

BIBLE STUDY-MARCH 22, 2023
THE BOOK OF ACTS – CHAPTER 21 & 22

CHAPTER 21

⁴ *We sought out the disciples there and stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.*

- "Through the Spirit" means "on account of what the Spirit said."
- The Holy Spirit was forbidding Paul to go to Jerusalem, even though it was God's will that he go (see v.14, 23:11).

QUESTION:

Did Paul disobey the Holy Spirit by going to Jerusalem?

⁸ *Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven.* ⁹ *He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.*

- This is the same Philip mentioned in 6:5 and 8:26-40
- Obviously the gift of prophecy was given to both men and women.
- Women actively participated in God's work (2:17; Philippians 4:3)

QUESTION:

Who were some other women who prophesied?

- _____ (Exodus 15:20)
- _____ (Judges 4:4)
- _____ (2 Kings 22:14)
- _____ (Nehemiah 6:14)
- _____ (Isaiah 8:3)
- _____ (Luke 2:36-38)

¹⁰ *After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.*

- Abagus was one of the prophets who foretold the famine 15 years earlier in A.D.46 (11:2-28), now he predicted Paul's arrest and imprisonment.
- The closer Paul got to Jerusalem, the clearer and more definite the revelations became (v.11)

¹³ *Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."*

- The will of the majority of even the unanimous wish of genuine caring believer is not necessarily God's will
- Paul was not indifferent to the pleas and tears of his friends, but he was determined to fulfill his purpose and willing to suffer imprisonment and even to die for the name of Jesus

¹⁴ *When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."*

- Many disciples also prophesied about the suffering that Paul would face if he went to Jerusalem
- Although Paul recognized the truth about the revelation, he relied on the personal guidance of the Holy Spirit and God's Word to him personally for the important decision he faced.

QUESTION:

How should we respond to the prophetic words of others?

¹⁸ *The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present.*

- James, Jesus' brother, was the leader of the Jerusalem church (15:13-21; Galatians 1:19; 2:9)

²⁰ *When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law."*

- Both James and Paul knew that Jewish ceremonies could not bring salvation
- They recognized that some parts of the law and Jewish custom could be followed as an expression of the believer's faith in and love for Christ

²¹ *They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs.*

- The Jerusalem council (Acts 15) settled the issue of circumcision of Gentile believers
- However, rumors went around that Paul had gone far beyond their decision, even forbidding Jews to circumcise their children.

QUESTION:

What does this tell us offending others?

²³ so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. ²⁴ Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law.

- Evidently these four men had made a religious vow. Because Paul was going to participate with them in the vow, he would need to take part in the purification ceremony for entering the temple (Numbers 6:9-20)
- Although Paul had strong convictions, he was willing to compromise on non-essential points, becoming all things to all people so that he might save some (1Corinthians 9:19-23)
- Jewish laws can be thought of in two ways. Paul rejected one way and accepted the other.
 1. _____

 2. _____

³¹ While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar.

- 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 (23:26)

³⁷ As the soldiers were about to take Paul into the barracks, he asked the commander, "May I say something to you?" "Do you speak Greek?" he replied. ³⁸ "Aren't you the Egyptian who started a revolt and led four thousand terrorists out into the wilderness some time ago?"

- By speaking in _____, Paul showed that he was a _____, _____ man and not just a common rebel starting riots
- The language caught the commander's attention and gained Paul protection and the opportunity to give his defense

⁴⁰ After receiving the commander's permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned to the crowd. When they were all silent, he said to them in Aramaic

- _____, was the common language of Palestinian Jews
- He used _____ to communicate in the language of his listeners and to show that he was a devout Jew and had respect for the Jewish laws and customs

CHAPTER 22

³ *"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today.*

- By saying that at one time he was zealous for God as any of his listeners, Paul was acknowledging their sincere motives behind their desire to kill him and
-
-

⁶ *"About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me.*

- After gaining a hearing and establishing common ground with his audience, Paul gave his testimony

¹⁶ *And now what are you waiting for? **Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.***

- Water baptism accompanied the proclamation of the gospel from the beginning of the church's mission (2:38,41)
- It is a rite of Christian initiation used in the New Testament to indicate a person is fully committed to Jesus
- Water baptism visibly demonstrated the believer's faith in the presence of the Christian community

QUESTION

What does water baptism mean/signify?

1. (Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 3:26-4:7)
-

2. (Acts 2:38) (Colossians 2:12)
-

3. (1Peter 3:21)
-

4. (2:38; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21)
-

5. (Romans 6:1-11; Colossians 2:11-12), (Romans 6:4-5, Colossians 2:12-13)
-

¹⁷ *When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance*

- The term "trance" here means a state of mind where a person is primarily aware only of the realm of the Spirit rather than the realm of the natural
- It means being brought by the Spirit into a deeper and more intense communion with God (see Peter's trance in 10:10; 11:5; Colossians 12:3-4)

²¹ *Then the Lord said to me, 'Go; I will send you far away to the **Gentiles**.'* ²² *The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, "Rid the earth of him! He's not fit to live!"*

- These people listened to Paul, but the word *Gentile* brought out their anger and exposed their pride.
- They were supposed to be a light to the Gentiles, telling them about the one true God

²⁷ *The commander went to Paul and asked, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" "Yes, I am," he answered.*²⁸ *Then the commander said, "I had to pay a lot of money for my citizenship."*

- By law, a Roman citizen could not be punished until he had been proven guilty of a crime
- Paul was born a Roman citizen, and the commander purchase his citizenship

³⁰ *The commander wanted to find out exactly why Paul was being accused by the Jews. So the next day he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the members of the Sanhedrin to assemble. Then he brought Paul and had him stand before them.*

QUESTION:

How did Paul use his time of persecution?

SOURCES:

1. <http://www.bibleversestudy.com/>
2. Life Application Study Bible – NIV
3. The Jeremiah Study Bible - NKJV
4. Life In The Spirit Study Bible- NIV