire need of them. Because of this, she left behind a legacy and was held in great respect by the people and the nation at large. And when her son Izates **became aware of this famine, he sent a large gift to the leaders in Jerusalem.**"

Suetonius also mentions this famine in 'Life of Claudius' chapter 18: "**There was a scarcity of food, which was the result of bad harvests that occurred during a span of several years.**"

Even the Roman historian Tacitus mentions the famine in his Annals, chapter 11:4: "A vision that came to him at night was the reason charges were filed against the man. **In this dream, he claimed to have seen Claudius crowned with a wreath made of wheat, the ears of which were folded downward. And from this vision, he predicted lean harvests to come.**"

THE GREATEST FAMINE THAT EVER OCCURRED

"And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD, "That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;



I will turn your feasts into mourning, And all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on every waist, And baldness on every head; I will make it like mourning for an only son, And its end like a bitter day.

"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD.

They shall wander from sea to sea, And from north to east; They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, But shall not find it. "In that day

the fair virgins And strong young men Shall faint
from thirst.

Amos 8:9-13

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