



**Michael Fronczak
Bible Study Resource Center
564 Schaeffer Dr.
Coldwater, Michigan 49036
www.biblestudyresourcecenter.com**

Copyright © 2009

Theme: Paul goes to Jerusalem and is arrested

Paul has made three missionary journeys. He is returning now, and it is almost like a wonderful victory march as he comes back into the city of Jerusalem. But along the way warnings are coming to him. He knows that trouble awaits him in Jerusalem.

Chapter 20 concluded with the tender meeting he had with the Ephesian elders at Miletus. Now he boards ship for the voyage that will return him to Israel.¹

Luke takes us now on the journey from Miletus on to the city of Tyre, which you read so much about in your papers today, there in southern Lebanon where the Israelis now have occupational troops.

Acts 21:1

And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we came with a straight course unto Coos, and the *day* following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara:

[that after we were gotten from them] “As when we had at last torn ourselves away from them.”

[Rhodes] On Rhodes was built an ancient wonder of the world, a brazen image dedicated to Helios, so tall that ships with sails spread could pass between its legs. It was 106 feet high and so great only a few could reach around its thumb. An earthquake overthrew it in 224 B.C. after standing for 66 years. When the Saracens took the Island in 672 A.D., they sold the brass to a Jew.

[Coos] An island in the Archipelago, or Aegean Sea, one of those called the Sporades. It was famous for the worship of Aesculapius and Juno; and for being the birthplace of Hippocrates, the most eminent of physicians, and Apelles, the most celebrated of painters.²

BBC: They put into Cos overnight; a small island, it was on the usual route to Rhodes and had a large Jewish community. Rhodes was a regular stopping place for ships; it also had a sizable Jewish community. Alexandrian grain ships hugging close to the coast of southern Asia Minor frequently made tedious stops at each port, due to the uncertainty of land breezes; thus after they have put in at the Lycian port of Patara in southern Asia Minor, Paul and his companions find a ship sailing across open water directly for Phoenicia, cutting along the south of Cyprus, still under a slight time constraint (Acts 20:16).³

¹McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:605). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² Adam Clarke's Commentary on the New Testament

³ Bible Background Commentary New Testament

Patara—One of the chief seaport towns of Syria.

When we had departed from them may be rephrased as “after tearing ourselves away from them.” The apostle Paul’s affection for his fellow believers ran deep (20:37). It must have been a difficult life for Paul, constantly leaving friends and family as he traveled about proclaiming the gospel. In **Patara**, a seaport, Paul and his companions could find a larger ship that would sail the four hundred miles directly to Phoenicia, with its ports at Tyre and Sidon. In the summer months, the wind of the Aegean Sea blows from the north, beginning very early in the morning. In the late afternoon the wind dies away. Sunset brings a dead calm, and later a gentle south breeze blows. If a ship was heading down the coast, it would typically anchor at evening and wait for the winds of the morning.⁴

ESV: Paul’s ship was probably a “coasting vessel”—one that traveled close to shore. Each of the places mentioned probably represents a day’s journey and the stopping place for the night. **Cos** and **Rhodes** are both islands, with port cities of the same name. Paul and his companions boarded a sturdier vessel at **Patara** for the 400-mile (644-km) open-sea voyage to Tyre. Patara was the main port city in Lycia; its immense harbor is now filled up with silt.

Acts 21:2

And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.

Phoenicia—A part of Syria.

finding a ship: Paul wasted no time because he wanted to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, which occurs just 50 days after Passover. Paul had celebrated Passover with his friends in Philippi more than three weeks earlier, so he had less than 30 days to reach Jerusalem in time for the festival.⁵

Acts 21:3

Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden.

[discovered Cyprus] They sighted it. Cyprus is the Kittim and Chittim in the Old Testament (Numbers 24:24; Isaiah 23:1,12; Jeremiah 2:10; Ezekiel 27:6; Daniel 11:30).

BBC: The southern shore of Cyprus, by which they passed, was shallow and had no harbors, so the ship did not try to put in there. The Roman province of Syria included not only Antioch to the north but also Phoenicia and Judea to the south; they had saved

⁴ The Nelson Study Bible

⁵ The Nelson Study Bible

considerable time by sailing across the open sea toward Tyre, which would provide safe harbor throughout the year.

Tyre—A city of Phoenicia, one of the most celebrated maritime towns in the world.

There the ship was to unlade her burden—The freight that she had taken in at Ephesus she was to unlade at Tyre; to which place she was bound.

McGee: I love the way this is expressed here. I think the translators of our Authorized Version have captured something that the modern translations just miss. They “discovered Cyprus” on the left hand is a way of saying that as they were sailing towards Tyre, Cyprus loomed up in the distance on their left-hand side. Of course it doesn’t mean that they were the first people to discover Cyprus. They saw the island and were near enough to recognize it, but they did not stop there. They were on their way to Tyre, a great commercial center which had been there since ancient times.⁶

Acts 21:4

And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

Paul’s biggest mistake of his life? If he hadn’t gone to Jerusalem, he would not have been imprisoned for two years!⁷

[he should not go up to Jerusalem] He should not go if he did not want to suffer what the Spirit warned him about many times (Acts 20:22-23). The Spirit gave Paul his own choice in the matter.

Barnes: And finding disciples. Christians. This is the first mention of there being Christians at Tyre; but there is no improbability in supposing that the gospel had been preached there, though it is not expressly recorded by Luke.⁸

Barnes: Who said to Paul. Comp. Acts 21:12. Their deep interest in his welfare, and their apprehension of his danger, was the reason why they admonished him not to go.

BBC: Jewish people and Christians could expect hospitality from their own wherever they went; it was a required part of their culture, honored their host and was an incomparably superior alternative to spending the night in inns, which usually doubled as brothels.

In light of the standard Jewish view that God’s Spirit especially inspired prophecy, prophecy is surely somehow involved in their exhortation. Yet this phrase is not Luke’s usual description of prophecy and probably indicates that they were simply warning him

⁶McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:605). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁷Chuck Missler, Notes on Acts, khouse.org

⁸Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament

not to go *on the basis of* their prophecies about what would happen (Acts 20:23; Acts 21:11).

LAN: ⁹Did Paul disobey the Holy Spirit by going to Jerusalem? No. More likely, the Holy Spirit warned these believers about the suffering that Paul would face in Jerusalem. They drew the conclusion that he should not go there because of that danger. This is supported by Acts 21:10-12 where the local believers, after hearing that Paul would be turned over to the Romans, begged him to turn back.

McGee: This is the verse used by those Bible teachers who feel that Paul made a great mistake when he went up to Jerusalem. It shows that these men spoke to Paul through the Holy Spirit. If I understand this correctly, the Spirit of God is not going to contradict Himself. I believe He is saying the same thing here that He had said before. Paul is not to go up to Jerusalem unless he is prepared to make the required sacrifice. Paul keeps saying that he is willing to make the sacrifice. He is perfectly willing to lay down his life for the Lord Jesus. That is the way I think it should be understood.

For several reasons I do not believe that Paul stepped out of the will of God when he went up to Jerusalem. He had a sentimental reason for going there, but it was a good reason. He was carrying the offering from the gentile Christians to the suffering saints in Jerusalem. He wanted to present this to the church in Jerusalem with his own hands, because it was his hands that at one time had wasted the church in Jerusalem. He had been partly responsible for the state of penury in which the saints in Jerusalem found themselves. Paul did not want to send some representative to Jerusalem; he wanted to go to Jerusalem himself.

Another reason I do not believe that Paul stepped out of the will of God is because of his writings later on. When Paul was in prison in Rome, the church at Philippi sent to him an expression of their sympathy. They loved him and they sympathized with his condition. But Paul wrote to them, “But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel” (Phil. 1:12). Because what happened to Paul did not hinder the spread of the gospel, I do not believe that Paul was out of the will of God.

Furthermore, you remember that when the Lord appeared to Ananias and told him to go to Paul after his conversion, He said to Ananias, “... Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake” (Acts 9:15–16). Up to this point in our study of Acts, Paul has not appeared before kings and rulers, but we know it is in the will of God that he should do so. In the next chapters we will find that he does go before kings. He will testify before King Agrippa. It is probable that he appeared before Nero in Rome. We know for certain that he reached those who were in Caesar’s household because he sent greetings from them in his Epistle to the Philippians (4:22), which was written while he was a prisoner in Rome.

Finally, as I have already mentioned, in 2 Timothy 4:7 Paul writes, “... I have finished my course...” This was written at the end of his life. It seems to me that he would not say that if for a time he had stepped out of the will of God. I must confess that

⁹ Life Application Notes

as I look back over my own ministry, I am confident that I stepped out of the will of God for a brief time. I didn't do it purposely. I did it ignorantly. I did it in a headstrong manner. I think the Lord has a way of making these things up to us. But I do not think that Paul at the end of his life could write that he had finished his course if he had been out of the will of God.

I have spent some time on this because there is controversy over it. I have several very good friends in the ministry who do not agree with my point of view, but we are still friends. I love these brethren in the Lord. I just tease them and say I hope they will see the light someday. As one of them said to me, "When we get in the presence of the Lord, we will all be in agreement."

JNTC: Guided by the Spirit, they told Sha'ul not to go up to Yerushalayim. Is God divided? Does he speak from both sides of his mouth? Can the Holy Spirit tell Sha'ul to go to Yerushalayim (20:22) and also speak through others telling him not to go? First, the two events are not at the same time. God can give an order and then rescind it, as he did in the case of Abraham's sacrificing Isaac (Genesis 22), or make a promise to destroy Nineveh and then change his mind because its inhabitants repent (Jonah 4). But here the *Ruach HaKodesh* is giving the believers of Tzor a word of knowledge (1C 12:8–10&N) that in Yerushalayim Sha'ul will meet with trouble. This word, already sensed by Sha'ul (20:23), is confirmed again shortly afterwards (vv. 10–14&N). But it is their own inference, not the Holy Spirit's command, that Sha'ul should therefore not go on. Their urging seems reasonable, and it appeals to sentiment. But it is not the Lord's will for Sha'ul, whom he told at the beginning that his ministry would involve suffering (9:16).¹⁰

In this verse, a warning was being given by the Holy **Spirit** of the danger that was waiting for Paul in Jerusalem. It is doubtful that the warning meant that Paul was actually not supposed to go. The warning did cause the disciples, who loved Paul and did not want to see him hurt, to discourage Paul from continuing his journey. But Paul had already demonstrated sensitivity to the leading of the Holy Spirit (16:6). He had already said that he was "bound in the spirit" to go to Jerusalem (20:22). Later Jesus Himself encouraged Paul concerning his decision to go (23:11).¹¹

The Greek would indicate that they looked for them, they searched for them and found them.

Acts 21:5

And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.

Prayer is appropriate anywhere.

¹⁰Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 21:4). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

¹¹ The Nelson Study Bible

When we had accomplished those days—That is, the seven days mentioned in the preceding verse.

Clarke: And they all brought us on our way, with wives and children—It is not likely that Paul, Silas, Luke, etc., had either wives or children with them; and it is more natural to suppose that the brethren of Tyre, with their wives and children are those that are meant; these, through affection to the apostles, accompanied them from their homes to the ship; and the coming out of the husbands, wives, and children, shows what a general and affectionate interest the preaching and private conversation of these holy men had excited.

Barnes: On the shore. Any place may be proper for prayer. John 4:21, also John 4:22-24. God is everywhere, and can as easily hear the prayer of the humble on the sea-shore as in the most magnificent temple. This is an instance, as well as that in Acts 20:36, where the apostle evidently prayed with the church without a form of prayer. No man can believe that he thus poured forth the desires of his heart at parting, and commended them to God, in a *prescribed form of words*. Besides that, there is not the least evidence that such a form was then used in the Christian church: scenes like this show more clearly than abstract arguments could do, that such a form was not needed, and would not be used. Paul and his fellow Christians, on the sand of the sea-shore, would pour forth the gushing emotions of their souls in language such as their circumstances would suggest, and such as such a scene would demand. And it is presumed to be impossible that any man can read this narrative in a dispassionate manner without believing that they offered an *extempore* prayer.

Acts 21:6

And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.

[they returned home] Men, wives, and children of Acts 21:5.

Taken—leave; Having given each other the kiss of peace, as was the constant custom of the Jews and primitive Christians.

Acts 21:7

And when we had finished *our* course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.

Always met with Christians: Work of Philip? Philip: one of the original seven deacons; evangelized in Samaria; baptized the Ethiopian treasurer.

Or possibly converts from Pentecost, 26 years earlier...

[**finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais**] Paul's voyage ended at Ptolemais.

[**brethren**] Christianity had spread abroad so that there were Christians in many places.

Clarke: We came to Ptolemais—This was a seaport town of Galilee, not far from Mount Carmel, between Tyre and Caesarea, where the river Belus empties itself into the sea. It was at first called Accho, (and this is the reading of the Syriac and Arabic), and belonged to the tribe of Asher, Judges 1:31; it was enlarged and beautified by the first of the Egyptian Ptolemies, from whom it was called Ptolemais. This place terminated St. Paul's voyage; and this is what is expressed in the text: And we came from Tyre to Ptolemais, where our voyage ended. See the Greek text.

Ptolemy II had made Ptolemais, a strong fortress and now a Roman colony (once named Acco), an important harbor.

Ptolemais is the Roman name of the modern city of Acco.

Acts 21:8

And the next *day* we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one of the seven*; and abode with him.

[**Caesarea**] About 60 miles south of Tyre and about this far from Jerusalem.

Barnes: We that were of Paul's company. From this it would appear that they had been attended thus far by some persons who were going only to Ptolemais. This clause, however, is wanting in many MSS., and has been omitted by Bengel, Griesbach, Knapp, and others, as spurious. It is also wanting in the Syriac and the Vulgate.

Barnes: The evangelist. This word properly means one who announces good news. In the New Testament it is applied to a preacher of the gospel, or one who declares the glad tidings of salvation. It occurs only in two other places, Ephesians 4:11, 2 Timothy 4:5. What was the precise rank of those who bore this title in the early Christian church, cannot perhaps be determined. It is evident, however, that it is used to denote the office of preaching the gospel; and as this title is applied to *Philip*, and not to any other of the seven deacons, it would seem probable that he had been entrusted with a special commission to *preach*, and that *preaching* did not pertain to him as a deacon, and does not properly belong to that office. The business of a deacon was to take care of the poor members of the church, Acts 6:1-6. The office of preaching was distinct from this, though, as in this case, it might be conferred on the same individual.

McGee: Paul is traveling down the coastline going from one place to another. I have driven that route by bus. Since there was no bus running in Paul's day, I'm sure that he walked this route. And what a ministry he had! Think of the believers that he met on the way. He had a real ministry and a real opportunity.

As I have been going from church to church, from town to town, from city to city, from place to place, ministering the Word of God, it is a great encouragement to see what God is doing in the lives of folk. When I was a pastor, I had to keep my nose to the grindstone, and I developed an Elijah complex—"I'm the only one left. I'm all by myself. I am the only one standing for you, Lord." Friend, if you could go over the ground I have been over in the past year, it would thrill your heart to know the number of wonderful churches, wonderful Christian works, wonderful Christian homes, wonderful Christian believers that there are in this country and in other countries of the world. It has been a real thrill to my own heart to meet these believers. Undoubtedly this was also the experience of Paul.

Church Leaders, Evangelist—Philip, the evangelist, is best known for his missionary work in Samaria and with the Ethiopian eunuch (8:5-40). An evangelist brings the good news of salvation to the unconverted and calls them to repentance. Pastors can also do the work of evangelists (2 Ti 4:5). Evangelists are included in the leadership team God has given the church (Eph 4:11).¹²

Chuck Smith: Now it is interesting, this is twenty years after Philip fled from Jerusalem because of Paul's intense persecution of the church at the time of the stoning of Stephen, where Paul stood and held the coats consenting or voting for Stephen's death. And then how Paul went out to wreck the church, imprisoning those that called upon the Lord and all, and at Paul's heavy persecution Philip had fled from Jerusalem. Went up to Samaria where a great revival broke out, then headed by the guidance of the Spirit down to Gaza, where the Ethiopian eunuch was converted and then made his way back toward Caesarea preaching in various cities, sharing the truth of Jesus Christ, but finally settled in Caesarea. Now these two men meet twenty years later.

No longer on opposite sides of the fence, but now brought together as brothers in Jesus Christ. And Paul stayed there now at the house of Philip, for Philip had settled now in Caesarea, had a family, four daughters. God's anointing upon them, they had the gift of prophecy. You know, time does go by and people do grow up and mature. There are a lot of people who say, "Where are all the Jesus people?" you know. Well they're here, but they have four kids. You know, time changes things. They are no longer the irresponsible teenagers there in their early twenties as they were, but now they're in their thirties, some of them late thirties. But yet having matured, grown, times change. You know, nothing is static. (laughing as Chuck scratches his head) That was not intended, an itch. But it's true; everything passes. But when we get into heaven all you fellows might be the same because the Bible says there's no parting there.¹³

¹² Disciple's Study Bible

¹³ Chuck Smith, Notes on Acts, Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, CA

Acts 21:9

And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

BBC: Paganism sometimes associated virginity with spiritual power (as with a special Roman order of celibate women called the Vestal Virgins), but the point of “virgins” here is probably that Philip’s daughters are young, under the age of sixteen. The verb tense indicates that they prophesied regularly or habitually. The Jewish tradition about Job’s prophetically endowed daughters (in the Testament of Job) may be later, but it illustrates the high esteem in which such prophetesses would have been held in antiquity.

These are the daughters of Philip, one of “the seven” (v. 8), and it was not surprising that they, living under the guidance of this devout deacon, had the spiritual gift of prophecy. The word “virgins” *parthenoi*, Gk. is the same word used for Mary the mother of Jesus. That they were virgins may indicate (1) they had also the gift of celibacy, or (2) they had taken a vow of special dedication or service, or (3) they simply had not married yet. This is another fulfillment of the prophecy about sons and daughters prophesying (Joel 2:28ff.; Acts 2:17). Paul gave directions about praying and prophesying by women, apparently in public worship, and with uncovered heads. He required the head covering, while not forbidding women the ministry of praying and prophesying (1 Cor 14:34-40; 1 Tim 2:8-15). There is no order of women prophets nor female pastors or elders in the N.T. Both Paul and Luke, however, clearly commended the service which women rendered to Christ under the proper conditions (Luke 8:1-3).¹⁴

Church Leaders, Prophet—The gift of prophecy can be bestowed as God wills upon any Christian (2:17; 19:6; 1 Co 11:5). The community does not install anyone into this office. It simply recognizes that someone has the prophetic gift. Both men and women may prophesy (1 Co 11:4-5). The church is to listen to such proclamation of God’s will in an orderly fashion and weigh its meaning (1 Co 14:29-33). The message of a prophet may be quite specific, as in the case of Agabus (Ac 21:10-11).¹⁵

Dake: [did prophesy] Eight reasons for women preachers:

1. In the Gospels we read of several women messengers who proclaimed "good news" (Matthew 28:1-10; Luke 24:9-11; John 4:28-30; John 20:16-18).
2. In Acts 2:14-21; Joel 2:28-31 God predicted and promised that He Himself would pour out His Spirit upon women and they would prophesy. To prophesy means to "speak to men to edification, exhortation, and comfort" (1 Cor. 14:3). "He that prophesieth edifieth the church" (1 Cor. 14:4). Prophesying is for the church and general public (1 Cor. 12:1-31; 1 Cor. 14:1-6,12,24-26,29-33).
3. In Acts 21:8-9 it is clear that Philip's four daughters were prophetesses, that is, they were evangelists like their father. This is in perfect accord with Joel 2:28-29 which was fulfilled in the early church (Acts 2:16), and with Acts 2:17-18 which will be fulfilled in the last days.

¹⁴ Believer’s Study Bible

¹⁵ Disciple’s Study Bible

4. In Romans 16 we have record of a number of women servants of the Lord in various churches. Phebe (Romans 16:1-2), Priscilla (Romans 16:3-5), Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, Persis, and Julia (Romans 16:6-15) are mentioned as laborers in the Lord.
5. In Phil. 4:2 Euodias and Syntyche are mentioned as being leaders of the church at Philippi.
6. Corinthian women prophesied and prayed in church (1 Cor. 11:4-5), so the scripture in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 that is used to condemn women preachers does not refer to preaching but to disturbance in church services—asking or talking out to their husbands in church, as stated in 1 Cor. 14:35. Even so with 1 Tim. 2:11-15, Paul is not condemning women preachers as long as they keep their place and do not "usurp authority over the man." Both men and women at Corinth were permitted to pray and prophesy, but were regulated by fixed laws in doing so (1 Cor. 14:24-32).
7. In 1 Cor. 12 Paul compares the church to a human body and mentions nine gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of prophecy, for all the members of the body of Christ, men and women.
8. Women were used of God in Old Testament days as prophetesses (Exodus 15:20; Judges 4:4; 2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron. 34:22; Neh. 6:14; Isaiah 8:3; Luke 1:39-56; Luke 2:36). The law made provision for women to make sacrifices, attend feasts, and make vows (Deut. 12:11-18; Leviticus 27).

God has used a rod (Exodus 4:2,17); ass (Numbers 22:28); ram's horn (Josh 6:5); ox goad, nail, barley cake, pitchers, jawbone, millstone (Judges 3:31; Judges 4:21; Judges 7:13,20; Judges 9:53; Judges 15:15-19); mantle (2 Kings 2:8); ditches (2 Kings 3:16); empty vessels (2 Kings 4:3); cruise of oil, ravens (1 Kings 17:4,16); worm, wind, fish, goad (Jonah 1:4,17; Jonah 4:6-7); cock (Mark 14:72); and many other weak things to confound the mighty (1 Cor. 1:18-21). Is it not possible then that he can use a woman?¹⁶

Clarke: Four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy—Probably these were no more than teachers in the Church: for we have already seen that this is a frequent meaning of the word prophesy; and this is undoubtedly one thing intended by the prophecy of Joel, quoted Acts 2:17, 18, of this book. If Philip's daughters might be prophetesses, why not teachers?

LAN: Obviously the gift of prophecy was given to both men and women. Women actively participated in God's work (Acts 2:17; Phil. 4:3). Other women who prophesied include Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), Noadiah (Neh. 6:14), Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3), and Anna (Luke 2:36-38).

four virgin daughters: Here we see a fulfillment of what Peter said in chapter 2 about how young men and women both would be gifted by the Spirit of God to prophesy and proclaim the truth of God.

¹⁶ Dake Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

Acts 21:10

And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

[**came down from Judaea**] About 2,000 feet lower than hills of Judea.

[**Agabus**] Mentioned twice (Acts 11:28; Acts 21:10).

McGee: The Holy Spirit is revealing to Paul what will happen to him when he goes up to Jerusalem. It is as though He is saying, “Paul, this is what you are going to face. Are you willing to do it?” God doesn’t want Paul to feel that He let him stumble unwittingly into a trap. Paul knows what awaits him, and he still is perfectly willing to go. Actually, this prophet is not telling him anything new. Back in chapter 20, when he was still in Asia Minor, he already knew that bonds and afflictions waited for him.

Agabus had predicted in 11:27–30 the famine that would fall upon Judea. In response to his prediction, the Gentile believers had collected money for the suffering believers in Jerusalem. Here Agabus predicted Paul’s imprisonment and suffering. The Holy Spirit did not forbid Paul to go to Jerusalem, but warned him of what it would cost him.

A certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea: In the spirit of Old Testament prophets, Agabus “play-acts” his message to Paul - that certain danger awaits him at Jerusalem.

Significantly, the daughters of Philip did not prophesy about Paul’s trip to Jerusalem, though we might have expected them to. The Holy Spirit chooses whom He will for such manifestations of the Spirit.

Acts 21:11

And when he was come unto us, he took Paul’s girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.

Same style of presentation in Jer 13:4; 27:2-3; Isa 20:3-4.

The 11th New Testament prophecy in Acts (Acts 21:11, fulfilled). Next, Acts 22:10. Here again, the Holy Spirit does not forbid Paul to go, but only predicts what would happen if he did go.

Clarke: Took Paul’s girdle, and bound his own hands, etc.—This was no doubt a prophet, in the commonly received sense of the term; and his mode of acting was like that of the ancient prophets, who often accompanied their predictions with significant emblems. Jeremiah was commanded to bury his girdle by the river Euphrates, to mark out the captivity of the Jews. Jeremiah 13:4. For more examples of this figurative or symbolical prophesying, see Jeremiah 27:2, 3; 28:4; Isaiah 20:1-6; Ezekiel 4:1-17; 12:1-28, etc.

BBC: Old Testament prophets often acted out their prophecies in ways similar to Agabus's action here (e.g., Jeremiah 27:2). Some commentators point out that the details were not all fulfilled literally (it was the Gentiles who bound him, although his accusers were Jewish), but one need not study the Old Testament prophets long before it is clear that they were allowed a large measure of poetic license, even though the essential message had to be accurate (e.g., 2 Kings 19:7, 28, 33, 35). The girdle was a long cloth wrapped around the waist several times and used as a pocket.

Clarke: Into the hands of the Gentiles—That is, the Romans, for the Jews had not, properly speaking, the power of life and death. And, as Agabus said he should be delivered into the hands of the Gentiles, he showed thereby that they would attempt to destroy his life. This prediction of Agabus was literally fulfilled: see Acts 21:33.

Holy Spirit, Revelation—The Spirit uses different means to reveal His will to protect His people. Agabus had been given the gift of prophecy earlier (see note on 11:28) and had predicted a famine. Prediction is an infrequent prophetic work in the New Testament. Agabus continued another prophetic tradition, that of acting out a prophetic oracle. Compare Jer 13:1-11. Ordinarily the gift of prophecy to Christians equipped them to proclaim the gospel, but occasionally it included predictions and oracles direct from God. See note on Ac 20:22-23.¹⁷

Acts 21:12

And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.

Clarke: Besought him not to go up to Jerusalem—For they all understood the prophecy to be conditional and contingent; and that it was in Paul's power to turn the scale.

Chuck Smith: "Are you trying to persuade me by begging, fellows? I'm not afraid of being bound. I'm ready to die for the Lord Jesus."

Now was it the will of the Lord for Paul to go to Jerusalem? When he was there at Tyre, the Spirit warned him not to go to Jerusalem. Here the Holy Spirit, you know, Agabus takes Paul's girdle, binds his hands and his feet, and he said, "Thus the man who owns this girdle is to be bound in Jerusalem and turned over to the Gentiles."

I believe that the Lord was just warning Paul what was going to await him and the disciples interpreted the warning as that he wasn't to go. But I believe that Paul was to go to Jerusalem. Their interpretation of the warnings was don't go. But you remember when Paul was first converted, that the Lord told Ananias there in Damascus, "Go to the street Straight, and inquire for Paul and lay hands on him that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And he said, "Lord, you got to be kidding. I know this guy Paul, I've heard of him. He's the one who wrecked the church in Jerusalem, throwing in prison all the Christians. And he's come here and my name is on his list. I'm on his hit

¹⁷ Disciple's Study Bible

list. I'm one of the guys he going to rip. Lord, you can't mean I'm suppose to go and expose myself to this guy and pray for him." And the Lord said, "Behold, he is a chosen vessel unto me and I am going to show him the things that he's going to suffer for My name."

Now it seems that the Lord was faithful with that, and always warned Paul of the sufferings he was going to experience. And with the warnings I think there was always, "Hey, Paul, if you want to duck out, you can." And Paul would say, "Hey, no way, Lord. Let's go for it." "I'm not worried about being imprisoned. I'm not worried about being bound. You can't dissuade me by your tears; I'm ready to die for Jesus. Being thrown in jail doesn't bother me at all. I'm ready to die for Jesus Christ." You just don't stop men like that.

You remember when he was at Corinth, the Lord said, "Preach boldly, no one will be able to lay their hands on you here nor hurt you. Because I have many people here in this city." When he was on the ship and looked like it was going to be a shipwreck, we'll get that in a couple chapters, and Paul stood up and said, "Hey, fellows, be of good cheer, everything's going to be all right. An angel of the Lord stood by me, that though the ship is going to be wrecked, not a life is going to be lost." But the Lord was always showing him the things that were going to transpire, the things he would have to suffer. And I believe the Lord was just faithful showing Paul the things that he was going to suffer for the cause of Jesus Christ. But Paul, "Hey, Lord, whatever, I'm ready to be bound. I'm ready to die." For as I told you before, Paul is one of my real favorites. I love commitment. I love that competitive desire to win. And the guy who's, "Hey, not going to be stopped by pain or a little hurt or whatever. Let's go for it." And I love that kind of man. He's just my kind of guy, and I just really admire him.

Acts 21:13

Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

[What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart?] This is question 56. The next question in Acts 21:22.

[I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus] Said by Paul four times:

1. I am ready to be bound (Acts 21:13)
2. I am ready to preach (Romans 1:15)
3. I am ready to minister (2 Cor. 12:14)
4. I am ready to die (Acts 21:13; 2 Tim. 4:6)

Compare Peter's readiness (Luke 22:33)

Barnes: To weep and to break mine heart? To afflict me, and distract my mind by alarms, and by the expressions of tenderness. His mind was fixed on going to Jerusalem; and he felt that he was prepared for whatever awaited him. Expressions of tenderness among friends are proper. Tears may be inevitable at parting from those whom we love;

but such expressions of tenderness and love ought not to be allowed to interfere with the convictions of duty in their minds. If they have made up their minds that a certain course is proper, and have resolved to pursue it, we ought neither to attempt to divert them from it, nor to distract their minds by our remonstrances or our tears. We should resign them to their convictions of what is demanded of them, with affection and prayer, but with cheerfulness. We should lend them all the aid in our power, and then commend them to the blessing and protection of God. These remarks apply especially to those who are engaged in the missionary enterprise. It is trying to part with a son, a daughter, or a beloved friend, in order that they may go to proclaim the gospel to the benighted and dying heathen. The act of parting-*for life*- and the apprehension of the perils which they may encounter on the ocean, and in heathen lands, may be painful; but if they, like Paul, have looked at it calmly, candidly, and with much prayer-if they have come to the deliberate conclusion that it is the will of God that they should devote their lives to this service-we ought not to weep, and to break their hearts. We should cheerfully and confidently commit them to the protection of the God whom they serve, and remember that they are seeking his glory, and that the parting of Christians, though for life, will be short. Soon, in a better world, they will be united again, to part no more; and the blessedness of that future meeting will be greatly heightened by all the sorrows and self-denials of separation here, and by all the benefits which such a separation may be the means of conveying to a dying world. That mother will meet with joy, in heaven, the son from whom, with many tears, she was sundered, when he entered on a missionary life; and surrounded with many ransomed heathen, heaven will be made more blessed, and all eternity more happy.

LAN: 13-14 Paul knew he would be imprisoned in Jerusalem. Although his friends pleaded with him to not go there, he knew that he had to because God wanted him to. No one enjoys pain, but a faithful disciple wants above all else to please God. Our desire to please God should overshadow our desire to avoid hardship and suffering. When we really want to do God's will, we must accept all that comes with it—even the pain. Then we can say with Paul, "The Lord's will be done."

Discipleship, Kingdom of God—Personal safety and security do not occupy the disciple's mind. Kingdom business does. Paul demonstrated the same kind of commitment Jesus expressed in His Gethsemane prayer. God's will, not human precautions, determined their actions.¹⁸

Acts 21:14

And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

Clarke: The will of the Lord be done—May that which is most for his glory take place! They plainly saw from the prophecy what would take place, if Paul went to Jerusalem; and every one saw that he had power to go, or not to go.

¹⁸ Disciple's Study Bible

Acts 21:15

And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.

60 miles from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

[**carriages**] Baggage, or that which was carried on trips (cp. 1 Samuel 17:22).

Clarke: **Took up our carriages;** We made ourselves ready; packed up our things; got our baggage in order. This is what the text means.

Barnes: **We took up our carriages.** This is a most unhappy translation. The word carriage we apply now exclusively to a vehicle for conveying anything—as a coach, chariot, gig, cannon-carriage, etc. The original word means simply, that they prepared themselves; made themselves ready; put their baggage in order, etc. ἀὐτοὶ ἐτοίμασαν ἑαυτοὺς. They prepared for the journey. The English word *carriage* was formerly used in the sense of that which is carried—baggage, burden, vessels, furniture, etc. Thus it was used in the time that our translation was made; and in this sense it is to be understood in 1 Samuel 17:22, "And David left his *carriage* (baggage) in the hand of the keeper of the carriage," etc. See Acts 21:20, margin. Isaiah 10:28, "At Michmash he hath laid up his carriages," [his baggage, etc.]

The journey from Caesarea to Jerusalem would take two days; they lodge overnight with Mnason (Acts 21:16).

The distance from **Jerusalem** to Caesarea was approximately 62 miles (100 km) by road. Paul probably arrived there in the spring of a.d. 57.

Acts 21:16

There went with us also *certain* of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge.

[**Mnason of Cyprus**] Mentioned only here. Cyprus had a large Jewish community, some of whom had migrated to Jerusalem and been among the first disciples (Acts 4:36). The name "Mnason" was more common among Romans, "Jason" among Jews and Greeks, but Jews occasionally used "Mnason" too (e.g., a later rabbi in Rome).

[**an old disciple**] An original or early convert, not necessarily old in age. He was originally from Cyprus but now lived in Jerusalem. He evidently was in Caesarea and was going home. (Acts 2:8-11).

Acts 21:17

And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

Barnes: Received us gladly. They had been long absent. They had been into distant regions, and had encountered many dangers. It was a matter of joy that they had now returned in safety.

BBC: This gracious reception would necessarily include hospitality for the whole delegation—including offering lodging in Jewish Christian homes to uncircumcised Gentile Christians (although Paul himself might have stayed with his nephew's family—Acts 23:16). This line thus has more significance than would normally strike the modern reader (see comment on *Acts 10:28).

Acts 21:18

And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.

[Presented gifts; a great famine had impoverished local believers...]

[James] James the half brother of Jesus Christ (notes, Acts 15:13-14). James, Jesus' brother, was the leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15:13-21; Galatians 1:19; Galatians 2:9). He was called an apostle even though he wasn't one of the original 12 who followed Jesus.

[elders] Greek: *presbuteros* (GSN-4245), elder. The word "elders" in the Old Testament meant the heads or rulers of the tribes, cities, and nations (see note, [□]Deut. 1:13). In the Gospels and Acts it generally refers to the Sanhedrin (Matthew 15:2; Matthew 16:21; Matthew 21:23; Matthew 26:3; Acts 4:5,8,23). In the early church elders were the ministers and deacons, or preaching elders and business elders of the local churches (Acts 11:30; Acts 14:23; Acts 16:4; Acts 20:17,28; Acts 21:18; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14). All apostles were elders (Acts 11:30; 1 Peter 5:1; 2 John 1:1; 3 John 1), but all elders were not apostles (Acts 15:2,4,6,22,23; Acts 16:4). The elders of Acts 20:17, were the overseers of Acts 20:28. The elders of 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5-10; 1 Peter 5:1-2 were preaching elders or bishops. The business elders were deacons (Acts 6). Bishops and deacons are mentioned in Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-13. See notes, [□]Matthew 20:26-27; note, Acts 20:28. The word *presbuteros* is also used of older men and women (Luke 15:25; John 8:9; Acts 17; Acts 4:22; 1 Tim. 5:2). It is used also of heavenly ranks (Rev. 4:4,10; Rev. 5:6,8,11,14; Rev. 7:11,13; Rev. 11:16; Rev. 14:3; Rev. 19:4). It is found 68 times and is translated "elder" except in John 8:9; Acts 2:17; Acts 4:22.

Clarke: Went in with us unto James—This was James the Less, son of Mary; and cousin to our Lord. He appears to have been bishop of the Church in Jerusalem, and perhaps the only apostle who continued in that city. We have already seen what a very important character he sustained in the council. See Acts 15:13.

Clarke: All the elders were present—It appears that they had been convened about matters of serious and important moment; and some think it was relative to Paul himself, of whose arrival they had heard, and well knew how many of those that believed were disaffected towards him.

ESV: all the elders were present. Apparently leadership of the church at Jerusalem now rested primarily with these “elders.” It seems that James himself was counted as an apostle (see 15:13–21; 1 Cor. 15:7–9; Gal. 1:19; 2:9), but the text does not say whether other apostles still remained in Jerusalem or if they had departed on other missionary activities (see note on Acts 12:17). In light of 1:8, the latter is likely.

Acts 21:19

And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.

[declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry] Paul gives his last missionary report to the church at Jerusalem (cp. Acts 15:4,12).

Clarke: Declared particularly, etc.—He no doubt had heard that they were prejudiced against him; and, by declaring what God had done by him among the Gentiles, showed how groundless this prejudice was: for, were he a bad man, or doing any thing that he should not do, God would not have made him such a singular instrument of so much good.

Paul delivers the collection from the Gentile Christians at this time (Acts 24:17; cf. comment on Acts 20:1-4).

things which God had done: The evidence of how God changed the lives of Gentiles was presented to the Christians in Jerusalem. The strongest evidence was the Gentile believers themselves who had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. At this time, Paul may have also given the money he had been collecting from the Gentile Christians (11:27–30; 1 Cor. 16:1). The love the Gentiles expressed to their suffering Jewish brethren was a mark of their genuine conversion.¹⁹

¹⁹ The Nelson Study Bible

Acts 21:20

And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

Even though the Jews are free from the law if they are Christians, that doesn't mean that they can't observe it, they are no longer under the law (Cf. Galatians).

[glorified] Were glorifying—not a single act, but a continual praising.

[many thousands of Jews there are which believe] Expressing the wide spread of Christianity among the Jews and how slow they were in giving up the law of Moses.

[zealous] Greek: *zelotes* (GSN-2207), enthusiast. Here; Acts 22:3; 1 Cor. 14:12; Galatians 1:14; Titus 2:14. Mixing law and the gospel makes a corrupt form of Christianity. Judaism and Christianity cannot work together for they are opposite. At this time God had not completely abolished all sacrifices and all the law in Israel as a national program. He tolerated the Jews continuing with all their rituals until the destruction of Jerusalem. From that time on it was impossible for them to observe these things. Thus He abolished the Mosaic dispensation by rendering the observance of the law impossible, fulfilling Daniel 9:26; Hosea 3:4-5; Matthew 23:36-39; Luke 19:41-48.

Barnes: How many thousands. The number of converts at this time must have been very great. Twenty-five years before this, three thousand had been converted at one time, Acts 2, and afterwards the number had swelled to some more thousands, Acts 4:4, The assertion, that there were then "many thousands," implies that the work, so signally begun on the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem, had not ceased, and that many more had been converted to the Christian faith.

JNTC: Many tens of thousands. Most English versions render Greek *muriades* as "thousands"; but the word, like its Hebrew equivalent, *r. vavot*, means, literally, "tens of thousands." Although "*muriades*" gives English its word, "myriads," which is not specifically quantitative, there is no reason here to turn a word which *is* specifically quantitative into one which is not, let alone into a different quantity. The matter is important because there is a theory common in non-Messianic Jewish circles that Messianic Jews constituted a negligible proportion of first-century Jewry. This assumed quantitative insignificance is then used to explain the relatively infrequent mention of Yeshua in Jewish sources and their almost complete neglect of Sha'ul.

It is hard to develop a defensible estimate of the number of Messianic Jews in the first century. I occasionally read in Messianic Jewish publications that there were half a million or a million, but I have yet to see anyone take responsibility for these numbers in print by naming primary sources. Nevertheless, there are some benchmarks. The *Encyclopedia Judaica*'s article on "Population" states:

"... a census of the Jewish population taken by Emperor Claudius in 48 C.E. found no less than 6,944,000 Jews within the confines of the empire It stands to reason,

therefore, that shortly before the fall of Jerusalem the world Jewish population exceeded 8,000,000, of whom probably not more than 2,350,000–2,500,000 lived in Palestine.” (13:87)

The article also notes that Jews constituted some 40% of the 500,000–1,000,000 inhabitants of Alexandria, “in which case the Alexandrine [Jewish] community may well have exceeded in size that of Jerusalem in its heyday.” Thus the Alexandrine Jewish community numbered 200,000–400,000, and the Jerusalem community “may well have” been smaller.

What proportion of the Jews of Jerusalem were Messianic? The word “*muriades*” in this verse, if taken literally, necessarily means at least 20,000 Messianic Jews. Twenty thousand, the minimum number of Messianic Jews, is 5% of 400,000, the maximum population of the city. Thus at least 5% of the Jews of Jerusalem were Messianic. If we carry this exercise in mathematical logic one step further and assume that 5% of the world Jewish population was Messianic, we can deduce that there were at least 400,000 Messianic Jews alive in the world before the fall of Jerusalem.

Moreover, archeological data yield much lower figures for city populations. Magen Broshi, curator of Jerusalem’s Shrine of the Book, which houses the Dead Sea Scrolls, estimates the city’s population at the end of King Herod the Great’s rule (c. 4 B.C.E.) at 40,000, and before the destruction of the Second Temple (c. 66 C.E.) at 80,000; these figures do not include the “suburbs” outside the city walls (“Estimating the Population of Ancient Jerusalem,” pp. 10–15 in *Biblical Archeology Review* 4:2 (1978)). If there were 80,000 Jews and 20,000 Messianic Jews, the Messianics constituted a quarter of the city’s population! But I find this unimaginable—a minority constituting a quarter of the Jewish population of Jerusalem could not have sunk into the oblivion suffered by the early Messianic Jewish community.

Another factor enters, although its consideration implies changing the word “**Judeans**” to “Jews” (see next part of this note, on “Judeans”). The population of both Messianic and non-Messianic Jews in Jerusalem was swollen by pilgrims who, like Sha’ul, had come for *Shavu.ot*, or who, like the Jews in 2:5–11, had stayed over since *Pesach*. Josephus wrote how the population of Jerusalem swelled up for the pilgrim feasts. If Magen Broshi’s estimate should be tripled for *Shavu.ot*, 20,000 is about 8% of 240,000; and applying this to the world figure yields 640,000 Messianic Jews in the world.

But there were **many** *muriades*, which must mean more than the minimum of 20,000. There could have been 30,000, 50,000 or more Messianic Jews in Jerusalem when Sha’ul arrived. In this case the world figure could well approach the million mark.

On the other hand, if it can be shown that *muriades* is not used literally to denote “tens of thousands” but figuratively to mean merely “very many,” then we can conclude next to nothing about the Messianic Jewish population in the first century. However, the burden of proof falls on those wanting to discount the word’s literal meaning, since Luke employs numbers literally when describing the size of the Messianic Community and uses nonnumerical terminology when speaking less precisely about its growth (see 2:41&N). The word “*muriades*” can be satisfactorily rendered “tens of thousands” in all three places where Luke uses it (Lk 12:1, Ac 19:19, here), and likewise at its three other New Testament appearances (MJ 12:22; Yd 14, where I render it “myriads”; and Rv 9:16).

Judeans, or “Jews.” Normally I render Greek *Ioudaioi* “Judeans” when the context is the Land of Israel, but when the context is the Diaspora, I translate it “Jews” (see Yn 1:19). Here both contexts are present, and one can make a case either way. The location is Yerushalayim, obviously in the Land, so I have put “Judeans” in the text. Moreover, the Judeans were the Jews most likely to be **zealots for the Torah**. But the social context of the pilgrim feast brings in the Diaspora, as noted above and at 2:5; see 2:11. Moreover, the textual context includes both “Gentiles” (v. 19) and “*Goyim*” (v. 21), which would argue in favor of rendering “*Ioudaioi*” “Jews” by way of contrast. In my view, a close call.

And they are all zealots for the Torah, or “jealous on behalf of the *Torah*.” God himself is described as “jealous” at Exodus 20:5 and elsewhere. On “*Torah*” as a translation of Greek *nomos* see v. 21. Nowhere in this narrative are these “zealots for the *Torah*” condemned for their devotion or for their adherence to the *Torah*. On the contrary, it was normal for Messianic Jews in Jerusalem to observe the Jewish Law. Not only were they Jews (not ex-Jews), but they behaved Jewishly, which means that they observed the *Torah* and were zealous for it. Their self-identification and their identification by others was as loyal Jews concerned for preserving the Jewish people, as the next verse demonstrates.

And so it is today. Messianic Jews today too regard themselves as loyal Jews. Most have increased their Jewish consciousness as a result of coming to trust in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua; and most are actively concerned for preserving the Jewish people. The model fostered in parts of the non-Messianic Jewish community that when one believes in Yeshua one leaves the Jewish people is false and misleading. There is no ground for it in the New Testament, which time and again demonstrates exactly the opposite. Churchmen who spread the lie that Jewish believers in Yeshua are no longer Jewish do incalculable harm to the Gospel, to the Jewish people and to the Church—not least by lending credibility to non-Messianic Jews who have their own defensive reasons for holding the same view.²⁰

Acts 21:21

And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children, neither to walk after the customs.

[informed] Three main points of misinformation (Dake):

1. Teaching Jews to apostatize (Acts 21:21). There is nothing of this nature in any of Paul's sermons to the Jews. On the contrary he repeatedly emphasized turning back to their God by accepting the very Christ Moses and the prophets said would come (Acts 9:20-22; Acts 13:16-41,46-49; Acts 14:21-22; Acts 15:1-2; Acts 16:4-5; Acts 17:2-3,22-32; Acts 19:8-20). His contention was that the Gentiles were not to be brought under the law and this is what the whole church agreed (Acts 15:1-35).

²⁰Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Ac 21:20). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

2. Teaching Jews not to be circumcised (Acts 21:21). This he did not do. He even had Timothy circumcised to please the Jews (Acts 16:2). It was only the Gentiles that He contended were not required to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses (Acts 15:1-35). He only taught in his epistles, some of which were written before this time, that circumcision did not save the soul and by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified (Romans 3:24-31; Romans 4:1-21; Galatians 3:19-25).
3. Teaching Jews to forsake the customs (Acts 21:21). Greek: ετηος (GSN-1485), rites, customs, habits, manners. Translated "custom" (Luke 1:9; Luke 2:42; Acts 6:14; Acts 16:21; Acts 21:21; Acts 26:3; Acts 28:17); "manner" (John 19:40; Acts 15:1; Acts 25:16; Hebrews 10:25); and "as one is wont" (Luke 22:39). Paul never advocated the Jews should become different in customs. He made it clear that they were mere forms and not destructive, unless one depended upon them for salvation (Romans 3:24; Ephes. 1:7; Ephes. 2:8-9; Col. 1:20; Col. 2:14-17).

[forsake] Greek: apostasia (GSN-646), apostasy. Here; 2 Thes. 2:3. This is far from Paul's aim.

Barnes: And they are informed of thee. Reports respecting the conduct of Paul would be likely to be in circulation among all at Jerusalem. His remarkable conversion; his distinguished zeal; his success among the Gentiles, would make his conduct a subject of special interest. Evil-minded men among the Jews, who came up to Jerusalem from different places where he had been, would be likely to represent him as the decided enemy of the laws of Moses, and these reports would be likely to reach the ears of the Jewish converts. The reports, as they gained ground, would be greatly magnified, until suspicion might be excited among the Christians at Jerusalem, that he was, as he was reputed to be, the settled foe of the Jewish rites and customs.

informed about you: Reports were circulating that Paul had been urging Jews to abandon Mosaic traditions. However, Paul never derided his Jewish heritage nor demanded that Jewish Christians renounce the Law of Moses. He only made it clear to everyone that the law could not function as a means of salvation. There is evidence that Paul was continuing to keep the Law when he stood before Felix in 24:11, 12. The fact that he was coming to Jerusalem to worship was evidence of this. What Paul *did* resist was any attempt to force Gentiles to become Jews. Salvation was through faith alone. Relying on adherence to the Jewish law was repudiation of the gospel message that salvation proceeds from faith in Christ and that alone.²¹

not to circumcise. Circumcision is singled out because it was considered the badge of God's covenant with the Jews. The rumor was false; Paul did not object to Jewish believers voluntarily following OT laws (see 16:3; 1 Cor. 7:18–19).

²¹ The Nelson Study Bible

Acts 21:22

What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.

[**What is it therefore?**] This is question 57. The next question is in Acts 21:37.

BKC: 2-24. James and the elders suggested that Paul **join in the purification rites of four men** who had taken **a vow and pay their expenses**. This was for the purpose of placating Jewish believers. Whether Paul's actions accomplished this is left unstated. That was beside Luke's purpose.

The details of this vow are unknown; it can only be surmised exactly what Paul was to do. The four men evidently had a Nazirite vow. At the conclusion of their vow some costly sacrifices were required of each man (cf. Num. 6:13-17). These men evidently were too poor to pay for them. Paul was asked to underwrite the expense of their sacrifices and thereby display his sympathy with the zealots of **the Law**.

Was Paul wrong in entering into this arrangement, which was a specific part of the Law? For several reasons it may be said he was not: (1) Paul himself had previously taken a Nazirite vow (Acts 18:18). (2) Later he unashamedly referred to this incident before Felix (24:17-18). (3) This action on Paul's part only confirmed one of the principles of his ministry which was to become like a Jew to win the Jews, and to become like one under the Law to win those under it (1 Cor. 9:20). (4) One of Paul's goals for the Jerusalem trip, along with relief of the poor, was the unifying of Jews and Gentiles. (5) Paul was not denying the finished work of Christ by offering animal sacrifices. The epistles Paul had already written by this time (Gal., 1 and 2 Thes., 1 and 2 Cor., Rom.) make it clear that such a denial was incomprehensible. He must have looked on these sacrifices as memorials. After all, this will be the significance of millennial sacrifices (Ezek. 43:18-46:24; Mal. 1:11; 3:3-4). (6) Paul later asserted he did not violate his own conscience (Acts 23:1).²²

Acts 21:23

Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;

[Expensive: loss of trade for a week + offerings: sponsorship deemed praiseworthy.]

[**Do therefore this that we say to thee**] This advice of the apostles and elders of the church was to avoid trouble with the thousands of Jews who came to the feast. It did not violate Paul's conscience or make him hypocritical. It was wise under the circumstances to further the gospel among the Jews.

[**vow**] This was perhaps a Nazirite vow which was at an end so now they could cut their hair and shave (Acts 21:24; Numbers 6:1-8). Nazirite vow (Num 6). 30 days; last 7 in

cf. *confer*, compare

²²Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:416). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

guilt. But the law still teaches us many valuable principles and gives us guidelines for grateful living. Paul was not observing the laws in order to be saved. He was simply keeping the laws as custom to avoid offending those he wished to reach with the gospel (see Romans 3:21-31; Romans 7:4-6; Romans 13:9-10). For more on the law, see Galatians 3:23-29; Galatians 4:21-31, and the chart in Galatians 3:25.

Acts 21:24

Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave *their* heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but *that* thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

[purify thyself with them] This refers to the ceremonies of a Nazarite vow. Paul perhaps could do this, having made a vow in Cenchrea (Acts 18:18).

[at charges with them] Help pay the expenses of the sacrifices and offerings (Numbers 6:13-21).

[shave] Greek: *xurao* (GSN-3587), only here; 1 Cor. 11:5-6.

[walkest orderly] Greek: *stoicheo* (GSN-4748), to walk according to religious observances. Here; Romans 4:12; Galatians 5:25; Galatians 6:16; Phil. 3:16. This advice should be understood to mean no more than to show the Jews that he was not an enemy of Moses and that he still considered the law holy and good. Paul did so, and helped pay the expenses of himself and the four brethren. This he could not have done with a clear conscience if the ceremonies were done to obtain justification through the law.

Paul paid the **expenses** of the four men who had taken a vow, because the men were impoverished by the famine in Judea and did not have enough money to complete their vow by offering a sacrifice in the temple. But there might have been another reason as well. The Jewish historian Josephus tells us that when Herod Agrippa I began his reign over Judea in A.D. 41, he paid for a considerable number of Nazirite vows to show his respect for the Mosaic Law. For the sake of showing his Jewish brethren that he had not forsaken the laws of Moses, Paul did what they asked. Reputation was an issue for the apostle, as it is for all believers (see 1 Tim. 3:7).²³

²³ The Nelson Study Bible

Acts 21:25

As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written *and* concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

[As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing] They still concluded, as in Acts 15, that Gentiles were not under such obligations and rituals.

they should keep themselves: The Christian leaders were not asking Gentiles to live like Jews; neither did they want to compel Jews to live like Gentiles. The spiritual unity of the body of believers is realized in its diversity, not in its conformity. From our diverse backgrounds and cultures we honor the same Lord.

Acts 21:26

Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

Mistake for Paul to undertake this vow? Paul is still a Jew, and accommodating this is a ritualistic, customary thing.

[took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them] Regardless of all criticism of Paul for submitting to this form of worship in the law, one thing is certain that he was willing to go through anything that he might win the Jews (Romans 9:1-3; 1 Cor. 9:20). What Paul went through after this was no judgment of God on him for his vow, because God had warned him before that these things would happen if he went to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22-23; Acts 21:11).

In this visit to Jerusalem, the brethren of the church suggested to Paul a means of disarming the local critics, who believed that Paul had advised the Hebrews abroad not to be concerned about strict observance of the Law of Moses. They suggested that Paul take four men who were about to go into the concluding days of their vow of purification. The concluding phase of the vow of separation had finally developed into a requirement that the ones taking the vow should spend at least the last seven days in the temple. Paul was to pay the temple fee for these four. By keeping rigidly to a popular and well-known ritual of Judaism, Paul would pacify the people who had believed the accusations of his falsifying critics. Paul had once gone the entire gamut of requirements for the consummation of a vow himself (18:18). In this case, Paul may have entered the temple on a different day for each of the four and then once for himself. Paul was not compromising here but was following the “accommodation principle” stated in 1 Cor 9:20. Paul was determined to maintain fellowship with the Hebrew believers and to check the power and contents of the falsehoods about him and his message overseas. The

unfortunate affair which occurred on Paul's final day of appearance at the temple was not related to the offerings which he made for the four who were under the vow. The Jews who finally attacked Paul were not related to the Judaizers.²⁴

ESV: he purified himself. See note on v. 27. Paul voluntarily went along with the suggestion from James and the elders. There is no basis in the text for the suggestion of some that the Jerusalem leaders were reluctant to accept the gift Paul brought, or that participating in this vow was a “condition” of accepting the gift from the Gentile churches, or anything suggesting reluctance or hostility toward Paul. The text says that the Jerusalem church received Paul and his companions “gladly” (v. 17) and “they glorified God” as a result of all that they heard from Paul (v. 20). Paul's willingness to join with the four men under a Nazirite vow is an example of his willingness to become “all things to all people” (1 Cor. 9:22, cf. vv. 19–23) for the sake of advancing the gospel.

Acts 21:27

And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

Introduction to the closing section of Luke's account.

Many visitors in Jerusalem: Feast of Pentecost.

[Jews which were of Asia] These were the main haters of Paul.

Clarke: The Jews which were of Asia—These pursued him with the most deliberate and persevering malice in every place; and it appears that it was through them that the false reports were sent to and circulated through Jerusalem.

Acts 21:28

Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

LAN: 28-29 These Jews knew how effective Paul's work had been in Asia. Their strategy was to discredit Paul so that his work would be weakened. Be alert when you hear accusations against God's workers. Someone may be trying to discredit them or to hinder their work. Keep an open mind and pray for the workers. They will be strengthened by your support.

defiled this holy place: The temple in New Testament times was surrounded by three courts. The innermost court was the Court of Israel where Jewish men could offer their sacrifices. Only consecrated priests actually entered the temple building itself, and only the high priest could enter the inner sanctuary of the Most Holy Place—once a year on

²⁴ Believer's Study Bible

the Day of Atonement (see Heb. 9:7). The second court was the Court of the Women where Jewish families could gather for prayer and worship. The outer court was the Court of the Gentiles, open to all who would worship God. If any Gentile went beyond the barrier into the second court, he or she would be liable to the death penalty. The Roman authorities, out of respect for the Jewish religion, authorized the death sentence for this trespass even for their own Roman citizens.²⁵

ESV: defiled this holy place. The Jews from Asia (v. 27) charged Paul with defiling the temple by taking a Gentile (“Trophimus the Ephesian,” v. 29) beyond the stone barrier that divided the outer courtyard (Court of the Gentiles) from the inner sanctuary, which was off-limits to Gentiles, under penalty of death. But their accusation was a lie. Paul, knowing of the death penalty, would not have brought a Gentile into the forbidden area.

Acts 21:29

(For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

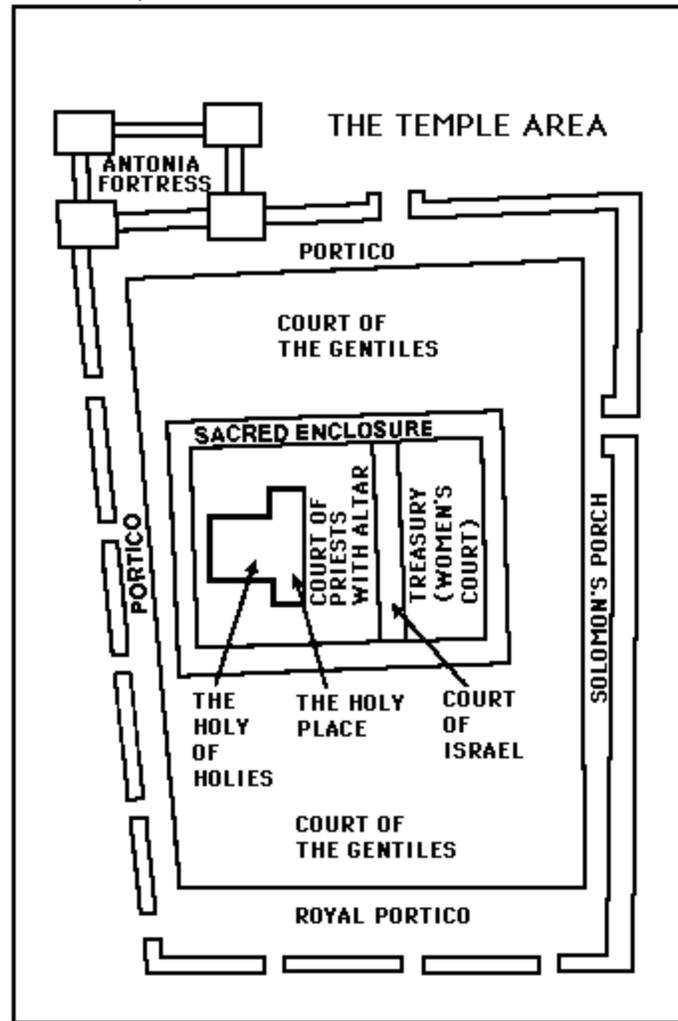
Chuck Smith: Now there was the court of the Gentiles but then there was the sign on the wall and it says, "Any Gentile that goes beyond this sign is responsible for his own death." And the Romans respected the right of them to stone anybody who would go on in to the Jewish court. They would allow them to go ahead and stone them. So they were accusing Paul of profaning the temple by bringing Greeks into the temple, which Paul did not do. But they supposed that he did it because they had seen these Greeks with him in the city of Jerusalem.

Acts 21:30

And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

Clarke: They took Paul—They tumultuously seized on him; and drew him out of the temple, out of the court of the Israelites, where he was worshipping: and—the doors were shut; the doors of the court of the Gentiles, probably to prevent Paul from getting any succor from his friends in the city; for their whole proceedings show that they purposed to murder him: they brought him out of the court of the Israelites, that court being peculiarly holy, that it might not be defiled by his blood; and they shut the court of the Gentiles, that they might have the opportunity unmolested of killing him in that place; for the court of the Gentiles was reckoned to be less holy than that of the Israelites.

²⁵ The Nelson Study Bible



BBC: They drag Paul “out of the temple” into the outer Court of the Gentiles. The *sagan*, or chief of the temple guard, apparently ordered the doors at the Court of the Women shut to keep the violence certain to ensue from spilling into the temple proper. (Josephus regarded the shedding of blood in the sanctuary as the “abomination of desolation,” so keeping bloodshed from the sacred precincts was important.)

Acts 21:31

And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

[to kill him] This shows their real intent.

[chief captain] Greek: *chiliarchos* (GSN-5506), a Roman commander of 1,000 men. See John 18:12.

[band] Greek: *speira* (GSN-4686), cohort. John 18:3.

BBC: On the northern part of the Temple Mount was the fortress Antonia, which housed a permanent Roman garrison of six hundred men (a cohort); from its towers guards would readily notice disturbances. To rush into the outer court of the temple, they had only to rush down the stairs from the fortress. The “commander” is a *chiliarch*, or tribune, literally commander of one thousand but actually of six hundred troops. Tribunes were drawn from the small, well-to-do Roman “middle” class.

Because Jerusalem was under Roman control, an uproar in the city would be investigated by Roman authorities. The commander of the troops at this time was Claudius Lysias (Acts 23:26). This commander was head of a cohort (a special group, part of a legion) of Roman soldiers. He was the senior Roman official in Jerusalem.

Acts 21:32

Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.

Acts 21:33

Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done.

Claudis Lysias, the Chief Captain.

[with two chains] Either hand chained to a soldier.

Barnes: To be bound with two chains. To show to the enraged multitude that he did not intend to rescue any one from justice, but to keep the peace. Paul's being thus bound would convince them of his determination that justice should be done in the case. Probably he was bound between two soldiers-his right arm to the left arm of the one, and his left arm to the right arm of the other. Acts 12:6. Or, if his hands and feet were bound, it is evident that it was so done that he was able still to walk, Acts 21:37,38. This was in accordance with the prediction of Agabus, Acts 21:11.

Acts 21:34

And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

Acts 21:35

And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people.

Acts 21:36

For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.

[**Away**] Greek: *airo* (GSN-142). Translated "take up" in Mark 16:18. Here it means murder, so to take up serpents could not mean to use them in a religious side show to prove faith (cp. Luke 23:18; John 19:15).

Some Greek writers of this period liked to draw parallels between analogous historical figures; Luke's record here parallels Jesus and Paul (Luke 23:18).

The same cry that they were making against Jesus, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him, crucify him." And so when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was carried of the soldiers, and the multitude were crying, "Away with him."

Acts 21:37

And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek?

This is questions 58-60. The next is in Acts 22:7.

Clarke: Canst thou speak Greek?—Claudius Lysias was not a Roman; he had, as himself informs us, purchased his citizenship of Rome with a great sum of money; (see Acts 22:28); and it is very likely that he was but imperfectly acquainted with the Latin tongue; and the tumult that was now made, and the discordant noise, prevented him from clearly apprehending what was said; and, as he wished to know the merit of the cause, he accosted Paul with, Dost thou understand Greek? And when he found that he did understand it, he proceeded to question him as below.

BBC: In the eastern part of the empire, Latin was confined to use in the military and in documents concerning Roman citizens. The public administration of Syria-Palestine used Greek, which was also the first language of the Jerusalem aristocracy, and most Jewish people in Palestine knew at least some Greek. The "tribune" (NRSV) or "commander" assumes that Paul is a particular troublemaker (Acts 21:38); most rabble-rousers he would know would have spoken Aramaic by choice. But most Egyptian business documents of this period were in Greek, which seems to have been the main language there; he thus should not be surprised that one he supposes to be an Egyptian speaks Greek. The point is not that Paul speaks Greek; it is that he speaks it without an accent, like someone educated and fluent in the language, which the tribune assumes the Egyptian Jew who had caused problems would not be.

LAN: 37-38 By speaking in Greek, Paul showed that he was a cultured, educated man and not just a common rebel starting riots in the streets. The language grabbed the commander's attention and gave Paul protection and the opportunity to give his defense.

Acts 21:38

Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?

Dangerous Egyptian: (Josephus) came out of Egypt, claimed to be a prophet, advised a multitude of followers to go with him to the Mount of Olives, and at his command the walls would fall down. Felix informed; soldiers with weapons attacked; the Egyptian escaped.

[Egyptian] Josephus says he was a man who claimed to be a prophet, and who told his followers that the walls of Jerusalem would fall before them if they would help him attack the city. About 30,000 men followed him but the Roman governor came suddenly upon him with a large army of Roman soldiers, both infantry and cavalry, and the crowd fled. About 400 were killed and 200 were taken prisoners, but the Egyptian with a few faithful followers escaped (Josephus, Antiquities, 20:8:6). As Lysias found this tumult against Paul, he supposed him to be the same Egyptian who had returned to stir up the people again. The difference between the 30,000 and the 4,000 in Acts may be explained that some scribe copying Josephus mistook the Greek letter delta (d), four, for lambda(l), thirty, writing 30,000 for 4,000. Or, it could be that he had 30,000 followers at one time and only 4,000 who attacked the city in the final end.

The historian Josephus wrote of an Egyptian who led a revolt of 4,000 people in Jerusalem in A.D. 54 and then disappeared. The commander assumed that Paul was this rebel.

Barnes: Into the wilderness. This corresponds remarkably with the account of Josephus. He indeed mentions that he led them to the Mount of Olives, but he expressly says that "he led them round about from the wilderness." This wilderness was the wild and uncultivated mountainous tract of country lying to the east of Jerusalem, and between it and the river Jordan. Matthew 3:1. It is also another striking coincidence showing the truth of the narrative, that neither Josephus nor Luke mention the name of this Egyptian, though he was so prominent and acted so distinguished a part.

When Paul spoke Greek, the commander realized that he was **not the Egyptian** assassin who had come to Jerusalem in A.D. 54 claiming to be a prophet. This Egyptian had led four thousand fanatical Jews up to the Mount of Olives, promising that at his word the walls of Jerusalem would fall and the Roman Empire would be destroyed. Felix, the governor of Jerusalem at the time, ordered his men up the Mount of Olives, where they killed some four hundred Jews and captured another two hundred. However, the Egyptian and some of his followers slipped away into the desert. These followers were called

σιχαρι, meaning “dagger men.” They would mingle with the crowds in Jerusalem during festivals and murder pro-Roman Jews.²⁶

Acts 21:39

But Paul said, I am a man *which am* a Jew of Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

Cf. Rom 9:3.

[**no mean city**] Not a despised city, but a prominent one in the Roman empire.

That Paul, gutsy guy. You know, here they're crying, "Away with him, kill him," you know, and they're trying to kill him. And now he's asking permission to speak to the people.

Acts 21:40

And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them* in the Hebrew tongue, saying,

[**licence**] Permitted him to speak to the people.

[**Hebrew tongue**] The Chaldee-Syriac. There should be no break or chapter heading here. Acts 21:25 would have made a natural break.

LAN: Paul was probably speaking in Aramaic, the common language among Palestinian Jews. He used Aramaic not only to communicate in the language of his listeners, but also to show that he was a devout Jew and had respect for the Jewish laws and customs. Paul spoke Greek to the Roman officials and Aramaic to the Jews. To minister to people most effectively, use their language.

ESV: 22:21 Paul Addresses the Jewish Crowd. Paul's address to the Jewish crowd sought to establish what he had come to the temple to prove in the first place—his faithfulness to his Jewish heritage. He gave his personal testimony: his former zeal for Judaism (22:3–5), his encounter with the risen Lord (22:6–11), his commission (22:12–16), and his vision in the temple (22:17–21).

²⁶ The Nelson Study Bible

Similarities between Jesus and Paul as shown in Acts 20 and 21:

- Like Jesus, Paul traveled to Jerusalem with a group of disciples.
- Like Jesus, Paul had opposition from hostile Jews who plotted against his life.
- Like Jesus, Paul made or received three successive predictions of his coming sufferings in Jerusalem, including being handed over to the Gentiles.
- Like Jesus, Paul had followers who tried to discourage him from going to Jerusalem and the fate that awaited him there.
- Like Jesus, Paul declared his readiness to lay down his life.
- Like Jesus, he was determined to complete his ministry and not be deflected from it.
- Like Jesus, Paul expressed his abandonment to the will of God.
- Like Jesus, Paul came to Jerusalem to *give* something.
- Like Jesus, Paul was unjustly arrested on the basis of a false accusation.
- Like Jesus, Paul alone is arrested, but none of the other followers of Jesus.
- Like Jesus, Paul heard the mob crying out, *Away with him!*
- Like Jesus, the Roman officer handling Paul's case did not know his true identity.
- Like Jesus, Paul was associated with terrorists by Roman officials.

The Spread of the Gospel

After Stephen's martyrdom, the believers in Jerusalem were scattered over Judea and Samaria because of Jewish persecution of the Christians (8:1-3). Wherever the Christians went, they preached the gospel, obeying Christ's command to be witnesses to Him "in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The Book of Acts records the spread of the gospel throughout the Mediterranean world.

Destination	Travelers	Purpose of the Journey	Response	Reference
Samaria	Peter and John	In response to Saul's persecution and Stephen's martyrdom, the believers scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Peter and John went to Samaria to preach to them.	The Samaritans listened to Philip and believed in Jesus. The whole city was filled with joy.	8:4-40
The Gaza road	Philip	The angel of the Lord told Philip to go to the Gaza road. There Philip witnessed to an Ethiopian.	The Ethiopian believed and was baptized.	8:26-38
Damascus	Paul	Paul was persecuting the Christians. Some Christians were staying in Damascus, so he pursued them there. However the Lord Jesus Himself appeared in a blinding vision.	Paul submitted to the Lord, and was eventually baptized by Ananias.	9:1-19
Joppa	Peter	Peter went to Joppa and raised Tabitha from the dead.	Many believed on the Lord.	9:36-43
Caesarea	Peter	In response to a vision, Peter went to the home of Cornelius, a Gentile, to preach the gospel.	The Holy Spirit was poured out on the Gentiles, and Peter baptized them as believers.	10:1-48
Antioch; Tarsus	Barnabas	The church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to investigate the church at Antioch, because many Greeks were becoming Christians.	Barnabas encouraged the Christians and then brought Paul to Antioch to teach them.	11:19-26
Cyprus; Pamphylia; Galatia	Barnabas; Paul; John Mark	The first missionary journey: The church at Antioch commissioned Paul and Barnabas for missionary work to preach the gospel.	Churches were established in the cities Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia	13:1-14:28
Jerusalem	Barnabas; Paul	Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to settle the question of whether Gentile Christians should obey Jewish laws.	The Jerusalem council agreed that salvation was only through Christ.	15:1-29
Cyprus	Barnabas; John Mark	After a break with Paul, Barnabas took John Mark to visit the churches in Cyprus.		15:36-41
Galatia; Asia Minor; Macedonia; Achaia	Paul; Silas; Timothy; Luke	The second missionary journey: Paul and Silas revisited the churches in Galatia and then the Holy Spirit led them to go to Macedonia. Eventually Paul was able to preach in Athens.	Churches were established in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth.	15:36-18:22
Ephesus; Achaia	Apollos	Apollos traveled from		18:24-28; 19:1

