

Acts 21:1-40

“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: 2 And finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. 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. 4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. 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. 6 And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again. 7 And when we had finished *our* course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day; 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. 9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. 10 And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus. 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. 12 And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 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. 14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. 15 And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. 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. 17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 And the *day* following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders

were present. 19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. 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: 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. 22 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; 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. 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. 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. 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, 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. 29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) 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. 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. 32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and soldiers, they left beating of Paul. 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. 34 And some cried one thing, and 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. 35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. 36 For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him. 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? 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? 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. 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,”

Introduction

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“Acts chapter 21, we finished last week, Paul with the elders from Ephesus, on the beach at Miletus, he is on his way to Jerusalem to get to the Feast of Pentecost. He has been told, as he is drawing closer to Jerusalem, in different cities where he visited churches he planted, that there were bonds and afflictions awaiting him. He said he was aware of that, but none of those things moved him, he felt bound in the spirit, compelled in the spirit to get to Jerusalem. And then when he met with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus, he told them ***‘This is the last time you’re going to see my face.’*** And of course, they were devastated, they could tell by the tone of his voice, he had planted that great church there in Ephesus, they had come to love him over the years. And now he’s saying ***‘You’re not going to see me anymore.’*** That is in this world, and no doubt they understood that. But as they knelt on the beach together, it says they wept, and they wept on his neck, and they held one another, and it says again in **verse 38**, **“sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And**

they accompanied him unto the ship.” Again, it’s an extreme sorrow, if you’re a studier, breaking down that word, very interesting picture of the type of sorrowing and pain they felt.

They Journey From Miletus To Caesarea

Luke then says, chapter 21, **“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:” (verse 1)** the words “gotten from them” it literally means, *“after we had torn ourselves away.”* Again, speaking of the great passion that there was, this is Paul and Luke there, seven others with them, they said **‘We had to tear ourselves away from them,’** we don’t imagine Paul that way all the time. We’ll see it this evening, in several places. Besides being, I think, cantankerous and determined, he was also a man of great passion that allowed himself to be vulnerable and into people’s lives. Some of that comes out greatly here. So, Luke says **‘It came to pass that after we had torn ourselves away from them, that we launched, and we came with a straight course unto Coos,’** travelling about 30 to 40 miles, **‘and the day following unto Rhodes,’** again, 20, 25 miles, **and from thence to Patara,’** 25, 30 miles, **“and finding a ship sailing over unto Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth.” (verse 2)** now that’s about 400 miles. Again, we take this for granted, as we watch this, like he’s getting on *El Al* and flying or something, this is a long arduous journey, and evidently not wanting to stop at every port, it seems that at Patara they pick up a cargo ship, down in verse 3 at the end it says she had to unload her burden there at Tyre. So that leg of the journey, it seems in verse 2 they found this ship sailing over unto Phoenicia, that 400 mile journey seemed to go unbroken, **‘when we were aboard, we set forth.’** **“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.” (verse 3)** now they’re in the southern part of Syria [Lebanon, actually, although Lebanon was a part of Syria at this point, all under the Roman Empire. Originally, the area that is now Lebanon was the ancient Phoenician empire, a maritime empire. Tyre and Sidon were part of the ancient Phoenician Empire.] Jesus, remember, went up there to the area of Tyre and Sidon to get away, where he encountered the widow there with the demon

possessed daughter, the Syro-Phoenician woman, they come to that area, they come to Tyre, **“for there”** the ship that they were on **“was to unlade her burden”** the cargo. **“And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.”** (verse 4) Now it’s the first time we hear of disciples at Tyre. Paul may have planted that church over 20 years earlier, when he persecuted everybody and drove them out of Jerusalem, he may have been responsible for the birth of that church [before he was a believer, amazingly enough, is what he’s implying]. But they come, and it says **‘We find disciples, and we tarried there,’** with this church, no doubt a fledgling church **‘seven days, who said to Paul, through the Spirit,’** here it is again, **‘that he should not go up to Jerusalem.’** Now again, over in **chapter 20**, he says **“Now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But none of these things move me...neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course.”** So, here again, meeting this new group of disciples, the ministry of the Holy Spirit very active in the early Church, they worked off the Old Testament, the New Testament was far from being completed or canonized, now the Holy Spirit having a very dramatic ministry, and here’s someone no doubt prophesying, again, telling Paul through the Spirit that he should not go to Jerusalem. **“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.”** (verse 5) Notice this, **“with wives and children,”** I think that tells us something of Paul’s personality, **“till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore and prayed.”** This is after knowing them just for seven days. A moving of the Spirit, warning Paul there was trouble ahead, he’s determined to move forward, it says they came, they joined him out to the ship, out to the beach with the wives and the children, the little kids. We don’t perceive Paul that way all the time. And it says they kneeled down on the beach, and they prayed together. **“And when we had taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned home again.”** (verse 6) and Luke says, **“And when we finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day.”** (verse 7) believers spread all over, this is northern Israel [Judea], those of you who have been on the trips to Israel with us

over the years, you know that in the northern part of Israel we go to Acco, Acco is a beautiful town just south of Haifa, and it dates back, it's Ptolemais, it's the town, it's a beautiful port, one of the most beautiful places to go out on the point and look at the sea, the Mediterranean and the waves breaking, beautiful. Paul now comes into Ptolemais there, and he saluted the brethren, the church, the believers that are there, and abode with them one day. **“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.”** (verse 8) about 60 miles from Ptolemais.

Paul's Stay At Philip's House, What Was It Like For Philip To Receive Paul Into His Home?

It doesn't say they made it in a day, but they departed the next day, **“and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.”** Now this would be a meeting I would like to be at, and listen to. Because the last we have of these two being together, approximately 20 years before this in the Book of Acts, remember, Philip is chosen with Stephen as one of the deacons, God began to do a remarkable work through their lives. Stephen is stoned to death, Paul standing there giving his consent. And it says **“Saul was consenting unto his death, and at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad throughout all the regions of Judea and Samaria, except for the apostles, and devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house and hailing men and women, committed them to prison. And therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word, then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and he preached Christ unto them.”** You remember then, miracles breaking out, a wonderful ministry there, and Peter and John come down and pray for the disciples there that are baptized or filled with the Holy Spirit. And the last impression we have of Philip with Saul of Tarsus there, was fleeing Jerusalem, driven out by this madman who was laying waste to the church, and he no doubt had heard rumours over the years, and now here comes this man, you know, you could imagine

the knock on the door, had killed one of his best friends, Stephen, and what was it like when they saw one another, what was it like? I think sometimes we need to think about forgiveness, I understand forgiveness is difficult. You know, God puts it in front of us because we are so easily injured, we're betrayed, we're hurt, sometimes it's very difficult for us, sometimes it takes years. And I think when the person on the other end particularly is non-repentant, it's very difficult for us, even to get alone with the Lord and say *'Lord, I forgive them, I don't want to see them anymore, maybe in heaven, but I forgive them.'* That's hard to do. Paul, you read, his swan song, his last words were to Timothy as he's writing, and he's there in prison and says ***'Everybody's forsaken me, Luke alone, he's here, with me. Bring Mark, he's profitable for me in the ministry. Now when you come, get my cloak and parchments that are at Troas, bring them to the prison, the cell is cold...some of the parchments, snuggle up with the Lord, and that Alexander the coppersmith, God's gonna get him,'*** there's that Paul there, right at the end, and evidently he hadn't let go of the grudge he had there, ***'that Alexander the coppersmith had done much evil.'*** But I think sometimes it's very difficult, particularly when the person on the other end is non-repentant. But, what do we do when someone has been monstrous, and they get saved? And they're a person we ***never*** thought would get saved. And when we come around talking the God-talk, what we often do is we poke at them. Before we let down our defenses we want to make sure their conversion is real, and we mess with them, and we try to provoke them, and we poke at them, we make it harder. I just wonder what this was like, Philip, receiving Paul the apostle now, not Saul of Tarsus any longer? Luke, Sopater, Aristarchus, Gaius, Trophimus, Tychicus, you read through this remarkable group of men that have been gathered from the churches into the home of Philip. I just would have loved to, it was a Kodak moment, when Paul came in, and they just stopped and looked at each other. I wonder how long it took before the tears flowed? I wonder how long it was before Philip said *'Man, you were a **pain**, we prayed that God would kill you, you were unbelievable.'* And this Paul, you know, he must have just said *'Please, I'm a different person, I'm a new creation in Christ, I already wrote the Book of Romans,'* what a meeting that must have been, and how I would have loved to sit and listened to the conversation that went down at that table, and an example to us, by the way, sometimes forgiving even the most difficult of circumstances. [I'm reminded of when the former Concentration camp guard who had been responsible for her

sisters' death approached Corey ten Boom and put out his hand, asking for forgiveness during a Bible study she was giving, telling her he had become a believer, and her saying how hard it was for her to take his hand.] 20 years afterwards, **“And the same man,” Philip, verse 9, “ had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.”** Most scholars feel that they were probably under 16, it doesn't say they were quads. I guess they could have been, that would be scarier yet, four identical girls that were all prophets, that could drive you out of your mind. Are they 17, 15, 14, 13? the point is they are young girls. Would to God that all of our daughters, just imagine, four young girls, filled with the Holy Ghost, virgins, that prophesied. You know, General Boykin was telling me about a man who had been a Muslim terrorist that had gotten wounded, and one of the surgeons who was a strong Christian man, actually took him into his barracks, and there was a place there to care for him, and into his home then in another country where his family was in the Middle East, and he said his kids would go down and sit on the edge of the bed, put their hands on him and pray for him, and he would scream *‘Get these devils away from me!’* but he said the kids fell in love with him, they thought he was crazy, and he said, slowly but surely they would come and sneak in, and just quietly, they wore him down, and he came to Christ and he was saved. What were these daughters like? Eusebius, the great Church historian tells us that they moved, they lived in Hierapolis until they died, all four of them, and Papias, who was the first bishop of the church in Hierapolis tells us that Philip's four daughters were an incredible source of information about the very early Church, in it's early days, and it's practices, Papias writes about them, what incredible women they were. Just, it seems that God had set their lives apart, and I think what I would have loved to have seen, just a family picture, Philip, his wife, and the four girls, just I would like to see. And we will, we will, in the not too distant future I believe. So, what an interesting scene, Paul now coming to the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven, how wonderful. And he abode with him, stayed there in his home. **“the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.”**

That Prophet Agabus Pays Paul Another Visit

“And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet, named Agabus.” (verse 10) now, this is not Paul’s first meeting with Agabus. Agabus had come to Antioch in Syria, back in chapter 11, and many years before this, about 15 years before this, Agabus had come, and if you remember, it says that he prophesied there at Antioch, and in these days prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch, when Paul was there, **“and there stood up one there named Agabus, and he signified by the Spirit that there would be a great dirth, a famine throughout all of the world,”** the Mediterranean world, **“which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.”** So Paul is familiar with him, somehow he’s led in the Spirit, he knows Paul was at the house of Philip the evangelist, has built-in guidance systems that guides him, the Holy Spirit, and he gets there, **“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.” (verse 11)** Very interesting, Agabus doesn’t say to Paul *‘Don’t go,’* that’s not what he’s saying. He’s just prophesying and he’s just predicting, he doesn’t forbid, he simply says *‘This in fact is what is going to happen,’* everybody else is telling Paul *‘Don’t go to Jerusalem,’* Agabus says ***‘The person who owns this piece of clothing is going to go to Jerusalem, and when he gets there, this is what’s going to happen to him.’*** But Paul had determined to go. Luke said **“And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.” (verse 12)** They begged Paul not to go up to Jerusalem, now that was Philip, it was probably his four daughters, *‘Please, Uncle Paul, please Uncle Paul,’* they probably prophesied too, you can imagine, and the men that were with Paul, we know that they’re begging Paul not to go. Look at **verse 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.”** Isn’t it interesting, ***‘I am ready both to be bound and to die in Jerusalem,’*** was he supposed to go, or was he not supposed to go? The church is saying ***‘Paul, you’re a treasure, you’re a living treasure to us, the church needs you so desperately, all of this prophesying, all of the warning of the Spirit that you’re not to go to Jerusalem,’*** you know, are they right, or are they wrong? Paul had already written the Corinthian letter, and said in chapter 13, ***‘now we prophesy in part,’*** even, I grew up in the Pentecostal side of the Church, people

appreciated it, sometimes you don't. But even when it's right, that it's imperfect, it's the Holy Spirit moving through a human being, and sadly, and sometimes more degrees than others, you get a certain aspect of that human being in the spiritual thing that's being communicated. It's like drinking out of the hose in the summer. You appreciate the water, but just has that rubber-hose taste, I mean it's great and it's cold, but it's just the conduit kind of adds a flavour to it, I don't mind that hose flavour a lot when I'm thirsty. But there's some of that in this. Anyhow, it's no doubt some of those gathered there who feel the oppression of the Spirit, not really [knowing] exactly how to communicate [it], saying *'He shouldn't go.'* Paul says **'Well I'm bound in the spirit to go,'** you have Agabus saying **'The guy who owns these clothes when he gets to Jerusalem,'** so he's prophesying it's gonna happen, this is what's going to happen to him. Just, chapter 23, you don't have to turn there, it says, now he's in Jerusalem, he's been taken, giving account, said, **"And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."** (verse 1) and what he's saying there, ***'I wasn't convicted, I didn't feel like I was doing something wrong or grieving the Spirit, I lived in good conscience in coming here, the way that I've lived.'*** And then of course a riot starts, we know all of the things that happen. In **chapter 23, verse 11**, it says **"And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem,"** he started a riot, **"so must thou bear witness also at Rome."** Jesus appeared to Paul, Paul is in prison. And Paul had said that earlier, ***'I just know I need to go to Jerusalem, and perhaps God will allow me to go to Rome also.'*** And now he's hearing the very same thing from Jesus. So, the estimation of Jesus Christ was, that he gave a good testimony. Well, what do we do? You know, we have to be very careful when we pull the trump-card, and that is *'The Lord told me.'* It's ok when we're doing it to ourselves, *'Well I think the Lord told me to do this or do that.'* [sometimes, but be careful, try the spirits that be, to see if they are in fact of Christ, you can go down the wrong road and waste a lot of time and effort] It's much different when you say to somebody *'I think the Lord told me you're supposed to do that.'* Now I don't want people telling me that, too much, sometimes I appreciate it. I don't mind it when somebody tells me *'The Lord told me he's going to bless you,'* and I think *'You must really hear clearly, that's a wonderful thing.'* But you can imagine in a church this size, I get all kinds of *'messages from the Lord'* from

different people. I'll get ready to fly somewhere, and in fact I had someone say *'I had a dream, and I saw the plane exploding, and everybody was...'* and I'm thinking *'Well, thanks...'* The gift of prophecy, Paul said, is to edify the church, I'm thinking to myself *'I don't feel very edified right now, so I'm hoping that was pepperoni pizza and not a prophecy in that dream.'* But there's always that mixture, I think they were both right. The impression that was coming on the hearts of people was this, ***'that bonds and afflictions awaited Paul in Jerusalem,'*** and the Holy Spirit was signifying that, people were getting the sense of it. Isn't it interesting? But I think Paul was correct in also saying ***'I'm driven, I can't turn back, the Lord is telling me to go.'*** And Jesus will ratify that, in fact when he appears in Paul's cell [in Acts 23:11]. Isn't it an interesting picture here, he says ***'Why are you making me weep, you're breaking my heart,'*** he says, ***'none of this moves me, I'm ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem, if that's what the Lord wants, just for the name of the Lord, for his sake.'*** ***"And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."*** (verse 14) Now that tells us, they were trying to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem, it says ***"he would not be persuaded,"*** and Luke says, ***"we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done."*** ***'We couldn't convince him, we couldn't persuade him,'*** that meant they were deliberately trying. Why was it, that they couldn't persuade Paul? ***'Danger ahead, we love you, this isn't good, we don't want to see anything happen to you.'*** Paul's saying ***'Well there's danger, I understand the Holy Spirit's telling me that, but I know in my heart I'm supposed to go,'*** ***'Can't we persuade you not to go?'*** A number of months earlier he had written this, ***"we are more than conquerors through him that loved us...for I am persuaded"*** this is what he was persuaded of ***"that neither death, nor life, nor angels, no principalities, nor powers, nor things present,"*** that would be Jerusalem ***"nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*** (Romans 8:37b-39) Paul was already persuaded of something, and he had already written that truth to the Romans, within several months previous to this, and no doubt those things are burning in his heart. And Luke says ***'And when we saw that we could not persuade him, then we just said 'Alright, the will of the Lord be done.'*** I believe it was Paul's destiny, he said he wanted to finish his course, to go to Jerusalem. Because from

Jerusalem, he goes to Caesarea, where he's there for almost two years, and no doubt interviews take place there, no doubt that's where Luke spends time going back to Jerusalem, gathering the information for the Gospel that he will write. He attended to Paul there in Caesarea. And as then Paul finally goes to Rome, he writes his prison Epistles, Ephesians...Colossians, you read through 2nd Timothy, you read through them, they changed the world, those prison Epistles touched the entire world, and Paul no doubt reached way more people writing those Epistles than if he himself had been free, traveling and evangelizing. So, God's direction here, Paul now going to Jerusalem, the rest of the disciples saying **'Well, we relent, the Lord's will be done, Paul.'**

Paul And The Others Head To Jerusalem

“And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.” (verse 15) “carriages,” King James for “luggage.” 65 miles from Caesarea, everything's up to Jerusalem even if it's downhill in Israel. **“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.” (verse 16)** This is interesting, they had made friends there, and brought with them one, now Mnason of Cyprus, King James says “an old disciple,” it's literally in the Greek *“it's an early disciple,”* we don't know how old he was. The idea is, he was there from the beginning, it doesn't tell us, does that mean he was there at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit fell in Acts chapter 2? an early disciple, having been with Jesus before the crucifixion and resurrection? Had he followed John the Baptist? We're not told. We're just told he was a disciple who was early in this entire process, and they found great fellowship with him, he went with them as they went up to Jerusalem now, he went with them. And Jerusalem, has a population they argue, 500,000 to 600,000, some say a little bit lower, normally. The mandatory feasts, on Pentecost was one of those, Jerusalem's population would swell to 2 million people. So the crowds in Jerusalem are tremendous now as Paul and these men go up to Jerusalem. And it says **“And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.” (verse 17)** “we” Luke, he's including himself, “the brethren,” the church there. Now we're not told specifically the form of the church in Jerusalem, we know when Paul was at

Antioch, and came back to Antioch with the letter from Jerusalem, it says **“the multitude of the disciples rejoiced,”** we always imagine big churches, well there was a, the church at Antioch was “a multitude,” we’re told that, it was a huge church. We know that in Jerusalem 3,000 were saved on the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached, we know 5,000 were saved after that, and it just says “God multiplied.” So, one historian says, that by 70AD over 100,000 Jews had become believers in Jerusalem, just imagine that, that’s an incredible number. [Of course, perhaps that’s 3 years earlier, in 67AD, the apostle John, whom Jesus had entrusted with the care of his mother Mary, must have realized with the Jewish revolt, that it was no longer safe for Mary, and of course the church itself to remain in Jerusalem. We know some temporarily moved to Pella, but knowing how wars move whole populations, my guess is that much of the early churches in Judea and the Jerusalem church itself, moved with John up into Asia Minor, to Ephesus.] Incredible number. So how big the church is and what form it has taken by this time we’re not sure. When they come, the church, the brethren receive them, this is a very interesting meeting, **“when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following Paul went in”** Luke says **“with us unto James; and all the elders were present.” (verses 17-18)** Now try to imagine this meeting. This is Paul, he’s leading the pack, Luke is with him, Titus is with him, Sopater is with him, Aristarchus is with him, Secundus is with him, Gaius is with him, Timothy is with them, Tychicus is with him, Trophimus is with him, Mnason is with him, and James himself now. You know, most of these men had heard of James, the Lord’s half-brother, had never met him before. They’re coming from the Gentile churches, they’re bringing an offering to the church in Jerusalem, what was it like for them to walk in with Paul and there’s James? His Epistle [of James] had been in circulation for about a decade about this point in time, the letter that James wrote that we love, and maybe some of these men had already been exposed to it and read it, but now here they come, and it says the other elders are present. We don’t know, is John there, is Peter there, who of the rest of the apostles might be there? they come in to James. Just imagine what that meeting was like, here are these Gentile elders and pastors that had come with the offering, representing the churches, they come to Jerusalem. Did they say *‘What was he like? What was the Master like? You were his half-brother, what was it like growing up with him? What did he look like? What was it like when he smiled? What was it like when he laughed?*

What was it like when you realized your older brother was God? What kind of questions do you ask James? *'Tell us about what delighted him. Tell us about what he said to you this morning?'* you see James, this old camel-knees, his legs became so deformed, they said he spent 8 to 10 hours a day in prayer, he never wanted to leave the side of his older brother. **'Any man lacks wisdom, let him ask'** he says, **'he gives liberally, he upbraideth not, he won't scold you or yell at you, let me tell you what he's like. You ask, he gives, he gives.'** Here comes these men, this interesting group. It says, we, Paul, we were with him, and you know we came in, there was James, there were the elders of the church at Jerusalem. What a meeting this must have been. Wouldn't you like to have this meeting on tape? I would want a DVD of this, not just a CD. **"And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present."** (verse 18) **"And when he"** Paul **"had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry."** (verse 19) now they give them this offering, no doubt, that they had brought, no doubt the church appreciated greatly, it was building bridges between Jew and Gentile. And Paul **"declared particularly"** that Greek phrase means literally "one by one." And what it's telling us is Paul described to this church in Jerusalem the work amongst the Gentiles, at Salamis, Pathos, Pisidia, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, the miracles, the growth of the Church. He had travelled over 8,000 miles by sea and over 7,000 miles by land, he had travelled 15,000, over 12,000 miles we know directly, but that would be, you figure with currents and twists, he had evangelized over 1,500 square miles in 16 years, and just think what it must have been like for the church in Jerusalem to hear what the Lord was doing throughout the Roman world. How remarkable this meeting must have been. And it says **"And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord,"** that would be a great place for all of this to end.

*The Church In Jerusalem Appears Here To Be
Lacking In A Certain Understanding About Law &
Grace*

Because the chapter gets a bit difficult after this, well, you're going to go there, so just hang on. It would have been a great thing if they just glorified the Lord, and that was the end of it. But it isn't, **"they glorified the Lord, and said unto him,"** unto Paul, **"Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe;"** that have accepted Yeshua as Messiah, thousands of them **"and they are all zealous of the law:"** (verse 20) Now this is slowly changing, it may be the inspiration, I believe, if you have your own distorted opinion, for Paul to write the Book of Hebrews, which is undoubtedly written before 70AD, because it references sacrifices that must have still been taking place. I believe Paul is drawn into a situation here, wanting to be all things to all men, that gives rise to one of the great truths he writes in the Book of Ephesians. James and the elders are saying, **'Look, you know how many thousands there are, of Jewish believers now, and many of them still zealous in regards to the things of the Law,'** **"And they are informed of thee"** Paul **"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."** (verse 21) Now that was a lie, what Paul did do, and he tells us, as he travelled, he had already written the Corinthian Epistles, he said **"Is any man called being circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised."** that's fine, **"is any man called in uncircumcision? Let him not then seek to be circumcised, because circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.** [i.e. the Big Ten, the Ten Commandments of God, the moral law of God not the ritualistic law of circumcision, that's what's important is what Paul's saying here in Ephesians. And interestingly enough, almost all of the Ten Commandments are issued individually throughout all of the Epistles, most written by Paul] **Let every man abide in the same calling..."** Paul says, **'Look, it's not the issue of customs that's important. It's the issue of the keeping of the law of God in the heart, as we embrace the truths of God's Word.'** That's what Paul was saying amongst the Gentiles [i.e. the church in Jerusalem was struggling with the issue of Law & Grace. For a better understanding of that subject see <https://unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm>]. He had taken from this very church, James, and the leaders, a letter back to the church at Antioch and the Gentile churches that said that they didn't need to circumcise, they had decided, **'Why should we lay a greater burden upon the Gentiles that neither we nor**

our fathers were able to bear, if they keep these things, that they stay away from fornication, idolatry, things strangled and blood, that they're doing well, that seems good to us and the Holy Ghost,' so that message had already been communicated. So it's James and the church in Jerusalem, that needed to be, to me, more forceful to communicate **'Hey, God spoke to us, the Holy Ghost spoke to us and said, at least amongst the Gentiles, there's no need for anyone to keep the law.'** [and by this statement "the law" it's referring to the ceremonial laws, not the basic moral law of the Ten Commandments and the spirit of them Jesus gave us in Matthew 5] And Paul evidently said as he encountered the Jews, **'Look, it's great, you're circumcised? then abide in that, don't try to be out from under the law in some ridiculous way,'** but the whole issue is where's your heart with the Lord, not the traditions, not the liturgy, church tradition or denominational. Reality is what matters, not religion, relationship is what matters, not religion. Paul was seeking to communicate that then. But James is saying, and the elders, **'We've got thousands of believers here, we're hearing bad things about you, that you're telling everybody to forsake Moses, telling people they shouldn't be circumcised.'** Verse 22 says **"What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come."** The idea is, **'This is the suggestion that we're making,'** it's hard to tell from the King James, **"The multitude must needs to come together: for they will hear that thou art come." 'the word is going to spread that you're here Paul,'** **"Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;"** (verse 23) evidently these four are believers. Now, Jesus said **'Let your yea be yea and your nay be nay,'** these are Jewish men that have come to Christ, and believe in him as Messiah, but they are still parsing out all of the heritage they have, which is very difficult to let go of [and this "heritage" as Pastor Joe calls it was literally the ceremonial part of God's Law, not the big 10 Commandments, but the ceremonial laws found within the Torah. These laws, as Paul pointed out shortly after this when he wrote the Book of Hebrews, were abrogated as not being necessary because the literal sacrifice of Jesus Christ took the place of all these ceremonial laws, these laws were only a shadow of the reality of Jesus' sacrificial death and how we now have our sins covered by his blood-sacrifice.] Those that had been Jews their entire life, particularly living in Jerusalem, around the sacrificial system, around the priests, around the dietary laws, all of a sudden they're

learning, now Jesus has taken care of everything, the blood of Christ is our righteousness. [Comment: Here's where Pastor Joe and I disagree about the dietary laws, I have come to see over the years, being a science nerd, that these laws are not ceremonial, but health laws. The swine flu of 1918-1919 was brought about by the intensive farming of swine, pigs, who dwelling in close contact with each other in herds, this flu virus multiplied, and then transferred over to their farmers. The corona virus that's shut down the entire world and crippled the world economy was a virus found in bats, which transferred to humans. The Bible in Leviticus 11 strictly forbids even human contact with these animals, and especially their dead carcasses. All shellfish have elevated levels of dioxin, which is the major ingredient of Agent Orange, a carcinogen our Vietnam Vets know all about. So I sincerely believe both our wonderful Gentile Christians, and even the Messianic Jewish communities are way off in believing the dietary laws are purely ceremonial, and thus done away. I think the whole world is learning a lesson here the hard way, and we'd better wake up.] So there is a transforming that's taking place, but the progress is slow. These men had taken a vow upon themselves, so it's hard to tell here, is it a Nazarite vow? because back in chapter 18 it tells us Paul himself there, it says **"And Paul, after this, tarried there a good while"** as referring to moving on, from Athens, **"then took leave of the brethren, and he sailed from thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow."** Now Paul himself had taken a vow, it was after the letter and meeting in Jerusalem in Acts 15, ah, we're not told that Paul thought it was legalistic, it was just something evidently in his heart, he had taken a vow. There's no instruction in the Epistles for you and I, that we're supposed to take vows and shave our heads. [Actually, Jesus himself told us in the Gospels to "swear not at all," which is akin to taking a vow.] You probably know Christians, and I do too, that have done that. Shaving your heads is popular anyhow. Not for me, but I'm 58 [Pastor Joe is 69 now in 2020, still going strong, God bless him], I've got all kinds of, when you've get like an old tree, I've got knots and warts and moss on my north side, I'd have all kinds of nicks if I tried to shave my head, do it while you're young, that's great, and then God does it to some of us as time goes by. But Paul had shaven his head, he had taken a vow, and they say **'Look, we've got these four men that have taken a vow,' "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.” (verse 24) “and them purify” it seems those were the ablutions, the ceremonial baptisms, “be at charge with them” means cover the cost of their vow. Listen, they’re dealing with the simple truth that the cross is an offense. Paul had written that to the Corinthians, the Jews seek after a sign, the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ and him crucified, foolishness to them, an offense to the Jews, a stone of stumbling, and foolishness to the Greeks. And here he is in Jerusalem, he has seen a great work amongst the Gentiles, and they’re trying to patch things up here, and not cause a ruckus, and they’re telling him *‘Now this is what we think you should do.’* Again, **1st Corinthians chapter 9**, Paul had said this, ***‘Though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more, unto the Jews I became a Jew, that I might gain the Jews, to them that are under the law, as though under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without the law, as without the law, being not without the law to God [i.e. God has written his laws in their hearts and minds to those that seem to be ‘without the law.'], but under the law to Christ, that I might gain them that are without the law.’*** But he's writing about something different there, he’s saying, ***‘For the sake of evangelism, I have become all things to all men.’*** Here, I think the problem is, James and the elders are saying, ***‘We have these thousands of Jews that have now come to believe in Yeshua, but they’re still zealous of the law*** [and that would mean they’re still zealous of the ceremonial parts of the law, which Paul points out in Hebrews have been abrogated by Christ’s sacrifice], ***‘Rumor is going to spread that you’re here, you could help patch things up if you took these young men, pick up the cost of their vow, evidently believers, and that you yourself then shave your head and you come in to the last day of it in regards to the purification, and everyone might see that you walk orderly and keep the law.’*** Paul was not keeping the law for his righteousness anymore. [Now the subject of law & grace is a complex one, and some believers reading this may get the wrong impression that the basic moral law of God, the Ten Commandments, are done away with for believers. The Bible doesn’t teach that. The sacrifice and blood of Christ is never a license to sin or live in a sinful lifestyle. To read some good teaching-explanations about law & grace, see <https://unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm>]

And Paul's men, Tychicus, Trophimus, Secundus, Aristarchus, all the Gentile men that came with Paul are listening to this. They say, the elders in Jerusalem, **“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, from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.”** (verse 25)

*Paul Enters The Temple With These Four Men To Complete
The Purification & Vows They Had Taken*

“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.” (verse 26)

Now, in Numbers 6, the offering that was offered was a peace-offering, it was blood, an animal. You know, that's the questionable thing here, Paul is trying to do what's right, but he already had peace with God, through the blood of Jesus Christ, so there are questions here as we look at this. [Comment: and don't forget, Paul was the **only** apostle, the only believer receiving nocturnal visits by the living Jesus Christ, as seen in Acts 18:9-10, and Acts 22:7-10, 18, 21, and Acts 23:11. The balance between Judaism, the true Judaism of Ezra & Nehemiah and the proper understanding between Law & Grace, as expounded by Paul for the Jewish believers in Jerusalem in the Book of Hebrews, was expressly taught to the apostle Paul directly by Jesus Christ. Jesus personally taught Paul in Arabia for an extended period of time. While I do not believe the Gentile Christians have a perfect understanding about what the early Judeo-Christian churches were like which Paul was used to raise up and found, they do have a very good understanding in the area of the grace of God as understood by Paul. As to which laws in the Torah are moral and not abrogated, and which are strictly ceremonial, there is a little bit of difference of opinion, which God allows, just so we respect each other's right of choice over what is essential and what is not, as Paul pointed out in Romans 14, see https://unityinchrist.com/romans/romans12-14_2.htm] It is a difficult time, it is a time of transition [for this founding church in Jerusalem, most of the churches Paul founded had already made the transition].

*Trouble Begins, Some Jews From Asia Minor Spot Paul In
The Temple*

“And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were in Asia,” that had persecuted him and followed him **“when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,”** that doesn’t mean they were praying for him, believe me, **“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”** Gentiles **“also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.” (verses 27-28)** So the whole plan of James and the elders blows to smithereens here. It wasn’t worth doing any of it. Now these unsaved Jews who had persecuted Paul throughout Asia Minor recognize him, and they’re screaming **‘This guy’s no good, this guy’s against Moses, against the law, he teaches against the Temple, and more than that he’s brought Greeks, Gentiles into this holy place!’** You have to understand, the context there for this, they believe, and they’re saying, that he’s brought Gentiles inside the Court of Women. Listen, in Jerusalem, most of you know, the Temple Precincts, it was over several thousand feet, the Court of Gentiles was the huge outer court, where the Jews turned it into a market place, they had no real respect or reverence for the fact that the Gentiles could come and believe in Jehovah. There was more strictly around the Temple itself, the Court of Women, and there was a warning written on that wall, it was about three foot high, and it was written in Greek and Latin, not in Hebrew, because the Jews understood, in Greek and in Latin it said *“Any Gentile that goes past here is dead.”* In fact, the literal translation and the inscription in both Greek and Latin read like this, this is what it said: *“No foreigner may enter within the barricade that surrounds the Temple and enclosure. Anyone who is caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death.”* And it said that in Latin and in Greek. The Romans had taken the right of the Jews away to execute the death sentence, stoning. Stephen was stoned in a riot, shouldn’t have happened. They had removed the right of the Jews to execute the death sentence, **except** they had made a provision for this. They knew that it ran so deep in the heart of the Jews, and the conviction was so great, that a Gentile that entered into the Court of Women

would defile the Temple, that the Romans themselves let them uphold the death sentence within those walls, even if it was a Roman citizen that was being put to death. Now that's remarkable, for Rome to be that condescending to have allowed that. [Maybe, it was paramount to the way that Rome administered, that the prevention of riots was more important than anything else, and so much so, that anyone responsible for causing a riot was subject to the death penalty. Well, a Gentile entering the Temple Precincts could and had caused riots amongst the Jews, so you can see the Roman reasoning behind this.] No doubt, when Paul writes from prison, when he writes to the Ephesians, he says this, **“But now in Christ Jesus ye who were afar off, have been made neigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even the law of commandments contained in the ordinances*; for to make in himself the twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:”** (Ephesians 2:13-16) Paul would finally write and say that partition wall is broken down. And listen, there are those in the Church [great Body of Christ] that have made the mistake of building that wall again. When I was a young man, my father was Catholic, my mom was Lutheran, I was not saved, and there was a wall of partition between me and Jesus Christ the Church had built. [Comment: from what I have been able to historically ascertain, the Catholic church, and it's daughter, the Lutheran church, is a false church. see <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch3.htm>] And it was about keeping tradition, it was about partaking of liturgy, it was about doing it the way we do it, and if you don't do it the way we do it, you can't be close to God, you can't be close to Jesus Christ, and by the way, I didn't think any of them were, I didn't see any light, nothing was witnessing to my heart, I was out with my friends taking drugs, living in the world, and none of that was touching me. It was Jesus Christ himself when I encountered him, and he washed over me with his love and changed my life, and I became a new creation. And I realized that wall of partition that had been rebuilt by the Church [Catholic, Lutheran etc.] was nonexistent. There is nothing between you and God's love, Jesus Christ has torn that down by the cross, by his own blood. And even this evening if you've been a prodigal, you've been away, listen, you are accepted in the beloved, yes, you should repent, John says **‘if we confess our sins he's**

faithful and just to forgive us, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,' but that wall of partition has been broken down. And it sadly has been rebuilt by the Church in different places and in different ways.

A Riot Begins, The Romans Are Forced To Step In

Here, a riot is beginning, they're accusing Paul of all of these things, so this attempt to placate the Jewish believers in Jerusalem had failed and fallen apart. And they said '**He's brought Gentiles into the Temple, and he's polluted this holy place.**' "(For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)" (verse 29) wasn't true. And notice this, "**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.**" (verse 30) no doubt, to the Court of Women, you had to go through a gate to enter that. "**And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.**" (verse 31) "chief captain" now the word means "to the Tribune" who was over a thousand men [Roman soldiers]. And that was his headache, believe me, extra soldiers were on duty during the Feasts, "**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.**" (verse 32) So if there are centurions, plural, each centurion is a hundred men under him, he's a Tribune with a thousand men under him, "**and centurions**" plural "**ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.**" (verse 32b) I'm sure he was glad. My question is, where is the church that talked him into going into the Temple and shaving his head and getting involved in this in the first place? Where are his buddies? "**Then the chief captain**" the Tribune "**came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. And some**" you know how crowds are "**cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult,**" when he couldn't get a straight answer, "**he commanded him to be carried into the castle**" the Antonio Fortress (verse 33-34). So then they got Paul on their shoulders, and they're carrying him up into the

Antonio Fortress. **“And when he came upon the stairs,”** now if you go to Jerusalem, you know you’ve got the Temple Precincts, and on the northern end was the Antonio Fortress where the Roman soldiers were, they could see the entire Temple Precincts from there. It says **‘When they carried him up on the stairs,’** they borne him, the soldiers were bearing him, **“so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying, Away with him.” (verses 35-36) ‘They’re crying Away with him!’** Well, isn’t it interesting 27 years before that, we’re told in John and Luke’s Gospel that the crowd in these precincts were crying *“Away with him!* to Jesus Christ, *“Away with him!”* to Pontius Pilate *“Away with him!”* I wonder if Paul was in the crowd then? I think he was. Remember the Sanhedrin. And here he is 27 years later, he’s being carried himself by the Romans, and the crowds are screaming the same exact phrase, *“Away with him! Away with him!”* How remarkable. Paul writes **‘That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his suffering, if by any means I might be conformable to his death.’** I wonder what the great apostle is thinking as the crowds are screaming *‘Away with him! Away with him!’* **“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?” (verse 37)** So he says to the Tribune in Greek **‘Can I talk to you for a moment?’** The Tribune is shocked and says **“You can speak Greek?”** **“Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?” (verse 38)** **‘I thought you were that trouble-making Egyptian.’** Paul said **‘Do I look like an Egyptian, are you kidding me? An Egyptian? You’ve gotta be kidding!’** how you say that in Greek, I don’t know. **“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.” (verse 39)** Josephus says there was a group called *The Secari*, “Seca” means dagger, they called them daggersmen, and they would slip into a crowd with a very sharp dagger six to ten inches long, and as they were walking by someone [usually a Roman soldier] they would slide it in and slide it out very quickly, and disappear in the crowd, and that person would fall down, bleeding. In fact, Jonathan the son of Annas, remember Annas and Caiaphas the high priest, Jonathan the son of Annas the high priest was killed by a Secari, an Egyptian Secari, one of the daggersmen. And they’re confusing Paul with this group, because

this riot started, he says **'You're that Egyptian trouble-maker, aren't you?'** Paul says **'Egyptian?'** The Tribune says **'Aren't you one of those who led 4,000 murderers out into the wilderness?'** Paul said, **'Man, I'm a Jew, of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia,'** **"a citizen of no mean city"** "of no mean" means "insignificant, small." He says **'I'm a citizen of no insignificant city, but of Tarsus, of Cilicia,'** **"and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people."** **"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," (verse 40)** Now look, this is the Holy Ghost, Paul said the Holy Ghost would tell me everywhere that bonds and afflictions await me in Jerusalem, **'but I am bound in the spirit to go there.'** Now Paul is up on the stage, he's up on the stairs going up into the Antonio Fortress, he's standing looking down at the multitudes, God's given him a stage, not the Romans, the Holy Ghost has given him a stage to speak to them. He's going to begin to speak to them in Hebrew, and this Roman soldier [Tribune] is not going to know what he said, because when the riot starts back up again he's going to get him inside and say *'What was he talking about?'* [That poor Tribune] *'Why did they start to riot again?'* So Paul says **'Can I speak to the people?'** they stop on the stairway, **"And when he"** the Tribune **"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," (verse 40)** He had spoken to the Tribune in Greek, now he's going to speak to this crowd in Hebrew. We can't go into...these next few chapters, very remarkably, give us the sequence that will follow, he will speak to them in a remarkable way, they give ear, they are silent, even when he says that Jesus is Yeshua the Messiah, they're silent, they listen. It isn't until he says **'God sent me unto the Gentiles,'** when he uses the word "Gentiles" then the riot breaks out again and everybody goes crazy. They gotta grab Paul, they bring him in, bind him, and then they come in and say *'What was he talking about, what was he saying?'* he orders him to be scourged so he can find out what he was talking about. Paul says **'Is it legal to scourge a Roman citizen?'** And then it says the Tribune is terrified, because it wasn't even legal to put a Roman citizen in chains. And then he comes in and meets with him privately and he talks with him, and so forth, and he arranges then a meeting, this is a preview, ok? Comes at the end of every show. He arranges a meeting with the Sanhedrin so that they can

understand what's going on. You remember, Paul gets in, people are yelling, and it says Paul perceives half are Sadducees and half are Pharisees, the Sadducees don't believe in the resurrection, they don't believe in angels, spirits, and it says when Paul perceived that, he said ***'I'm a Pharisee, am I being called into question for believing in the resurrection?'*** And they all start yelling at each other, fighting with each other then, and they have to get Paul out of there again. Then he's in prison at night, and he realizes, the Lord comes and appears to him and says ***'Paul, you did a good job, you started two riots here, it's way above your par. You're going to go to Rome also.'*** You would think that's First Class *El Al*. Several of these Jews then take an oath, that they're not going to eat or drink until they kill Paul. So they go back to the high priest and say *'Call for another meeting, and when you get him in there, we're going to kill him.'* Somebody overhears it, and sends a little boy [Paul's nephew] to come and to talk to Paul, and Paul when he hears it, says to the little boy [his nephew] *'You go to the Tribune and you tell him.'* And it was the Tribune, the Roman Centurions and Tribunes we meet are fairly remarkable men, who takes aside this young boy and talks to him privately, finds out what's going on, and then he grabs several Centurions, 60 cavalymen and they get Paul out of there at night and they take him to Caesarea where he will be for two years. We'll catch up with all of that in the next Sunday night service, then we have some remarkable, remarkable scenes there, then finally we'll follow his journey to Rome. So, I encourage you to read ahead, let's stand, let's pray...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 21:1-40, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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<https://resources.ccp Philly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=44>

The church in Jerusalem was still struggling with the issue of Law & Grace. What is the proper balance? See <https://unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm> and https://unityinchrist.com/romans/romans12-14_2.htm

Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews to help further enlighten the Jerusalem and Judea churches of God in Judea about the sacrifices, the Temple, the priesthood, and Law & Grace as it now applies to believers in Yeshua. For an expository study on Hebrews, see <https://unityinchrist.com/hebrews/Hebrews1-1-14.htm>