

Acts 21

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The Third Journey of Paul 53-57 AD



1. Detail the journey from Miletus to Caesarea.

Acts 21: 1-9

1 When we had parted from them and had set sail, we ran a straight course to **Cos** and the **next day to Rhodes** and from there to **Patara**;

2 and having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.

3 When **we came in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left**, we kept **sailing to Syria and landed at Tyre**; for there the ship was to unload its cargo.

4 **After looking up the disciples, we stayed there seven days; and they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem.**

5 When our days there were ended, we left and started on our journey, **while they all, with wives and children, escorted us until we were out of the city. After kneeling down on the beach and praying, we said farewell to one another.**

1. Detail the journey from Miletus to Caesarea.

Acts 21: 1-9 con't.

6 Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home again.

7 When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and after greeting the brethren, we stayed with them for a day.

8 On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him.

9 Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses.

2. What did the Holy Spirit reveal to Agabus?

Acts 21: 10-11

10 As we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

11 And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, “This is what the Holy Spirit says: ‘In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’ ”

Agabus's prediction for Paul parallels the fate of Jesus.

Matt. 20: 18-19

18 “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death,

19 and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify *Him*, and on the third day He will be raised up.”

3. What did Paul's companions encourage Paul to do? What was Paul's response?

Acts 21: 12-13

12 When we had heard this, we as well as the local residents *began* begging him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

4. Describe the attitude of Paul's companions?

Acts 21: 14

14 And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, “The will of the Lord be done!””

Luke 22: 39-42

39 And He came out and proceeded as was His custom to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed Him.

40 When He arrived at the place, He said to them, “Pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

41 And He withdrew from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and *began* to pray,

42 saying, “Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.”

5. Who did Paul and his companions stay with at Jerusalem?

Acts 21: 15-16

15 After these days we got ready and started on our way up to Jerusalem.

16 *Some* of the disciples from Caesarea also came with us, taking us to **Mnason of Cyprus**, a disciple of long standing with whom we were to lodge.

Acts 21: 17-20a

17 After we arrived in Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

18 And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

19 After he had greeted them, he *began* to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

20 And when they heard it they *began* glorifying God;...

6. What did the many thousands of Jewish believers learn concerning Paul's preaching?

Acts 21: 20b-22

20 ... and they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of those who have believed, and they are all zealous for the Law;

21 and they have been told about you, that you are teaching all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

22 "What, then, is *to be done*? They will certainly hear that you have come.

Ceremonial Law

Ceremonial law relates specifically to Israel's worship (Leviticus 1:1-13). Its primary purpose was to point forward to Jesus Christ. These laws were no longer necessary after Jesus' death and resurrection.

While we are no longer bound by ceremonial laws, the principles behind them – to worship and love a holy God still apply. The Jewish Christians often accused the Gentile Christians of violating the ceremonial law.

The principles behind the commands should guide our conduct. At times, Paul asked Gentile Christians to follow some of these laws, not because they had to, but in order to promote unity.

Civil law

Civil law dictated Israel's daily living (Deut. 24:10-11).

Society and cultures of the new Christians were so radically different, some of these guidelines could not be followed specifically.

Moral law

Moral law is the direct command of God.

For example, the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) required strict obedience. They revealed the nature and will of God.

We are to obey this moral law, not to obtain salvation, but to live in ways pleasing to God.

7. What was Paul's response to this issue?

Acts 21: 23-26

23 "Therefore do this that we tell you. We have four men who are under a vow;

24 take them and purify yourself along with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads; and all will know that there is nothing to the things which they have been told about you, but that you yourself also walk orderly, keeping the Law.

25 "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, having decided that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication."

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them.

1. Paul rejected the idea that the Old Testament laws bring salvation to those who keep them. Our salvation is freely given by God's grace.
2. Paul accepted the view that the Old Testament laws prepared new Christians for and taught them about the coming of Jesus Christ.
3. The law teaches many valuable principles and gives guidelines for grateful living.
4. Paul was keeping the laws as a way to avoid offending those he wished to reach with the Gospel.
5. Paul submitted himself to the Nazirite vow to keep peace and unity in the Jerusalem church.

8. Who stirred up the crowd and what were the charges against Paul?

Acts 21: 27-29

27 When the seven days were almost over, the Jews from Asia, upon seeing him in the temple, *began* to stir up all the crowd and laid hands on him,

28 crying out, “Men of Israel, come to our aid! This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people and the Law and this place; and besides he has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.”

29 For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

The crowd's charges against Paul:

1. This is the man who preaches to all men everywhere against our people and the Law and this place.
2. He has even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.

9. How did God protect Paul?

Acts 21: 30-36

30 Then all the city was provoked, and the people rushed together, and taking hold of Paul they dragged him out of the temple, and immediately the doors were shut.

31 While they were seeking to kill him, a report came up to the commander of the Roman cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion.

32 At once he took along some soldiers and centurions and ran down to them; and when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

33 Then the commander came up and took hold of him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains; and he began asking who he was and what he had done.

34 But among the crowd some were shouting one thing *and* some another, and when he could not find out the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks.

35 When he got to the stairs, he was carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob;

36 for the multitude of the people kept following them, shouting, “Away with him!”

10. Who did the commander of the Roman cohort mistake Paul to be?

Acts 21: 37-39

37 As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the commander, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek?”

38 “Then you are not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?”

39 But Paul said, “I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city; and I beg you, allow me to speak to the people.” **24**

11. What happened when Paul was given permission to address the mob?

Acts 21: 40

40 When he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned to the people with his hand; and when there was a great hush, he spoke to them in the Hebrew dialect, saying,

12. What can we learn from Paul's willingness to go to Jerusalem even though hardships awaited him?

1. Paul never taught that customs and rituals could not be practiced if a person wished. He only taught that they were not necessary to salvation.

2. Even true believers can be tragically influenced by rumors and untruths. We must always be on guard against false teachers.

3. Paul was willing to become all things to all men and to do anything not contrary to God's will, in order to reach men for Christ.

4. Paul was willing to suffer for the cause of Christ.