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This is WHY Joseph of Arimathea sought an urgent audience with Pilate — he had to claim the Messiah’s body before the Jewish authorities could burn it to ashes. In doing so, however, he fueled the anger and hatred of the religious authorities.

Following the retrieval and the resurrection of the Messiah, the anger of the ruling priesthood of the Sanhedrin exploded to the surface. In secret conclave they plotted and planned a campaign of unremitting persecution against the newly formed Church of YEHOVAH God. Maliciously, they determined to exterminate or imprison all those who followed “The Way” — and Joseph was at the top of the list! Soon a great persecution swept through the land.

Saul (who was later to become Paul) raged through Jerusalem and the surrounding countryside, aiding the vengeful Sanhedrin in their pogrom against the followers of the Messiah. He struck quickly and viciously. Members of the Church of YEHOVAH God — whether they were Greek, Roman or Jew — were openly (or in secret) struck down like vermin. No mercy was shown. The records of the time indicate that the prisons of Judea were filled to capacity with the unfortunate victims of the persecution.

The first notable victim Saul seized upon was Stephen. Along with Peter, John and others, Stephen had defied the Saducees by vigorously preaching the Kingdom of YEHOVAH God throughout the city of Jerusalem. Thousands were converted daily, a fact which further infuriated the corrupt Sadducean priesthood. Fate soon caught up with Stephen; and he was stoned to death by the minions of the Sanhedrin as Paul looked on.

George Jowett writes that “so fierce was Saul’s vindictive purge that he wrought havoc within the Church at Jerusalem. The boundaries of Judea could not confine him. Illegally, he trespassed far within Roman territory where he hounded the devotees without censure or interference from the Roman administration. No doubt the Romans felt Saul was doing them a service, and a good job in ridding them of what they considered an undesirable religious pestilence.” (The Drama of the Lost Disciples, p.30).

Throughout this terrible time Joseph of Arimathea remained the fearless, stalwart protector of the disciples of the Messiah — and especially the women. On every possible occasion he placed himself between them and their vengeful enemies — using his power and influence to avert danger to his brethren. Saul’s fury knew no bounds. Try as they may, Joseph’s position as a Roman official prevented Saul and his partners in crime from harming his person, or those whom he personally defended.

Nevertheless, it soon became a losing battle. Within FOUR YEARS after the death of the Messiah (35 A.D.) many of the Christians were scattered out of Jerusalem and Judea.

There can be little doubt that the ships of Joseph's vast mercantile enterprises carried the numerous refugees to safety in other lands. This fearless and indomitable man of YEHOUVAH God spared neither help nor wealth in aiding all the people he could.

The Boat Without Oars!

The time came when the Sanhedrin finally caught up with Joseph and his faithful companions. Frederic Mistral, the French Provençal poet who lived in the nineteenth century (1830-1914), relates what happened in his work called *Mireio* — published in 1859.

According to this, after Saul's persecution Joseph and his companions were thrust into A BOAT WITHOUT OARS OR SAILS by the Jews, who were glad to be finally rid of them. This occurred, according to Mistral, on the coast of Palestine — somewhere near to Mt. Carmel. Thrust into the boat with Joseph were Lazarus, Trophimus, Maximin, Cleon, Eutropius, Sidonius (Restitutus, "the man born blind"), Martial and Saturninus. Included in the boat were also Mary, wife of Cleopas; Salome; Mary Magdalene; Martha and the maid of the two latter, Marcella.

The poem relates that as the boat was drifting out to sea Sarah, the handmaid of Salome and Mary Cleopas, cast herself into the sea to join her mistress, and by the help of Salome was brought into the boat. After beating about the Mediterranean for some time, the boat drifted to THE COAST OF PROVENCE IN GAUL (FRANCE) and, following the RIVER RHONE, ARRIVED AT ARLES, which was eventually converted to Christianity by the preaching of Trophimus.

Mistral drew his material from the Provençal traditions as they live today in the scattered homesteads of the Camargue, and in the minds and hearts of all the people in the adjacent countryside.

Further information can be found in the Ecclesiastical Annals of the sixteenth century Vatican librarian, CARDINAL CAESAR BARONIUS (1538- 1609 A.D.). Baronius, an historian of great integrity who was known for his uncompromising treatment of the truth, discovered a document of great antiquity in the Vatican archives. To his fascination, the manuscript revealed that in THE YEAR 35 A.D. Joseph of Arimathea and a group of companions that included Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, Martha and a number of others, WERE CAST ADRIFT IN A BOAT from the coast of Palestine by PERSECUTING JEWS.

"In that year the party mentioned was exposed to the sea in A VESSEL WITHOUT SAILS OR OARS. The vessel drifted finally TO MARSEILLES and they were saved. From Marseilles JOSEPH AND HIS COMPANY PASSED INTO BRITAIN and after preaching the Gospel there, died." (Ecclesiastical Annals, under section A.D. 35).

On commenting about this information from Cardinal Baronius, Ivor C. Fletcher notes:

No trace of Joseph in Palestine is found after about A.D. 35, no record of any martyrdom and no reference to his movements outside of the areas of Britain and France. The information given by Baronius relating to the enforced voyage to Marseilles of Joseph and his companions seems **THE MOST LIKELY AND LOGICAL ACCOUNT OF HIS MOVEMENTS.** — *The Incredible History of God's True Church*, p.73.

The Cardinal's Annals quote the Acts of Magdalen, which we have already discussed, for the record of the voyage to Marseilles and the spreading of the gospel in the south part of Gaul.

In chapter 37 of the Acts, after listing the names of Joseph's companions in the **OARLESS BOAT**, Rabanus Maurus goes on to describe their dangerous voyage: "Leaving the shores of Asia and favoured by an east wind, they went round about, down the Tyrrhenian Sea, between Europe and Africa, leaving the city of Rome and all the land of Italy to the right. Then happily turning their course to the right, they came near to the city of Marseilles, in the Viennoise province of the Gauls, where the **RIVER RHONE** is received by the sea. There, having called upon God, the great King of all the world, they parted; each company going to the province where the Holy Spirit had directed them, presently preaching everywhere, 'the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.'"

Gladys Taylor, in her book *Our Neglected Heritage*, takes note of the same incident:

Caesar Baronius, the church historian who was also appointed librarian of the Vatican in 1596, wrote in his magnum opus, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, of the finding in the Vatican Library of a most ancient manuscript in which was described the voyage of a company of our Lord's friends, travelling in an **OLD BOAT** which had been abandoned by its master and was **WITHOUT OARS OR SAILS**, who **LANDED AT MARSEILLES**, whence they spread out over **SOUTHERN FRANCE** where many churches record them as their founders. Among this company is **JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA**, who is not mentioned as founder of any of these churches, a fact which suggests that he may have journeyed on and could not have spent much time in southern France. Baronius dates the arrival of this boat to A.D. 35. — *Covenant Books*, London. 1969. P.15.

Further confirmation of the voyage of Joseph and his companions can be found in the *Otia Imperialia*, a book written by Gervais de Tilbury who was Marshall of the Kingdom of Arles (in France) in the year 1212. Dedicating the book to Otho IV, Tilbury writes about the old church of Les Saintes Maries in the Camargue:

There, on the seacoast, one sees the first of Continental churches which was founded in honour of the most blessed mother of our Lord, and consecrated by many of the seventy-two disciples **WHO WERE DRIVEN FROM JUDEA AND EXPOSED TO THE SEA IN AN OARLESS BOAT**: Maximin of Aix, Lazarus of Marseilles, the brother of Martha and Mary, Eutrope of Orange, George of Velay, Saturninus of Toulouse, Martial of Limoges, in the presence of Martha, Mary Magdalene and many others.

"The tradition of Joseph of Arimathea and his companions in the oarless boat was

accepted by the whole LATIN CHURCH for over a thousand years. For proof of this we have only to turn to the BREVIARY (book of prayers, hymns, psalms and readings used by Roman Catholic priests) at ST. MARTHA'S DAY, JULY 29th. There we find a LECTON FOR THE SECOND NOCTURNE (NIGHT) which tells how Mary, Martha and Lazarus, with their servant Marcella, and Maximin, one of the seventy-two disciples, WERE SEIZED BY THE JEWS, PLACED IN A BOAT WITHOUT SAILS OR OARS, AND CARRIED SAFELY TO THE PORT OF MARSEILLES. Moved by this remarkable fact, the people of the neighbouring lands were speedily converted to Christianity; Lazarus became bishop of Marseilles, Maximinus of Aix... and...Martha ...died on the fourth day before the Kalends of August, and was buried with great honour at Tarascon." (Monuments Inedits, By Faillon. Vol. ii, p.114).

There are many other sources, including Greek and Roman authorities that tell the story of Joseph and the oarless boat. Even the Jewish Encyclopedia, under the title "Arles," mentions that the first Jews in Arles arrived by boat without captain, sails or oars.

Another source adds that "without sails and oars, they drifted with the wind and the currents arriving unharmed at CYRENE, in northern Africa. After obtaining sails and oars, the little party of refugees followed the trade route of the Phoenician merchant ships as far west as Marseilles, France." (The Traditions of Glastonbury, p.37).

The South of France

Joseph of Arimathea was no stranger to the city of Marseilles. As the chief port in the continent of Europe for the export of tin and lead, the ships of Joseph were probably a common sight in the harbor. It has been said that Joseph's name was as well known in the area as the names of Carnegie, Schwab and Bethlehem Steel are to us today. It can therefore be assumed that Joseph had many influential friends at Marseilles who would gladly welcome him amongst them.

Marseilles, situated in southern France on the Mediterranean coast, is the capital of the department (province) of Bouches-du-Rhone. Sitting slightly east of the mouth of the Rhone, the city was originally called MASSALIA and was founded circa 600 B.C. by mariners from Phocaea in Asia Minor. There is, however, evidence that Marseilles was settled by the Phoenicians at a much earlier date; and the name of the city is taken from the Phoenician word for "settlement." J. W. Taylor records that "the great port of Massilia, the modern Marseilles, by means of which most of the intercourse between Provence and the rest of the civilized world was carried on, was quite an old city in the early days of Christianity. Founded by the Greeks some six centuries before the birth of our Lord, it had steadily increased in size and in importance as the commerce of the world had widened. Pytheas sailed from Marseilles when he made his first voyage to British waters in 350 B.C., and consequently at this early date, Marseilles must have been a maritime centre of very considerable importance" (The Coming of the Saints, p.111).

A fascinating account of both Marseilles and the surrounding countryside is found in the works of STRABO — Greek geographer and historian of the time of the Messiah (63? B.C. – 24? A.D.). Strabo’s account, therefore, shows the city that Joseph did business in, and later arrived at in the “oarless” boat. Strabo writes:

Marseilles, founded by the Phocaeans, is built in a stony region. Its harbour lies beneath a rock which is shaped like a theatre, and looks toward the south. It is well surrounded with walls, as well as the whole city, which is of considerable size. Within the citadel are placed the “Ephesium” and the temple of the Delphian Apollo. The “Ephesium” is the temple consecrated to Diana of Ephesus. All the colonies sent out from Marseilles hold this goddess in peculiar reverence, preserving both the shape of her image and also every rite observed in the metropolis.

The Massilians live under a well-regulated aristocracy. They have a council, composed of six hundred persons, called Timuchi, who enjoy this dignity of life. Fifteen of these preside over the council and have the management of current affairs; these fifteen are in their turn presided over by three of their number, in whom rests the principal authority; and these again by one.

No one can become a Timuchus who has not children, and who has not been a citizen for three generations. The country abounds in olives and vines, but on account of its ruggedness the wheat is poor; consequently the people trust more to resources of the sea than of the land, and avail themselves fully of their excellent position for commerce. Strabo continues:

The people of Marseilles possess dry-docks and amouries. Formerly they had an abundance of vessels, arms and machines, both for the purpose of navigation and for besieging towns; by means of which they defended themselves against the barbarians, and likewise obtained the alliance of the Romans, to whom they rendered many important services, the Romans in their turn assisted in their aggrandisement. Sextius, who defeated the Salyes, founded not far from Marseilles a city which was named after him and the hot water found there (Aquae Sextiae, now AIX). Here he established a Roman garrison and drove from the sea coast which leads from Marseilles to Italy, the barbarians whom the Massilians were not able to entirely keep back. The land which the barbarians abandoned he presented to the Massilians, and in their city are laid up heaps of booty taken in NAVAL ENGAGEMENTS against those who disputed the sea unjustly. Formerly they enjoyed singular good fortune as well in other matters as also in their amity with the Romans, but since the war of Pompey against Caesar, in which they sided with the vanquished party, their prosperity has in some measure decayed. Nevertheless some traces of their ancient industries may still be seen among the inhabitants, especially the making of engines of war and SHIP-BUILDING. Now that the surrounding barbarians under the dominion of the Romans are daily becoming more civilized, and leave the occupation of war for business of towns and

agriculture, there is no longer the same attention paid to these objects by the people of Marseilles. The aspect of the city at the present day is a proof of this. All who profess to be men of taste turn to THE STUDY OF ELOCUTION AND PHILOSOPHY. The city for some time back has become quite A SCHOOL FOR THE BARBARIANS, and has communicated to the Galatae such A TASTE FOR GREEK LITERATURE that they even draw contracts on the Greek model. Further, AT THE PRESENT DAY IT SO ENTICES THE NOBLEST OF ROMANS THAT THOSE DESIROUS OF STUDYING RESORT THITHER IN PREFERENCE TO ATHENS. These, the Galatae observing, and being at leisure on account of peace, READILY DEVOTE THEMSELVES TO SIMILAR PURSUITS, and that not merely individuals but the public generally; PROFESSORS OF THE ARTS AND SCIENCES, AND LIKEWISE OF MEDICINE being employed not only by private persons but by towns for common instruction.

We see here that Marseilles was not only a great ship-building and trading center, but also a great center of learning, greater evidently than even the city of Athens — long known for its educational system! In fact, Marseilles was one of the FOUR GREATEST CITIES OF CIVILIZATION during Roman times, competing with Ephesus, Athens and Rome as a center of commerce and learning. “Specially connected by race and religion with the older civilization and learning of the East, it yet stood in the very van of Western progress, and drank daily of the strength and vitality of Roman spirit and power which ebbed and flowed as in a ceaseless stream through the very heart of it” (The Coming of the Saints, p.114).

Great roads passed through Marseilles to the west and to the north — the great western road slicing through Narbonne into Spain, and the great northern road leading through Arles, Vienne and Lyons to the north parts of Gaul and across the sea to Britain. Both of these roads were in constant use by civilians and the Roman military. During the reigns of Claudius and Nero, the Romans were engaged in a war with the British, and a continual stream of troops passed along this road to and from Britain. Claudius himself, at the head of his troops, undertook a forced march from Rome through Marseilles and along the great northern road to Britain.

Strabo also describes the city of NARBONNE, another city important to the tin trade and situated west of the River Rhone. Founded by the Romans in 118 B.C. and their first colony beyond the Alps, Narbonne was a leading port up until the 13th century when its harbor silted up.

These descriptions by an almost contemporaneous author give us a graphic picture of the civilization of Marseilles and the Rhone valley during the time of Joseph. This was no barbarous country — some distant backwater of the Empire! It was a rich and prosperous region, full of learning and education that rivaled the great centers of the Roman Empire. This was the area that received Joseph and his refugee companions as their boat put to shore after the tenuous voyage from Palestine.

A great many local traditions have been handed down in THE MARSEILLES AREA regarding the arrival and later activities of Joseph of Arimathea and his little band of refugees. Ivor C. Fletcher notes that “it is a clear historical FACT that SOUTHERN FRANCE was one of the FIRST AREAS IN THE WEST to receive the gospel message.” One local tradition tells of the boat without sails or oars drifting to the coast of Provence and, after following the RIVER RHONE, arriving at the city of ARLES. As we have already seen in the Jewish Encyclopedia, the first JEWISH SETTLERS in the area are said to have “come in a boat which had been deserted by its captain.”

In the Spanish town of CIUDAD RODRIGO, we find another version of the same legend. This simply states that Mary Salome, Mary Cleopas, Mary Magdalene (the sister of Lazarus), Lazarus, Maximin, Chelidonius, Marcella and JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA came to AQUITAINE GAUL and there preached the gospel of the Kingdom of God, “as the histories of the Gauls and the local traditions plainly teach.”

A number of the RHONE VALLEY CHURCHES trace their origins back to LAZARUS and other of Joseph’s companions in the boat. On the south side of the old harbor at Marseilles — near the Fort St. Nicolas — stands the CHURCH OF ST. VICTOR, built in the 13th century and once attached to an abbey founded early in the 4th century. “With its lofty crenellated walls and square towers built of large blocks of uncemented stone, it resembles a fortress” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1943 edition. P.965). The Church of St. Victor was constructed above CRYPTS dating mainly from the 11th century. These crypts embody architecture of both the Carolingian period and THE EARLY CENTURIES OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA. Tradition reveals that LAZARUS INHABITED THE CATACOMBS UNDER ST. VICTOR, and many “momentos” of his stay in

Marseilles can still be seen.

Author J. W. Taylor visited the Church of St. Victor in Marseilles, and relates what he saw: A door on the south side of the nave leads down to a subterranean church, large and lofty, which dates from the fourth century. This was built by the Cassianite monks, and from its position has been untouched and could not well be destroyed through all the centuries since.

And all this vast fourth-century church has been visibly built around A STILL OLDER NATURAL CAVE OR GROTTA known as the ORIGINAL FIRST-CENTURY CHURCH OR REFUGE OF ST. LAZARUS....

The great height of this underground abbey church, its darkness, its stillness, the few scattered but perfect round pillars supporting the roof, and the ‘FIRST-CENTURY CHAPEL’ which is enshrined by it, all combine to produce a picture of early Christian life and architecture, striking and irresistible.

No explanation that I know of has been, OR CAN BE, offered other than that OFFERED BY

TRADITION — that here was the place where LAZARUS OF BETHANY lived and preached and ministered and died, and that therefore within some two hundred or three hundred years afterwards this church was built in honour of HIS MEMORY and to enshrine his body which was then present here.

And all through the ages ever since this faith has been firmly held, and lives as strong today as ever. If we come back from the crypt or subterranean church into the (upper) church of St. Victor, at the west end of the nave, under the organ-loft, we find a life-sized STATUE OF ST. LAZARUS...and underneath the statue two pieces of stone REMOVED FROM THE OLD SEPULCHRE AT BETHANY out of which our Saviour raised him. On the pediment of the statue is this inscription:

‘Divo Lazaro
a Christo suscitato
qui Massiliensium primus
Apostolus
hujus ecclesiae cryptam
ministerio et passione
illustravit.
In memoriam missionis
A.D. MDCCCXCVII
grato animo parochus
fidelesque
S. Victoris dedicant.’

Faillon, in his *Monuments Inedits* (Paris, 1859 & 1865), summarizes Lazarus’ journey to Marseilles and his preaching there:

Tradition states that St. LAZARUS, after the ascension of Jesus Christ, remained for a time in the company of the Apostles, with whom he took charge of the Church which was at Jerusalem. After this he went to the island of Cyprus in order to escape from the persecution which arose (about Stephen).

Having filled there for several years the office of a missionary priest, HE ENTERED INTO A SHIP, AND TRAVERSED THE SEA, BY THE GRACE OF GOD ARRIVED AT MARSEILLES, the most celebrated town of Provence. Here, exercising the functions of his priesthood, he served God, to whom he had entirely consecrated his life, in righteousness and true holiness. He preached the word of Life to those who had not yet received it, and gained many converts to Jesus Christ. — Vol. ii, p.114.

The city of Marseilles controlled irregular patches of coastline and towns all along the Mediterranean coast. They were under the protection of Rome and generally lived in harmony with the Roman government, but had their own government and managed their own affairs as Strabo just described.

Above this area was PROVINCIA or the NARBONNAISE, which extended from immediately above Marseilles to as far as Vienne. This seems to have been a Roman district, under direct control of the Roman government and especially colonized by Rome. In fact, it belonged to Rome long before the rest of Gaul was conquered, and was known as PROVINCIA GALLICA all during this time of conquest and for a long time afterwards. The rest of the continent above it was known as GAUL or GALLIA. Just over the border in Gaul was LUGDUNUM or LYONS — the capital of the Segusii who were at this time also under Roman control or supervision.

Probably here also a measure of self-government was allowed by the Romans. We therefore find, in the south of France in the first and second centuries, THREE NOTABLE DISTRICTS AND GOVERNMENTS: The Massilian in MARSEILLES, the Romans in PROVINCIA GALLICA, and in Lugdunum or “LYONS of the Gauls” a modified local government with Roman occupation and control.

To the middle district — or Provincia Gallica — which was almost as Roman as Rome was, came another companion of Joseph in the boat — TROPHIMUS.

Trophimus settled in the city of ARLES, which was formerly called ARELATE. Some 54 miles northwest of Marseilles, Arles stands on the left bank of the Rhone where the river divides to form its delta. Arles was an important city at the time of Julius Caesar’s invasion, and later became the seat of the prefecture of the Gauls and one of the foremost cities in the western empire. Today the city still contains some of the old Roman buildings — including an arena that holds more than 25,000 people. “St. Trophimus is known there AS THE FIRST BISHOP OF THE CITY” (The Coming of the Saints, p.132).

Some stones, said to be from the first-century meeting-place built by him, are still standing, and the later cathedral (originally dedicated to Stephen) was rededicated to the MEMORY OF TROPHIMUS when his body was removed here in 1152. “The cathedral is still called the cathedral of St. Trophime, and the TOMB OF ST. TROPHIMUS forms a font or baptistry on the left side of the nave as you enter it” (Ibid., p.132). His body was subsequently moved to AUTUN.

Local traditions state that he came from the East, was of Greek nationality and the personal friend of Paul and Peter. One tradition claims that Paul visited him on one of his missionary journeys, and the house (or the site of the house) in which they met is known today as “La maison des Saints.” According to George F. Jowett, “Trophimus was sent to Gaul by Joseph [of Arimathea]...He was consecrated the first bishop of Arles and there performed an outstanding service...His Christianizing endeavours embraced a large area which formed the DISTRICT OF NARBONNE. He became the first Metropolitan of the Narbonne, with Arles as his Bishopric. For centuries it continued to be a prominent stronghold of the Christian faith in Gaul” (The Drama of the Lost Disciples, p.165).

MAXIMIN'S PRESENCE in the south of France is remembered by the little town named after him — ST. MAXIMIN. Thirty to forty miles from Marseilles by train, the village sits in an extensive, cultivated plain full of vineyards and olive gardens. The plain itself is surrounded on almost every side by distant high mountains or hill ranges. In the center of this fruitful plain is what appears to be one vast towering structure — the big white church of St. Maximin. From the distance the adjoining town is hardly visible, and one sees nothing else but the church until entering St Maximin itself, when the church disappears from view.

The village itself is a quiet, semi-Eastern-looking town, with high white houses and a small central "Place" or plaza. The plaza contains a fountain and four sets of trees to form a promenade. On one side of the plaza a lane leads up to the church. Here, and in the surrounding countryside, the MEMORY OF MAXIMIN is the strongest.

With regard to another of Joseph's companions, SIDONIUS or RESTITUTUS (the man or boy born blind), we are told in a PROVENÇAL TRADITION that he accompanied the Bethany family to Provence. But of his life after arriving in southern France, we have two different traditions. One states that he was the same as CHELIDONIUS and worked with Maximin, after whose death he took charge of the Church of God at AIX. The other tradition identifies his history with the little VILLAGE OF ST. RESTITUT and the more important old town of St. Paul Trois Chateaux (the old Roman colony of Augusta Tricastinorum), of which church he is said to have been the leader and founder.

The Church of "St. Restitut" is said to have formerly contained his relics. Notes Augustus J. C. Hare, "its west bay, which has the appearance of a tower, is surmounted by a cupola and contains two storeys. In its lower storey (is) the TOMB OF ST. RESTITUT" (South-Eastern France, London, 1890).

MARTIAL, accompanied by his father and mother (Marcellus and Elizabeth), Zaccheus (the publican of the gospels) and JOSEPH are represented as arriving at LIMOGES in the first century. Martial remained at Limoges (the ancient Lemovices and Augustoritum) and old Aquitaine legends, going back at least as far as the 10th century, say he was the FIRST missionary apostle of Limoges (Fastes Episcop, vol.ii, p.104).

The other Christians who accompanied Joseph in the little boat, also left their imprint in the traditions of southern France. Rabanus states that EUTROPIUS "was the first Bishop of Aquitaine" and preached at ORANGE (Aurasicum) and SAINTES (Sanctonas), whereas SATURNINUS preached at TOULOUSE (Tolosam) where he was killed by a mob who threw him down from the capitol.

On to Avalon!

While there are STRONG TRADITIONS surrounding the companions of Joseph in southern France, the traditions of Joseph himself having resided here are nonexistent! As we have seen, the legends of Provence show that Joseph came to Marseilles and the Rhone Valley as one member of the group that arrived in the disabled boat. However, the evidence seems to indicate that he simply passed through this region to another destination. We find faint traces of him at LIMOGES (in company with Martial) and at ROCAMADOUR, the traditional dwelling-place of Zaccheus, who is said to have journeyed WITH JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA and Martial as far as this town, “and to have stayed here because of its resemblance to his old home in Palestine” (The Coming of the Saints, p.203).

In summary we find:

1/. At Marseilles and Ste. Baume we find cave churches or dwelling-places of the early Christians, held as such since time immemorial and identified with Lazarus and one of the Maries. Joseph of Arimathea is said to have come with them AND PASSED ON (Local tradition and Life of Rabanus).

2/. At Limoges and Rocamadour we find a similar cave-shelter and the traditional coming of Jewish missionaries in the first century, one of whom is Joseph of Arimathea. Zaccheus and Martial remain, while JOSEPH PASSES ON (Tradition).

3/. At Morlaix a disciple of Joseph — Drennalus — is said to have preached in 72 A. D. Again, at Fecamp (along the coast from Morlaix) we find the legend of the washing ashore of the trunk of a fig-tree belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. The name (Ficus Campus) Fecamp is believed to have arisen from this legend. (Tradition and North-Western France, by Augustus Hare. George Allen, 1895).

4/. In Cornwall we find traditions of Joseph arriving in a boat with a young Yeshua. HE PASSES ON (tradition).

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