

## ACTS CH 21 – PAUL IS ARRESTED IN JERUSALEM

21:1-14

- This is the same Philip who was chosen as a deacon and who evangelized to the Ethiopian Eunuch and the magician back in chapter 8
- Daughters who prophesy: The term virgin also indicate that they were young, in their teens, with the oldest probably being no more than 16.
- This is likely the same Agabus who through the Spirit foretells a coming famine back in chapter 11:28

Is God sending conflicting messages?

- One commentator notes, “Unlike the authority of Christ’s apostles, the NT prophetic gift— “Reception and declaration of a word from the Lord through a direct prompting of the Holy Spirit and the human instrument thereof.” —was not infallible, but needed to be weighed and sifted. While the revelation that Paul would have trouble in Jerusalem was accurate, Agabus misapplied it by saying Paul should not go there. Paul knew he had to go (20:23).”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21, “Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test everything; hold fast what is good.”

Why was Paul so set on going to Jerusalem?

- 1) To report the works done amongst the gentiles
- 2) To distribute the alms he collected for the Jerusalem church
  - a. Acts 24:17-18; Romans 15:25-29

Paul’s life course - Acts 20:17-24

- Paul is ready for whatever may come his way, but others aren’t as ready or willing.
- In your own life, can you say “The will of the Lord be done?” If not, why? What’s holding you back. Is Christ worth it to you? Is Christ worth exceedingly more than anything this world has to offer? Philipians 3:8
- Are you able to say in other’s lives “the will of the Lord be done?” Do you let your own fears and hesitations get in the way of God’s will for them? Ephesians 2:10

21:15-24 – Nazirite Vow

- “A Nazirite vow was connected with becoming pure or holy before Yahweh for a set period of time. “(Numbers 6:2–21). The vow of a Nazirite involved these three things.
  1. Abstinence from wine and strong drink.
  2. Refraining from cutting their hair during the whole period of the continuance of the vow.
  3. Avoidance of contact with the dead.

Why would someone who champions gentiles’ rights to not have to follow the law, then submit himself to a vow under the law? Is he contradicting himself?

- “By doing this, Paul will show that he is still sensitive to Jewish culture, which James believes will overturn their fellow Jews’ concerns about Paul. This action demonstrates that Paul is not [actively] encouraging Jews to abandon their traditions, cultural identity, or religious identity.”
- Paul did something similar to this when he had Timothy (a half jew/half gentile) be circumcised so as not to be an unnecessary hindrance to their witness to the Jewish people. Acts 16:3; 1 Corinthians 9:21-23

Jonathan F. Bayes *Threefold Division of the Law: Moral, Judicial, Ceremonial*  
Why are we bound to some parts of the OT, but not others?

- “The ceremonial and civil law are [retracted], but the moral law remains in force for all time as the declaration of divinely ordained ethical principles and as the rule of life for the true believer, who will inevitably ‘delight in the law of God according to the inward man’ (Rom 7:22)”
- Christ came to fulfill and perfect what we could not. Matthew 5:17; Hebrews 9:11-14, 10:1-4, 11-12; Galatians 5:1-6

What Does it mean for us today?

- Laws and customs do not contribute to salvation.
- Ephesians 2:8-22 – Saved by grace through faith
- Romans 14:5-19 - One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike