

Bible Study April 6, 2022

Acts 21 Paul Goes to Jerusalem

Acts 21: 1-16 Paul departed from Miletus after saying a sorrowful goodbye to the Ephesian elders, sailing daily to Cos, and then to Rhodes, and then to Patara. There he boarded a sea going vessel bound for Tyre, then Ptolemais and then to Caesarea. In Tyre, the Holy Spirit showed the believers what Paul would face in Jerusalem. Paul was clearly following the lead of the Holy Spirit in his going to Jerusalem, but his friends warned him not to go. In Caesarea, Paul stayed with Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons who had been ordained in Jerusalem. He had four daughters who had the gift of prophecy. Agabus, who had prophesied of the famine in Jerusalem, came to Paul, took his belt, and tied his own hands and feet to show what would soon happen to Paul. The people there begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Paul remarked he was called to serve Jesus, even to his death, so the people then said, "Let the will of the Lord be done."

Acts 21: 17-26 Paul Participates in a Nazarite Ceremony Paul arrived in Jerusalem, visited James, the brother of Jesus, and all the elders from Jerusalem are there as well. Paul reported all that he was doing among the Gentiles, and they all glorified God. They then reported to Paul it was being said that among the Jews, Paul instructed them not to follow the Law of Moses, nor to circumcise their children. This of course was false, so they told Paul to join four men who had taken a vow, to purify himself, pay for all their expenses. Paul did as was suggested, entered the temple giving notification when the days of purification would be fulfilled, and made an offering for all of them. He did this to show he was a Jew and still followed all Jewish customs. Gentiles only had to refrain from blood, from meat sacrificed to idols, from meat that had been strangled, and from sexual immorality.

While under the Nazirite vow, a person must refrain from wine, strong drink, grape juice, grapes, raisins; must avoid contact with a dead body; and would not cut their hair, and present an offering to the temple. When the time of the vow was completed – usually 30 days – they would shave their heads to show the vow was completed.

Acts 21: 27-36 Paul Arrested in the Temple Paul was attacked in the temple as he was charged with not following the Law of Moses and for bringing

the Gentile Trophimus the Ephesian into the temple. He was innocent of both charges, but was dragged out of the temple and the gates were shut. They were about to kill him when word came to the tribune of the cohort that all of Jerusalem was in confusion and in an uproar. Paul's beating was stopped, and the Roman commander ordered Paul to be arrested and placed in chains. Paul was questioned, but the mob shouted so loudly Paul could not be heard. He was then taken to the Roman barracks where the crowd kept shouting, "Away with him!"

The rest of the story in two weeks...