

Acts Chapter 21

1. **Now it came to pass, that when we had departed from them and set sail, running a straight course we came to Cos, the following *day* to Rhodes, and from there to Patara.**

A. **Now it came to pass,**

1. **came to pass-** Gr. *ginomai*

B. **that when we had departed from them and set sail,**

1. **departed-** Gr. *apospao-* *to tear away*

a. The use of this word shows that the elders in Miletus were not wanting to let Paul go, and he had to tear himself away from them. This is a much better situation than some ministers who find themselves being tossed out of a place!

2. **set sail-** Gr. *anago-* *of navigators: launch out, set sail, put to sea*

C. **running a straight course we came to Cos,**

1. **running a straight course-** Gr. *euthudromeo-* *to run straight*

2. **Cos-** means *summit, public prison*

a. *This was a small island in the Grecian Archipelago, a short distance from the southwestern point of Asia Minor. It is now called "Stan-co." It was celebrated for its fertility, and for the wine and silk-worms which it produced. It was about 40 miles south of Miletus. -Barnes Commentary*

D. **the following day to Rhodes,**

1. **following day-** Gr. *hexes*

2. **Rhodes-** means *rosy*

a. *Rhodes lay fifty miles to the south of Cos. It was famed for being the most beautiful spot in this, perhaps the fairest portion of the world. There was a proverb that 'the sun shone every day in Rhodes.'* From its unrivalled situation, lying as it does on the verge of two of the basins of the Mediterranean Sea, it has always been an emporium for the eastern and western trades. It was the point from which the Greek geographers reckoned their parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude, In the Greek period, it was illustrious especially for its great temple of the Sun, and for the Colossus; this latter, in the days of Paul, was in ruins, having been overthrown by an earthquake. Its navy had done great

and effectual service in the suppression of piracy in those seas. In the days of Roman power, Rhodes still enjoyed a nominal freedom. It formally became a province of the Empire in the days of the Emperor Vespasian. In mediaeval story, Rhodes obtained a distinguished place as the home of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, and then it was the last Christian city to make a stand against the Saracens. It now belongs to the Ottoman Turks, retains its ancient name, but little else of its former magnificence and power.

-Popular NT Commentary

E. and from there to Patara

1. Patara- means *scattering*

a. *Patara, on the coast of Lydia, was the harbour of Xanthus, and, from its ruins, was a place of some importance and splendour. Here was a famous oracle of Apollo. This port is now an inland marsh.* -Barnes Commentary

2. And finding a ship sailing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard and set sail.

A. And finding a ship sailing over to Phoenicia,

1. **finding-** Gr. **heurisko**

2. **ship-** Gr. **ploion**

3. **sailing over-** Gr. **diaperao-** *to pass over, cross over, i.e. a river, a lake, a body of water*

4. **Phoenicia-** means *palm country*

a. *For it seems that the ship they went aboard at Assos, [Act 20:13](#) went no further, at least in the way the apostle was going, than Patara; but lighting on another ship, which was bound for Phoenicia, for the city of Tyre, which bordered on the land of Israel, and indeed originally belonged to Canaan;* - Gill Commentary

B. we went aboard and set sail

1. **went aboard-** Gr. **epibaino-** *to walk up*

2. **set sail-** Gr. **anago-** *of navigators: launch out, set sail, put to sea*

3. When we had sighted Cyprus, we passed it on the left, sailed to Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unload her cargo.

A. When we had sighted Cyprus,

1. **sighted**- Gr. **anaphaino**- *to bring to light, display; mid. and pass. to appear, a nautical term, to come in sight of*
2. **Cyprus**- *means fair, blossom*
 - a. *One of the largest islands of the Mediterranean - about 148 miles long and 40 broad. It is distant about 60 miles from the Syrian coast. It was the "Chittim" of the Old Testament (Num 24:24). The Greek colonists gave it the name of Kypros, from the Cyprus - i.e., the henna (see CAMPHIRE) – which grew on this island. It was originally inhabited by Phoenicians. In 477 B.C. it fell under the dominion of the Greeks; and became a Roman province 58 B.C.. In ancient times it was a centre of great commercial activity. Corn and wine and oil were produced here in the greatest perfection. It was rich also in timber and in mineral wealth.*
-Smith Bible Dictionary

B. we passed it on the left,

1. **passed**- Gr. **kataleipo**- *to leave*
2. **left**- Gr. **euonumos**- *left hand*

C. sailed to Syria,

1. **sailed**- Gr. *pleuo*
2. **Syria**- *means exalted*
 - a. *The geographical name Syria is here employed in the Roman sense, according to which Phoenicia and Palestine were considered parts of the province of Syria. The distance between Patara and Tyre was 340 geographical miles.*
-Popular NT Commentary

D. and landed at Tyre,

1. **landed**- Gr. **katago**- *to bring the vessel from deep water to the land*
2. **Tyre**- *means a rock*
 - a. *A celebrated commercial city of Phoenicia, on the coast of the Mediterranean. Its Hebrew name, **Tzor**, signifies a rock; which well agrees with the site of Sur, the modern town, on a rocky peninsula, formerly an island. There is no doubt that, previous to the siege of the city by Alexander the Great, Tyre was situated on an island; but, according to the tradition of the inhabitants, there was a city on the mainland, before there was a city on the island; and the tradition receives*

some color from the name of Palaetyrus, or Old Tyre, which was borne in Greek times, by a city on the continent, thirty stadia to the south. -Smith Bible Dictionary

E. for there the ship was to unload her cargo

1. **ship**- Gr. **ploion**
2. **unload**- Gr. **apophortizomai**- *to lay down a load, unlade, discharge*
3. **cargo**- Gr. **gomos**- *a lading or freight of a ship, cargo, merchandise conveyed in a ship*

4. And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem.

A. And finding disciples,

1. **finding**- Gr. **aneurisko**- *to find out, to find by diligent search*
 - a. This word shows that Paul searched for the disciples in the city.
2. **disciples**- Gr. **mathetes**

B. we stayed there seven days,

1. **stayed**- Gr. **epimeno**- *to remain on*
2. **seven days**- Gr. **hepta hemera**

C. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem.

1. **told**- Gr. **lego**
2. **through the Spirit**- Gr. **dia pneuma**
 - a. Notice that they did not say, "Paul, I don't feel good about you going...". Neither did they say, "Paul, don't go to Jerusalem. We are saying this by the Spirit..." No, it says they told Paul "by the Spirit" not to go to Jerusalem. This was the writer of Acts saying and recording that they said this to Paul, by the Spirit, not that they thought they were speaking by the Spirit.
 - b. We saw earlier that Paul felt bound to go on this trip and he felt it was God compelling him to go. Here we see the Spirit said do not go. Which is it?! God is not schizophrenic! He is not going to say go and then do not go. Paul felt bound to go, but it was not from the Lord. The Holy Spirit, the whole trip was trying to get Paul to stop because he would not be accepted in Jerusalem.

c. This shows the danger of taking up a false burden that we think is from the Lord but it is not. It comes from our own soulish attachment to a thing or people. The closest thing to a leading from the Spirit is a strong emotional attachment to something or someone. Paul was strongly attached emotionally to the Jewish people. He had taken the burden upon himself to reach them, but that was not his call from God.

3. **go up**- Gr. **anabaino**

4. **Jerusalem**- means *habitation of peace*

5. When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed.

A. When he had come to the end of those days,

1. **come to the end**- Gr. **exartizo**- *to complete, finish*

a. The use of this word implies Paul had planned to stay there for a week.

2. **days**- Gr. **hemera**

B. we departed and went on our way,

1. **departed**- Gr. **exerchomai**

2. **went on our way**- Gr. **poreuomai**- *traveled*

C. and they all accompanied us,

1. **accompanied**- Gr. **propempeo**- *to send forward*

D. with wives and children,

1. **wives**- Gr. **gune**

a. There is only one Greek word for women and wives in the Bible- **gune**. Here we see it refers to wives.

2. **children**- Gr. **teknon**

a. God desires Christian families not just Christians. It is important to include children in the spiritual functions of the church and prayer. Here we saw the children join in prayer. It marks them for good.

E. till we were out of the city,

1. **city**- Gr. **polis**

F. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed

1. **knelt down**- Gr. **tithemi gonu**- *to set on the knees*

a. This was a common posture for prayer in the days of the Bible. I do not think we kneel enough in praying as we should. Kneeling is a sign of humility and submission to God. Kneeling is not the only prayer posture found in the Word of God. But it is a prominent one, which is not practiced much anymore among many Christians Are we too proud to kneel in prayer these days, or are we too proud because we have not yet kneeled in prayer?

2. **shore-** Gr. **aigialos-** *shore, beach*

a. Depending on how soft the sand was, this might not have been very comfortable on their knees. Humility is not comfortable for our flesh.

3. **prayed-** Gr. **proseuchomai**

6. When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned home.

A. When we had taken our leave of one another,

1. **taken our leave-** Gr. **aspazomai-** *embraced*

a. Paul had just known these saints for a few days but had an instantaneous strong connection to them. This is only true of Christians and the bond we share in the Spirit.

B. we boarded the ship,

1. **boarded-** Gr. **epibaino**

2. **ship-** Gr. **ploion**

C. and they returned home

1. **returned-** Gr. **hupostrepho**

2. **home-** Gr. **eis idios-** *unto their own*

7. And when we had finished *our* voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day.

A. And when we had finished our voyage from Tyre,

1. **finished-** Gr. **dianuo-** *to accomplish fully, bring quite to an end, finish*

2. **voyage-** Gr. **ploos-** *a sailing*

3. **Tyre**

B. we came to Ptolemais,

1. **came-** Gr. **katantao-** *to come to a place over against, opposite another*

2. **Ptolemais**- means *warlike*

a. *This was a city situated on the coast of the Mediterranean, on the north angle of a bay which extends, in a semicircle of three leagues, as far as the point of Mount Carmel. At the south and west sides the city was washed by the sea, and was surrounded by triple walls. It was in the tribe of Asher [Jdg 1:31](#), and was originally called Accho; but was called Ptolemais in honor of one of the Ptolemies, who beautified and adorned it.* - Barnes Commentary

C. **greeted the brethren,**

1. **greeted**- Gr. **aspazomai**- *embraced*

2. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**

a. It appears Paul was seeking out Christians here as well. He is no longer looking for ministry but for connection and encouragement from other believers.

D. **and stayed with them one day**

1. **stayed**- Gr. **meno**

2. **day**- Gr. **hemera**

a. It only takes one day to change your life. These believers could have had their whole Christian life altered by what Paul imparted to them that day. Do not discount the power of today!

8. **On the next *day* we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was *one* of the seven, and stayed with him.**

A. **On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea,**

1. **next day**- Gr. **epaurion**- *upon the next*

2. **Paul's companions**- Gr. **peri Paulos**- *those around Paul*

a. This phrase, "we who were Paul's companions", is not found in the best Greek manuscripts. This seems to make more sense, because with this phrase added, it seems that Paul's companions departed without Paul and stayed with Philip without Paul. I think it is clear that Paul was with them during this time.

3. **departed**- Gr. **exerchomai**

4. **came-** Gr. **erchomai**

5. **Caesarea-** means *severed*

a. *This city was formerly called Strato's Tower. It is situated on the coast of the Mediterranean, at the mouth of a small river, and has a fine harbor. It is 36 miles south of Acre, and about 62 miles northwest of Jerusalem, and about the same distance northeast of Azotus. The city is supposed by some to be the Hazor mentioned in [Jos 11:1](#). It was rebuilt by Herod the Great, and named Caesarea in honor of Augustus Caesar. The city was dedicated to him, and was called Sebaste, the Greek word for Augustus. It was adorned with most splendid houses; and the Temple of Caesar was erected by Herod over against the mouth of the haven, in which was placed the statue of the Roman emperor. It became the seat of the Roman governor while Judea was a Roman province, [Act 23:33](#); [Act 25:6](#), [Act 25:13](#). Philip afterward resided at this place. See [Act 21:8-9](#). Caesarea at present is inhabited only by jackals and beasts of prey. "Perhaps," says Dr. Clarke, "there has not been in the history of the world an example of any city that in so short a space of time rose to such an extraordinary height of splendor as did this of Caesarea, or that exhibits a more awful contrast to its former magnificence by the present desolate appearance of its ruins. Not a single inhabitant remains. Of its gorgeous palaces and temples, enriched with the choicest works of art, scarcely a trace can be discerned. Within the space of 10 years after laying the foundation, from an obscure fortress, it became the most flourishing and celebrated city of all Syria." Now it is in utter desolation. -Barnes Commentary*

B. and entered the house of Philip the evangelist,

1. **entered-** Gr. **eiserchomai**

2. **Philip-** means *lover of horses*

a. *We have already met with this Philip. In the early years of the Church's story, seven men were chosen by the believers in Jerusalem as assistants to the 'Twelve;' of these seven two seem to have come rapidly into great prominence, Stephen and Philip. The first of these, Stephen, after acquiring a fame*

unequaled in the first years of the faith, endured a martyr's death, and thus followed his Master. The second, Philip, like Stephen, became a great preacher. We read of him in Samaria (chap. [Act 8:5](#)), and again on the way to Gaza (chap. [Act 8:26](#)), then as preaching in many nameless cities ('in all the cities,' chap. [Act 8:40](#)), and finally apparently settling in Caesarea. This was about A.D. 35-36, nearly a quarter of a century before the visit of St. Paul to the home of Philip on his way to the Holy City.

-Popular NT Commentary

3. **evangelist**- Gr. **euaggelistes**- *a proclaimer of the good news*

- a. This is a five-fold equipping office. [Eph. 4:11](#)
- b. Although we do not read any more after chapter 8 of Acts [his ministry in Samaria and in the desert with the Ethiopian eunuch] of Philip's evangelistic endeavors, no doubt he continued on up until this point.

C. **who was one of the seven and stayed with him.**

1. **seven**- Gr. **hepta**

- a. This is referring to the seven chosen to be deacons in the early church. Philip, along with Stephen, was among those chosen. These two went on to greater levels of ministry leadership as recorded in the Bible.
- b. This verse shows us that first we must be found faithfully serving before we are promoted to leadership. No one starts out in leadership.

2. **stayed**- Gr. **meno**

- a. Again, we do not see Paul trying to minister to the Jews or any unsaved person on this journey to Jerusalem, but he was seeking the solace of believers.

9. **Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.**

A. **man**- Gr. **aner**

B. **virgin**- Gr. **parthenos**- *one's marriageable daughter*

1. This term was used to merely show that they were not married. It is interesting to note that if a young woman was not married back in that day she was supposed a virgin. I wish that were the case today. That goes both ways for men and women.

C. daughters- Gr. **thugater**

1. *This is an example of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel quoted by St. Peter in the early days of the faith ([Act 2:17](#)): 'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy . . . and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit' ([Joe 2:28-29](#)).*
-Popular NT Commentary

D. prophesied- Gr. **propheteuo**

1. I wonder what they prophesied? I don't know...maybe.....
..... **DON'T GO TO JERUSALEM!**
2. Women prophesied in the early church. [1 Cor. 11:5](#) So much for that erroneous and misapplied teaching of women not being able to speak.

10. And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

A. And as we stayed many days,

1. **stayed-** Gr. **epimeno-** *to stay on*
2. **many days-** Gr. **pleion hemera-** *more days*
 - a. This should be translated as "more days" not "many days". Paul could not have stayed many days because of his haste to go to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost.
 - b. Paul could have stayed a bit longer than he first anticipated.

B. a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea

1. **prophet-** Gr. **prophetes**
2. **named-** Gr. **onoma**
3. **Agabus-** means *a locust*
 - a. Tradition says that Agabus went to several countries, teaching and converting many. This moved the Jews of Jerusalem to arrest him, and they tortured him by beating him severely and putting a rope around his neck. He was dragged outside the city and stoned to death.
4. **came down-** Gr. **katerchomai**
 - a. Jerusalem is in the region of Judea, which is high hill country.

5. **Judea**- means *land of Judah- praise*

- a. Agabus, just coming from Jerusalem, is warning Paul about going to Jerusalem. It is possible that those in Jerusalem had not accepted Agabus' ministry either.

11. **When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.' "**

A. **When he had come to us,**

- 1. **came**- Gr. **erchomai**

B. **he took Paul's belt,**

- 1. **took**- Gr. **airo**- *lifted*

- a. I would question if some guy took my belt off of me! I would say, "Hey dude, what are you doing?"

- 2. **belt**- Gr. **zone**

- a. *The loose, flowing robes, or outer garments, which were worn in Eastern countries, were bound by a girdle, or sash, around the body when they ran, or labored, or walked. Such a girdle was therefore an indispensable part of dress.*

-Barnes Commentary

C. **bound his own hands and feet,**

- 1. **bound**- Gr. **deo**

- a. Paul had earlier said that he felt bound in his spirit to go to Jerusalem. Here the Holy Spirit tells and it is demonstrated to him that he will be physically bound in Jerusalem.

- 2. **hands**- Gr. **cheir**

- 3. **feet**- Gr. **pous**

- a. Often prophets in the Old Testament would act out their prophecies as visuals. [Isa 20:2](#), [Jer 13:1](#), [Eze 4:1](#), [Hos 1:2](#)

D. **and said,**

- 1. **said**- Gr. **epo**

E. **Thus says the Holy Spirit,**

- 1. **says**- Gr. **lego**

- 2. **Holy Spirit**

- a. Again, the Holy Spirit is warning Paul about what waits ahead for him in Jerusalem. Why would the Holy Spirit keep warning Paul about going in a direction which was His will

and that Paul was already committed to going in? There was none! That would just serve to possibly dissuade Paul from doing it!

- b. Paul turns this around as just more opposition is against him in following out his mission.
- c. Paul had a great strength in that he was very hard headed against persecution, but now the enemy was using this against him, and he was taking the warnings from God as opposition to him doing God's will.

F. So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt,

1. Jews

- a. What? Problems from the Jews? That was nothing new. Again, Paul was sent to the Gentiles but always would go to the Jews. Most of his problems were caused by this. How often are we the source of most of our problems?

2. Jerusalem

- a. Early on in Paul's Christian experience, God told him to get out of Jerusalem because his testimony would not be received and to go to the Gentiles. Now, Paul returns to that same place, thinking things have changed. This was not so.

3. bind- Gr. **deo**

4. man- Gr. **anthropos**

5. owns- Gr. **esti-** *this is*

6. belt- Gr. **zone**

G. and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles

1. deliver- Gr. **paradidomi**

- a. Paul came to Jerusalem as a free man, but would end up, in Rome, as a prisoner. He could have gone there as a free man. He had just finished writing the book of Romans and declared himself ready to preach the gospel in Rome.

[Rom. 1:15](#) He would get there, but in a different way than what he had first thought.

2. hands- Gr. **cheir**

3. Gentiles- Gr. **ethnos**

- a. Look at this! He is going to minister to the Jews, but of course that is not going to work out well for him, and they will hand him over to those that he is supposed to be

ministering to! The Gentiles! This was another Jonah situation here. Paul will be spit up on Gentile land after being thrown into the sea after a shipwreck!

12. Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem.

A. Now when we heard these things,

1. heard- Gr. **akouo**

- a. This group heard and heeded the warning; sadly, Paul did not.

B. both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem

1. pleaded- Gr. **parakaleo-** *to beseech, to pled, to encourage*

- a. Here we see yet another group of people trying to get Paul to change his mind. You cannot always determine God's will by people being in favor or being not in favor of what you are doing, but when there is a unanimous opposition to your course of action over a continued space of time, it is best to really check with the Lord if you are on the right course.

2. go up- Gr. **anabaino-** *to walk up*

- a. Jerusalem is at a high elevation in Palestine, so if you were going there from any direction, you had to go up.

3. Jerusalem

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

A. Then Paul answered,

1. answered- Gr. **apokrinomai**

B. What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart?

1. weeping- Gr. **klaio-** *to weep, sob, wail*

2. breaking- Gr. **sunthrupto-** *to crush to pieces; met. to break the heart of any one, to make to recoil in fear*

- a. This word means to crush or break, but as above, it can mean to cause one to recoil in fear. He could have been saying, "Why are you trying to cause me to fear going forward with my plan?"

b. Again, why would the Holy Spirit ask Paul to go to Jerusalem and accept the mission only to have people raised up along the way to warn him about what awaited him, which would only cause fear in him to complete the mission?

3. **heart-** Gr. **kardia**

a. Their emotional pleas were breaking his heart, but not his will.

C. **For I am ready not only to be bound,**

1. **ready-** Gr. **hetoimos-** *ready, prepared*

a. We need to be ready and prepared in our hearts for what God has called us to do. In this case, he was ready for something that God had NOT called him to do.

2. **bound-** Gr. **deo**

D. **but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus**

1. **die-** Gr. **apothnesko**

a. Here we see a very noble sentiment by Paul, which he meant with all his heart. He was ready to die for the Lord. There is a problem with this. God did not call him to die for Him in Jerusalem. He was not called to Jerusalem at all!

b. Most Christians that read this say, "Now that is what a Christian ought to be right there! You need to be ready to put it all on the line for Jesus! This is awesome!" The thing we need to see is that when we get into the flesh, we revert back to our version of flesh that we developed before we came to Christ. Paul had 100% prime USDA choice flesh. He had very refined, noble looking, religious flesh. When Paul got into the flesh, he got religious, and it looked very, very good! We see an example of this when Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them on their second missionary journey, but Paul refused because Mark had failed them on the first journey. They ended up fighting over it and having a ministry split. Later, Paul admitted that John Mark was needed for the ministry and requested his help.

c. Religious flesh always offers up to God what He did not request or ask for. God did not ask that Paul die for him in Jerusalem.

2. **name-** Gr. **onoma**

14. So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

A. So when he would not be persuaded,

1. persuaded- Gr. **peitho**

- a. When you have already decided on a course of action, it is hard to be persuaded to change it.

B. we ceased,

1. ceased- Gr. **hesuchazo-** *to be silent or quiet, acquiesce, to desist from discussion*

- a. This is a wise course when someone is not persuaded. It is not up to us to persuade someone. We can share with someone but it is not up to us to force them to be persuaded.

C. saying- Gr. **epo**

D. the will of the Lord be done

1. will- Gr. **thelema**

2. Lord- Gr. **kurios**

3. done- Gr. **ginomai-** *come to pass*

- a. Some take this to mean that they acknowledged that Paul's going to Jerusalem was the will of God. That is not what this is saying. If these people knew it was God's will for Paul to go to Jerusalem and were trying to persuade him to not go, then that would have been sinful and wrong. All this is saying is that they put Paul in God's hands and trusted God to bring out His will through the situation.
- b. We need to commend people into God's hands and pray that God will work out His will in their lives, especially when it looks like they are headed in the wrong direction.

15. And after those days we packed and went up to Jerusalem.

A. days- Gr. **hemera**

B. packed- Gr. **aposkeuazo-** *to pack up (one's) baggage*

C. went up- Gr. **anabaino**

1. This must have been a very anxious time for Luke and the rest of the team, knowing bad things were about to go down.

16. **Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge.**

A. Also some of the disciples from Caesarea went with us and brought with them a certain Mnason of Cyprus,

1. **disciples-** Gr. *mathetes*

2. **Caesarea**

3. **went-** Gr. *sunerchomai-* *to come with*

4. **brought-** Gr. *ago*

a. *The original in this place would be better translated, "And brought us **to** Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple," etc. It is evident that, though Mnason was originally of Cyprus, yet he was now an inhabitant of Jerusalem, and was well known to the disciples at Caesarea. It is possible that he might have been at Caesarea, and accompanied Paul to Jerusalem; but the more correct interpretation of the passage is, that Paul and his fellow-travelers were conducted to his house in Jerusalem, and that he was not with them in the journey.*

-Barnes Commentary

5. **Mnason-** means *remember*

a. It is very interesting that the Holy Spirit chose to mention this man, Mnason. His name means "remember". He was an early disciple, before Paul had gotten saved, when he was still Saul of Tarsus, the hater of Christians. It is interesting that right when they got to Jerusalem, Paul would meet this man, Mnason. God was again trying to get Paul's attention through this man. This man's name means "remember." His presence was saying, "Remember Paul before you were saved, how you were so hard, obstinate, and hostile to the faith? Well, that is the same kind of person you are about to deal with right now! "

6. **Cyprus**

B. an early disciple,

1. **early-** Gr. *archaios-* *old*

a. This man was saved before Paul was. He may have been one of the three thousand that were saved on the Day of

Pentecost, coming to Jerusalem for that feast and staying afterwards.

2. **disciple**- Gr. **mathetes**

C. **with whom we were to lodge**

1. **lodge**- Gr. **xenizo**- *to lodge as strangers*

17. **And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.**

A. **And when the we had come to Jerusalem,**

1. **come**- Gr. **ginomai**- *came, arrived*

2. **Jerusalem**

B. **the brethren received us gladly**

1. **brethren**- Gr. **adelphos**

2. **received**- Gr. **dechomai**- *to embrace, welcome*

a. This visit to Jerusalem seemed to have started well but would not end well.

3. **gladly**- Gr. **asmenos**- *with joy, delight*

a. The brethren will receive us usually when we agree with them, but not so much when we do not.

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

A. **On the following day Paul went in with us to James,**

1. **following day**- Gr. **epiousa**- *be at hand, next, following, on the following day*

2. **went in**- Gr. **eiseimi**- *to go into*

3. **James**

a. *James, the so-called brother of the Lord (see [Gal 1:19](#); [Gal 2:9](#)), and the writer of the New Testament epistle which bears his name, who is generally supposed to have presided over the earliest church Council (see [Acts 15](#)), occupied a peculiar position of authority among the Jerusalem Christians. His history was a strange one. During the Lord's earthly life, James, with the rest of 'His brethren' seems to have been a disbeliever in His mission. He was converted by that appearance of the Risen One specially related by Paul ([1Co 15:7](#)), — 'After that He was seen of James.' At a*

comparatively early period of the Church's history he appears to have been selected as the resident head of the Jerusalem community. He possessed two qualifications which marked him out for this peculiar distinction,—his relationship after the flesh to the risen Jesus, and his faithful observance of the Mosaic law and ordinances, to which he seems to have added a rigorous asceticism. His surname of the 'just' or 'righteous,' by which name he was generally known in the records of the early Church, is a witness that he was, if not the stem ascetic of the tradition above quoted, at least a rigid observer of the Mosaic ritual and law. It has been happily remarked by Dr. Schaff (History of the Apostolic Church, vol. i. book I), that 'the influence of James was altogether necessary. He was not to outlive the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Shortly before it (according to Hegesippus), in the year 69, after having borne powerful testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus, he was thrown down from the pinnacle of the temple and stoned by the Pharisees. His last words were, "I beg of Thee, Lord God Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He was buried by the temple.' -Popular NT Commentary

- b. James had a very strong personality. He also did not have the revelation of grace and the freedom from the Law that Paul did. The Pauline revelation of grace is just that! It was given to Paul. Many contemporaries of Paul did not understand what Paul understood- even Peter!
- c. **2Pe 3:16** as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures.
- d. James had such a strong personality, that Peter was afraid of James when he was enjoying grace and its freedom in a Gentile church in Antioch. Messengers came to Peter, from James, and out of fear, he separated himself from the Gentiles and from eating with them.
- e. **Gal 2:11** Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;

Gal 2:12 for before certain men **came from James**, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, **fearing** those who were of the circumcision.

- f. Paul rebuked Peter for his duplicity and the turning from grace to legalism, but it would be Paul's turn to do that. James pressured Paul about him showing that he was still under the Law and Paul goes with it! He had just written the book of Romans, wherein he clearly taught that **we [including himself]** were dead to the Law so we could live for another, even Jesus Christ. [Rom. 7:4](#) Paul had a turn at duplicity, turning from grace to legalism. He clearly states in [Rom. 6:14](#) that we are no longer under the Law but under Grace.

B. and all the elders were present

1. **elders**- Gr. **presbuteros**- *mature ones*

- a. They were mature in the teaching of Moses, but not so much in the understanding of grace.

2. **present**- Gr. **paraginomai**- *to appear publically*

19. When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

A. When he had greeted them,

1. **greeted**- Gr. **aspazomai**- *to embrace*

- a. The religious will embrace you if you agree with them and follow what they say.

B. he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through His ministry

1. **told** - Gr. **exegeomai**- *to detail, to set forth in language; to tell, narrate, recount*

2. **in detail**- Gr. **kata heis hekastos**- *according to each and every one*

- a. This was what had happened on his second and third missionary journeys. Paul had already reported to them at an earlier date what happened during his first missionary journey. [Gal. 2:1-9](#)

3. **done**- Gr. **poieo**

4. **Gentiles**- Gr. **ethnos**

- a. Paul chose to only talk about his ministry among the Gentiles, and did not choose to discuss that everywhere he had gone he had attempted to preach his grace message to Jews first. Of course, the religious and legalistic Jews did not want to hear about being free from the Law. Neither did James and the rest of the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem!
- b. Earlier, Paul had been ordained by the church leadership in Jerusalem, and it was directed to him to go to the Gentiles, and Peter to go to the Jews. However, Paul left there and went straight to the Jews first, which he did, wherever he went. Paul leaves this out for good reason.

5. ministry- Gr. **diakonia-** *service*

- a. At the root of our calling on the earth is to serve others. A minister is a servant. Understanding this keeps us in the place of humility. Many "ministers" seek to be served. Jesus came to serve, not be served. [Mark 10:45](#) He is our example.

20. And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law;

A. And when they heard it,

1. **heard-** Gr. **akouo**

B. they glorified the Lord

1. **glorified-** Gr. **doxazo**

a. They glorified the Lord for what He was doing among the Gentiles, who were lower class believers in their minds. They said they did not need to keep the Law, but the religiously superior Jews still felt that they needed to keep the Law in their thinking.

b. They praised God for what He was doing among the Gentiles, but quickly James will turn and try to get Paul to agree that the Jews were still under the Law.

2. **Lord-** Gr. **kurios**

C. And they said to him,

1. **said-** Gr. **epo**

D. You see,

1. **see-** Gr. **theoreo**

- a. Obviously, this was something that James had on his agenda to talk to Paul about from the beginning. When Paul gave his praise reports, James said "Praise God!" and then got right into what he wanted to talk to brother Paul about.

E. **brother-** Gr. **adelphos**

1. I can almost hear the religious tone this word was said in- You see, Bruuuther...

F. **how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed,**

1. **myriads-** Gr. **urias-** *a myriad, ten thousand, a vast multitude*

- a. The use of this word is to put pressure on Paul to submit to his(James') direction -"This is what I think and a vast multitude agrees to as well!"
- b. People try to use this tactic to put pressure on you. "Everyone thinks this" or "Everyone agrees".

2. **Jews**

3. **believed-** Gr. **pisteuo**

- a. These are Jews that had accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Savior, just like Paul had. I doubt there were myriads of Jews that had accepted Christ. Relatively few Jews have received Christ over the last 2000 years compared to Gentiles.

G. **and they are all zealous for the law**

1. **zealous-** Gr. **zelotes**

- a. It is good to have zeal, if it is zeal for the right things.
[Gal. 4:18](#)
- b. The religious jews were zealous, but not according to knowledge. They went about trying to establish their own righteousness by the law. Christ is the end of the law for those who believe in Him. [Rom. 10:3-4](#)

Do you know who wrote that? Paul.

Do you know where he wrote that? In the book of Romans.

Do you know when he wrote the book of Romans? He had just written it before this trip to Jerusalem. Now Paul is bowing to this legalistic zeal and becoming a hypocrite.

2. **law-** Gr. **nomos**

- a. This is the case today. There are many Christians that are zealous for the law. Being zealous for the law in this case was zealous about being under the Law and keeping the law. Christians have died to the law and are set free from being under the law. We are now under grace. [Rom. 6:14](#)

21. **but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children nor to walk according to the customs.**

A. **but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses,**

1. **informed-** Gr. **katecheo-** *to inform by word of mouth*

- a. Word of mouth is often not reliable.

2. **teach-** Gr. **didasko**

3. **Jews**

4. **Gentiles-** Gr. **ethnos**

5. **forsake-** Gr. **apostasia-** *defection from truth*

6. **Moses-** means *drawn out*

- a. So when are we now to be committed to Moses instead of Jesus?
- b. The use of the name of Moses refers to the torah- the first five books of the bible or what is called the law. These are the books Moses wrote.
- c. We are not to embrace and hold on to the Law, but the person who the law represents and foreshadows, who is Jesus Christ. Would you rather try to embrace the shadow of your loved one, or your actual loved one? The law was but a shadow that was cast by the person of Jesus.

B. **saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to customs**

1. **saying-** Gr. **lego**

2. **circumcise-** Gr. **peritome**

- a. You can be circumcised in the new covenant, but it avails absolutely nothing! [Gal. 5:2-3, 6](#) Faith in Jesus does! It is a spiritual circumcision that matters. [Rom. 2:28-29](#) Paul wrote

these things! He should have quoted his own scripture to James at this point, but nope, he was silent.

3. **children-** Gr. **teknon**

4. **walk-** Gr. **peripateo**

5. **customs-** Gr. **ethos**

a. So, when are we to preach and teach customs?

The traditions of man make the Word of God of none effect.

[Mark 7:32](#)

b. You might observe a custom, but make sure you do not make it something that gives you special merit with God, or is something everyone must do to be right with God or be blessed by God. It is ok to celebrate your heritage or culture, but that does not make you closer to God nor something everyone else must do.

22. **What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come.**

A. **What then?**

B. **The assembly must certainly meet,**

1. **assembly-** Gr. **plethos-** *a great number, of men or things*

a. This is further pressure upon Paul. A great number of Jews are about to convene and they all are wondering about his faithfulness to the law and to the Jewish traditions.

2. **meet-** Gr. **sunerchomai-** *come together*

a. The multitude were there for the feast of Pentecost.

C. **for they will hear that you have come**

1. **hear-** Gr. **akouo**

a. Paul was a well known figure even though the majority had only heard of him.

2. **come-** Gr. **erchomai**

23. **Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow.**

A. **Therefore do what we tell you,**

1. **do-** Gr. **poieo**

a. James had set up a scenario that put great pressure on Paul and now he is telling Paul- **Do this!** Paul should have said **no!**

2. **tell-** Gr. **lego**

B. We have four men who have taken a vow

1. **four**- Gr. **tessares**

2. **men**- Gr. **aner**

3. **taken**- Gr. **echo**- *to have*

4. **vow**- Gr. **eucho epi**- *a vow upon*

a. *From the shaving of the head, mentioned immediately after, it is evident that the four men in question were under the vow of Nazariteship; and that the days of their vow were nearly at an end, as they were about to shave their heads; for, during the time of the Nazariteship, the hair was permitted to grow, and only shaven off at the termination of the vow. Among the Jews, it was common to make vows to God on extraordinary occasions; and that of the Nazarite appears to have been one of the most common.*

- Clarke Commentary

b. The Nazarite vow is mentioned in [Num. 6:1-21](#)

24. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave *their* heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but *that* you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.

A. Take them and be purified with them,

1. **take**- Gr. **paralambano**

2. **purified**- Gr. **hagnizo**

a. James is telling Paul to purify himself. We are only purified by the blood of Jesus, not by the law!

b. Paul should have quoted what he wrote in **Heb 10:2**

*For then [animal sacrifices] would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, **once purified**, would have had no more consciousness of sins.*

B. and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads,

1. **pay expenses**- Gr. **dapnao**- *to incur cost*

a. *Share with them the expense of the offerings required when the vow is completed. Those offerings were a ram of a year old for a burnt-offering, a sheep of the same age for a sin*

offering, a ram for a thank-offering, a basket of unleavened cakes, and a libation of wine. See [Num 6:13-20](#).

-Barnes Commentary

- b. **Hold on!** Do you see what is happening here? James is asking Paul to pay for the animal sacrifices for the four men and for himself that went with the Nazarite vow! James is asking Paul to sacrifice animals that represents Jesus' final and complete sacrifice on the cross! He is asking Paul to put faith in the blood of animals to find favor with God! Paul should have said **NO, NO, NO, NO, NO!!!!!!**
- c. Paul should have quoted to James what he wrote in [Heb. 10:1-14](#). The blood of animals have no value towards God. It is only the blood of Jesus that provides acceptance and blessing from God.

2. **shave**- Gr. **xurao**

3. **heads**- Gr. **kephale**

a. This was done at the end of a Nazarite vow.

C. and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing,

1. **know**- Gr. **ginosko**- *to know by experience*

a. James is saying, "Prove you are a keeper of the law". Paul will submit to going back under the law so he could get an opportunity to preach grace to them. That is not a good place!

2. **informed**- Gr. **katecheo**

3. **nothing**- Gr. **oudeis**

D. but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law

1. **walk orderly**- Gr. **stoicheo**

a. Another pressure tactic. "Paul, if you do this then everyone will know you walk orderly." In other words, he was saying, "If you don't, everyone will know you are disorderly!"

b. The only way to walk orderly is to walk by faith in the finished work of Jesus. Walking orderly in the New Covenant is to walk by faith in our new creation. We are a new creation by grace, not by keeping the law.

c. Paul should have quoted his own writing at this point.

Gal 6:15 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. **Gal 6:16** And as many as walk [Gr. **stoicheo**] according to this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

2. **keep-** Gr. **phulasso**

- a. At this point Paul's red light buzzer should have been going off big time! He should have remembered his own teaching and quoted it to James what he had preached earlier to Peter in Antioch: Gal 2:16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. Gal 2:17 "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, *is* Christ therefore a minister of sin? Certainly not! Gal 2:18 For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. Gal 2:19 For **I through the law died to the law** that I might live to God.
- b. I have a question. How can you be a keeper of the law and dead to the law at the same time? You cannot. You can only do that by faith in Jesus who the law represents!
- c. James, himself, later would get a revelation of grace in relation to the law and will say in his letter what he would write later in his life: **Jas 2:10** For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. At this point James does not have the revelation of grace Paul had. The grace message given to the church came to Paul first. It is called the Pauline revelation. Peter even said that he had a problem understanding things Paul wrote about.
- d. No one ever kept the law but Jesus!

3. **law-** Gr. **nomos**

25. **But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written *and* decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality."**

A. But concerning the Gentiles who believe,

1. Gentiles- Gr. **ethnos**

2. believe- Gr. **pisteuo**

a. These are born again Christians. They are no different than born again Jews. If you are born again you are a new creation in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile. Paul should have corrected James at this point by quoting the scripture he wrote! [Col. 3:11](#)

Nope. He was silent in front of James.

B. we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing,

1. written- Gr. **epistello**

a. This refers to the letter the council in Jerusalem wrote to the Gentiles about not having to keep the Mosaic Law.

[Act 15:23](#)

2. decided- Gr. **krino-** *decide, judge*

3. observe- Gr. **tereo**

a. Jesus came and removed the barrier between Jew and Gentile and James quickly puts the barrier back up by making a distinction between saved Gentiles and saved Jews. He says the Gentiles did not need to observe or keep the law, but the Jews had to. This was making the Gentiles second class Christians. This elevated the Jews over the Gentiles as to how special and close they were to God because they observed the law. The problem is that no one has ever kept the law, except Jesus. We can never become closer or be justified in God's sight by keeping the law. Paul knew this very well and kept silent.

b. Paul earlier rebuked Peter publicly for creating a division barrier between Jews and Gentiles in Antioch. [Gal. 2:11-21](#) He raked him over the coals with a mini-sermon. Peter had caved in out of fear of James, and now Paul was doing the exact same thing!

C. except that they should keep themselves from the things offered to idols,

1. keep- Gr. **phulasso**

a. James will list a few rules that the council led by him created for the Gentiles to keep. This list was never given by God to the Gentiles. James spear-headed and sent this list. It is interesting to note that everything listed below, the Gentiles struggled with afterwards. Law always stirs up desires for what is forbidden.

2. offered to idols- Gr. **eidolothuton**

D. from blood,

1. blood- Gr. **aima**

a. Life is in the blood. [Lev. 17:11](#)

b. If this was the case then only well done steaks would have been allowed. Your medium cooked steaks would have made you out of the will of God and would have impacted your righteousness.

E. from things strangled,

1. strangled- Gr. **pniktos**

F. and from sexual immorality

1. sexual immorality- Gr. **porneia**

a. This, of course, is not something any Christian should be participating in. Grace teaches us to deny this, not a rule against it.

26. Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.

A. Then Paul took the men,

1. took- Gr. **paralambano**

2. men- Gr. **aner**

B. and the next day,

1. next day- Gr. **echo hemera**

C. having been purified with them,

1. purified- Gr. **hagnizo**

a. Paul was already purified through faith, not by the works and outward cleansing of legalistic washings.

D. entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification,

1. **entered-** Gr. **eiseimi**

2. **temple-** Gr. **hieron**

a. The temple of the Holy Spirit entered into the natural temple in Jerusalem! We are the temple of the Holy Spirit! He had no business being there.

3. **announce-** Gr. **diaggello**

4. **expiration-** Gr. **ekplerosis**

5. **days-** Gr. **hemera**

6. **purification-** Gr. **hagnismos**

a. *The literal translation here would be, 'declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification until the offering was offered for every one of them;' that is to say, Paul entered the temple declaring [to the priests] when the days of purification would be completed for himself and the four, namely, in seven days; and that then, at the close of them, the customary offerings for all of them would be made; or, in other words, Paul announced to the temple authorities the interval, viz. seven days, between this declaration of his and the end of the vow and the presenting the required offerings. Dean Alford purposes to translate, 'signifying their intention of fulfilling;' but this is inadmissible. Dean Howson (St. Paul, chap, xxi.) would render the whole passage thus: 'He entered into the temple, giving public notice that the days of purification were fulfilled, [and stayed there] till the offering for each one of the Nazarites was brought.' If this rendering be adopted, we must understand that Paul entered the temple and told the priests that the period of the Nazaritic vow was accomplished; and he waited then within the sacred enclosure till the necessary offerings were made for each of them, and their hair cut and burnt in the sacred fire. Wieseler also adopts this view. [The rendering, however, given above, which looks on the announcement of the days of purification as having reference to the future, on the whole appears best and simplest.] Seven days was the ordinary period for the more solemn purifications. - Popular NT Commentary*

E. at which time an offering should be made for each of them.

1. **time-** Gr. *heos hou-* *until at which*

2. **offering be made-** Gr. *prosphero prosphe-* *an offering should be offered*

a. Wow! Paul was minutes away from having an animal sacrificed for himself that represented His Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! All so that he could somehow preach grace to them! He was going under the law to reach those under the law. [1 Cor. 9:20](#) He went too far in this case! The Holy Spirit had been telling and warning him about going to Jerusalem.

b. As we will see, this is stopped in God's mercy and no animal was actually sacrificed on his behalf. He was captured in the temple before that could happen.

27. Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him,

A. Now when the seven days were almost ended,

1. **seven days-** Gr. *hepta hemera*

a. These were the prescribed days of purification. [Num 6:9](#)

2. **ended-** Gr. *sunteleo*

B. the Jews from Asia,

1. **Jews-** Gr. *Ioudais*

2. **Asia**

a. Where were these Jews from? Asia. Where had Paul been ministering the past number of years? Asia. Paul was called to the Gentiles, not the Jews, but he would always go to the Jews first and stir them up into anger. Here he meets up with them again, and the whole problem started by him being out of the prescribed plan of God. If he had gone to the Gentiles instead of the Jews, he would have never had any problems with the Jews of Asia.

C. seeing him in the temple,

1. **seeing-** Gr. *theaomai*

a. They knew Paul well because they had resisted Paul to his face in Asia.

2. **temple-** Gr. *hieron*

D. stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him

1. **stirred up**- Gr. **sugcheo**- *commingle, stir up into commotion, to agitate*
 - a. Religious people are good at stirring up people in a bad way.
2. **crowd**- Gr. **ochlos**
3. **laid hands**- Gr. **epiballo cheir**- *to throw hands upon*
 - a. The Jews regularly laid hands on Paul, but not to bless him!

28. **crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all *men* everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place."**

A. **crying out**- Gr. **krazo**

B. **Men of Israel,**

1. **men**- Gr. **aner**
2. **Israel**

C. **help**- Gr. **boetheo**

D. **This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people,**

1. **man**- Gr. **anthropos**
 - a. This is the most general word for man in the Greek and no doubt the use of it was a put down.
2. **teaches**- Gr. **didasko**
3. **men**- not in Greek- omit
4. **people**- Gr. **laos**- covenant people
 - a. This refers to the Jews.
 - b. This was not the case.

E. **the law**

1. **law**- Gr. **nomos**
 - a. Paul was not against the law. What he was against was people trying to be justified by it or being under the law. He taught that the law was good and holy, but it could not justify anyone. He taught that Jesus fulfilled the law for us and we are justified by faith in Jesus and His finished work.

F. **and this place**

1. **place**- Gr. **topos**

G. **and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place**

1. **brought**- Gr. **eisago**- *introduce*
2. **Greeks**- Gr. **ethnos**

a. They had already seen Paul in the city and were ready for him. They saw he had a Greek man, Trophimus, with him at the time and thought that Paul had brought him into the temple.

3. **temple**- Gr. **hieron**

4. **defiled**- Gr. **koinoo**- *to make common, unhallow*

a. Jesus had previously taught Peter through the sheet vision and subsequent visit to Cornelius, not to call any man common or unclean. [Acts 10:28](#)

b. The legalistic Christ-rejecting Jews were the ones defiling the temple right then!

5. **holy place**- Gr. **hagios topos**- *set apart place*

a. This natural temple would be destroyed not many years after this. The true temple is the Church of God!

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

A. For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city,

1. **seen previously**- Gr. **proorao**

2. **Trophimus**- means *one who nourishes*

3. **Ephesian**

a. Ephesus was in Asia. It was the Jews from Asia that saw Paul in the temple because they recognized him. They also recognized Trophimus because they knew of him as he was from Ephesus.

4. **city**- Gr. **polis**

a. Jerusalem

B. whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple

1. **supposed**- Gr. **nomizo**- *presume*

a. It is amazing how people can accuse and condemn others based on assumption alone. Legalistic people practice this.

2. **brought**- Gr. **eisago**

3. **temple**- Gr. **hieron**

a. *But the evidence was insufficient. Paul was too well informed not to be aware of the inscription which forbade the entry of any alien within the inner temple under penalty of death. It*

was on one of the pillars of the balustrade which separated the court of the women, where the Nazarite ceremonies were performed, from the inner sanctuary. The stone bearing this inscription was discovered by M. Clermont Ganneau in 1871, It is as follows: "No alien is to enter within the railing and enclosure round the temple. Whosoever is caught will be responsible to himself for his death which will ensue" (CB). This was "the middle wall of partition" referred to in [Eph 2:14](#), Seeing the apostle busy with ceremonies in the company of others in the inner court, the Asian Jews supposed that he had taken Trophimus beyond the prescribed barrier. (Walker)

30. And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut.

A. And all the city was disturbed,

1. **city-** Gr. **polis**

2. **disturbed-** Gr. **kineo-** *to throw into commotion*

a. This was not the first city that the Jews disturbed because of Paul. This was a common occurrence wherever Paul was. He had a knack of inciting the Jews.

B. and the people ran together,

1. **people-** Gr. **laos**

2. **ran-** Gr. **ginomai sundrome-** *began to run together*

C. seized Paul,

1. **seized-** Gr. **epilambanomai-** *to take hold upon*

a. This was also a common occurrence for Paul. He must have thought, "Here we go again!"

D. and dragged him out of the temple,

1. **dragged-** Gr. **helkuo**

2. **temple-** Gr. **hieron**

a. The last time Paul was in this temple he was praying and God told him to flee Jerusalem because his testimony would not be accepted. He was expressly told to go to the Gentiles. Now, he is here again in the place God told him to leave seeking to minister to the Jews.

E. and immediately the doors were shut

1. **doors-** Gr. **thura**

2. **shut-** Gr. **kleio**

a. *Not of themselves, as if there was something miraculous in it, as some have thought, but by the door keepers, the Levites; and which might be done, partly to prevent Paul's returning into it for refuge at the horns of the altar, and partly to keep out the Gentiles from coming in, they were alarmed with.* -Gill Commentary

b. *It is also likely that these doors were shut, and Paul thrust out, to guard against the possibility of the temple floors being stained with blood and thus polluted in the event of Paul and his supposed companion being summarily put to death by the people. This was done by the Levites in charge of the 'House.'* -Popular NT Commentary

31. **Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.**

A. **Now as they were seeking to kill him,**

1. **seeking-** Gr. **zeteo**

2. **kill-** Gr. **apokteino**

a. *This was evidently done in a popular tumult, as had been done in the case of Stephen, Acts 7: They could not pretend that they had a right to do it by law.* -Barnes Commentary

B. **news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar**

1. **news-** Gr. **phasis**

2. **commander-** Gr. **chiliarchos**

a. *The name of this chief captain, or tribune, was Claudius Lysias, as we learn from [Act 23:26](#).*

b. He was the captain of a 1000 men.

3. **garrison-** Gr. **speira**

a. *The Roman tribune, who had a troop of soldiers under him, which lodged in general in the castle of Antonia, which was built at the angle where the northern and western porticoes of the outer court of the temple were joined together. This castle was built by John Hyrcanus, high priest of the Jews: it was at first called Baris, and was the royal residence of the*

Asmoneans, as long as they reigned in Jerusalem. It was beautified by Herod the Great, and called Antonia, in honor of his friend Mark Antony. By this castle the temple was commanded, as it stood on higher ground. Josephus describes this castle, War, b. v. chap. 5, sec. 8, "as having four towers, from one of which the whole temple was overlooked; and that one of the towers was joined to the porticoes of the temple, and had a double pair of stairs from it, by which soldiers in the garrison were used to come down with their arms to the porticoes, on the festival days, to keep the people quiet; for, as the temple was a guard to the city, so this castle was a guard to the temple." "It seems, therefore," says Bp. Pearce, "to me very plain, that the place where the Jews were about to kill Paul was the court of the Gentiles, the porticoes being there; and that the chief captain came down there to his rescue."

-Clarke Commentary

4. uproar- Gr. **sugcheo**

32. He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

A. He immediately took soldiers and centurions

1. took- Gr. **paralambano**

2. soldiers- Gr. **stratiotes**

a. A very large number of soldiers, for they are called an army.

[Act 23:27](#)

3. centurions- Gr. **hekatontarches**

a. Leaders of a hundred soldiers.

b. The plural of this word shows there were hundreds of soldiers called in on this. This means that this riot was quite large.

B. and ran down to them

1. ran down- Gr. **katatrecho**

a. The tower where the soldiers were stationed were above the temple grounds.

C. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers,

1. saw- Gr. **eido**

2. **commander**- Gr. **chiliarchos**

3. **soldiers**- Gr. **stratiotes**

D. they stopped beating Paul

1. **stopped**- Gr. **pauo**

a. The appearance of the ruling Roman army was the only thing that stopped them from beating, and ultimately, killing Paul.

2. **beating**- Gr. **tupto**

a. It must have taken a few minutes to gather all the soldiers and come down to the temple area. Paul must have been already bloody and bruised from the beating of the crowd.

c. This beating was unnecessary. Paul should have not been in Jerusalem or in the temple. The last time he was in the temple in Jerusalem God told him to flee Jerusalem and go to the Gentiles because his testimony would not be received. God had not changed his mind. God had been trying to warn Paul all the way to Jerusalem that this would happen to him, but he would not listen. However, he was set on ministering to the Jews.

33. Then the commander came near and took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and he asked who he was and what he had done.

A. Then the commander came near and took him,

1. **commander**- Gr. **chiliarchos**

2. **came near**- Gr. **eggizo**- *approached*

3. **took**- Gr. **epilambano**- *to take up*

a. Paul was laying on the ground from his beating. The commander pulled him up off the ground.

B. and commanded him to be bound with two chains,

1. **commanded**- Gr. **keleuo**- *to incite by word, order*

a. When this man spoke, people jumped to action.

2. **bound**- Gr. **deo**

3. **two chains**- Gr. **duo halusis**

a. This is in fulfillment of the prophecy given by Agabus. By that prophecy we know that one chain bound his hands, and the other chain bound his feet. [Acts 21:11](#)

b. Paul was treated as a dangerous criminal.

c. This bondage was not God's will. He should have never been in Jerusalem. We often find ourselves in a binding situation because we are out of the will of God.

C. and he asked who he was and what he had done.

1. **asked**- Gr. **punthanomai**- *to ascertain by inquiry, to investigate*

2. **done**- Gr. **poieo**

a. The commander asked Paul who he was and what he had done. The enemy comes to accuse us of the same questions. Who do you think you are? What have you done?

If we answer these questions wrongly will bind us.

We must answer the enemies accusation:

- I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus and what I have done has no bearing at all. It is all about what Jesus has done!

34. And some among the multitude cried one thing and some another. So when he could not ascertain the truth because of the tumult, he commanded him to be taken into the barracks.

A. And some among the multitude cried one thing and some another.

1. **multitude**- Gr. **ochlos**

2. **cried**- Gr. **boao**- *to raise a cry, shout*

B. So when he could not ascertain the truth because of the tumult,

1. **ascertain**- Gr. **ginosko**- *to learn by personal experience*

2. **truth**- Gr. **asphales**- *for sure or certain*

a. It is hard to ascertain the truth when multiple voices are speaking to you. Wisely, the commander sought solitude to find out the truth. We need to do the same. Often, we have too many voices coming at us to determine what is true. We need to draw away and seek the Lord in His Word and by prayer. It is the solitude that we can hear the small still voice inside us.

3. **tumult**- Gr. **thorubos**- *an uproar, din; an outward expression of mental agitation, outcry, a tumult, commotion*

C. he commanded him to be taken into the barracks

1. **commanded**- Gr. **keleuo**

2. **taken**- Gr. **ago**- *to be conveyed along*

- a. This Greek word always implies being conveyed along by someone.
- b. This is the Greek word that is used of being "led" by the Spirit. Being led by the Spirit is to be conveyed along by the agency and power of the Holy Spirit.

3. barracks- Gr. **parembole-** *something thrown up next to, or between, something else; an interjection or an interpolation*

- a. This is where the soldiers resided in the Antonia castle.

35. When he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob.

A. When he reached the stairs,

- 1. **reached-**Gr. **ginomai-** *come to*
- 2. **stairs-** Gr. **anabathmos-** *steps up*

B. he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob

- 1. **carried-** Gr. **bastazo-** *to lift, raise, bear aloft; to bear, carry in the hands or about the person*
 - a. This is a sad position Paul put himself in. Often when we get out of the will of God, it is others who have to carry us since God's provision and grace is not made available to do our own thing. God will not sustain our Ishmael's.

- 2. **soldiers-** Gr. **stratiotes**
- 3. **violence-** Gr. **bia-** *force, impetus, violence*
- 4. **mob-** Gr. **ochlos-** *crowd*

36. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, "Away with him!"

A. For the multitude of the people followed after,

- 1. **multitude-** Gr. **plethos**
- 2. **people-** Gr. **laos**
- 3. **followed after-** Gr. **akoloutheo**

B. crying out- Gr. **krazo**

C. Away with him

- 1. **away-** Gr. **airo**
 - a. Yet another Jewish crowd that was not blessed by Paul's ministry.

37. Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks, he said to the commander, "May I speak to you?" He replied, "Can you speak Greek?"

A. Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks,

1. lead- Gr. eisago- *to bring into*

2. barracks- Gr. parembole

B. he said to the commander,

1. said- Gr. epo

2. commander- Gr. chiliarchos

C. May I speak to you

1. speak- Gr. epo

D. He replied

1. replied- Gr. phemi

E. Can you speak Greek

1. speak- Gr. ginosko- *know*

2. Greek- Gr. helen

a. *The Greek language was what was then almost universally spoken, and it is not improbable that it was the native tongue of the chief captain. It is evident that he was not a Roman by birth, for he says [Act 22:28](#) that he had obtained the privilege of citizenship by paying a great sum. The language which the Jews spoke was the Syro-Chaldaic; and as he took Paul to be an Egyptian Jew [Act 21:38](#), he supposed, from that circumstance also, that he was not able to speak the Greek language. -Barnes Commentary*

38. Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?"

A. Egyptian- Gr. Aiguptios

1. *That Egyptian was probably a Jew who resided in Egypt. Josephus has given an account of this Egyptian which strikingly accords with the statement here recorded by Luke. See Josephus, Antiq., book 20, chapter 8, section 6, and Jewish Wars, book 2, chapter 13, section 5. The account which he gives is, that this Egyptian, whose name he does not mention, came from Egypt to Jerusalem, and said that he was a prophet, and advised the multitude of the common people to go with him to the Mount of Olives. He said further that he would show them from thence how the walls of*

Jerusalem would fall down: and he promised them that he would procure for them an entrance through those walls when they were fallen down. Josephus adds (Jewish Wars) that he got together 30,000 men that were deluded by him; "these he led round about from the wilderness to the mount which was called the Mount of Olives, and was ready to break into Jerusalem by force from that place. But Felix, who was apprised of his movements, marched against him with the Roman soldiers, and defeated him, and killed 400 of them, and took 200 alive. But the Egyptian escaped himself out of the fight, but did not appear anymore." It was natural that the Roman tribune should suppose that Paul was this Egyptian, and that his return had produced this commotion and excitement among the people. -Barnes Commentary

2. This Egyptian rose A.D. 55

B. time ago- Gr. **pro hemera**

C. stirred up a rebellion- Gr. **anastatoo**

1. See above.

D. led- Gr. **exago-** *to bring out*

E. four thousand- Gr. **tetrakischilioi**

F. assassins- Gr. **sikarios**

1. *Josephus says, that he brought them out of the wilderness, or led them through it to the Mount of Olives, from thence to rush into Jerusalem, when the walls should fall down at his command; but he says, the number of men that he led out were about thirty thousand; it may be at first there were no more than four thousand, but afterwards were joined by others, and increased to thirty thousand; or among these thirty thousand, he had four thousand "murderers, or sicarii": so called from the little swords which they carried under their clothes, and with them killed men in the daytime, in the middle of the city, especially at the feasts, when they mingled themselves with the people.- Gill Commentary*

G. wilderness- Gr. **eremos**

39. But Paul said, "I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people."

A. But Paul said,

1. **said-** Gr. **epo**

B. I am a Jew from Tarsus,

1. **Jew-** Gr. **loudais**
2. **Tarsus-** means *feathered, flat basket*

C. in Cilicia,

1. **Cilicia-** means *land of Celix*

D. a citizen of no mean city,

1. **citizen-** Gr. **polites**
2. **mean-** Gr. **asemos-** *not marked; met. not noted, not remarkable, unknown to fame, ignoble, mean, inconsiderable*
 - a. *Tarsus as a city stood high in public estimation. It was not only famous as a university and seat of learning, but was the most important centre in that part of the Empire, and possessed many privileges. It bore on its coins the proud title of METROPOLIS AUTONOMOS, 'the independent capital city.'* -Popular NT Commentary

3. **city-** Gr. **polis**

E. and I implore you,

1. **implore-** Gr. **parakaleo**

F. permit me to speak to the people

1. **permit-** Gr. **epitrepo-** *to transfer, to allow*
2. **speak-** Gr. **epo**
3. **people-** Gr. **laos**

a. Paul just cannot let it go. He should have realized he that had made a mistake by coming to Jerusalem, but no, he is dead set upon preaching the gospel to the Jews and asks for permission to do so. He will get into his introduction, but did not get to share the gospel itself which was about Jesus dying on the cross and rising from the dead. He will barely get through his personal testimony, and mentions the Gentiles who end his talk. All of this, and he never got to share the gospel at all! It was not God's plan for him. He would end up in chains heading to Rome. That is where he was supposed to go to start with. He mentioned a call to come to Rome in the book of Romans he had just written. He would get there but it would be aboard a ship as a prisoner in chains.

40. **So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to *them* in the Hebrew language, saying,**

A. So when he had given him permission,

1. **given permission-** Gr. **epitrepo-** *to transfer, allow*

B. Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people

1. **stood-** Gr. **histemi**

2. **stairs-** Gr. **anabathmos**

a. He was safely above and away from the people below.

3. **motioned with his hand-** Gr. **kataseio cheir-** *to sway downwards with the hand*

a. We do this today. We will motion with our hand downwards to quiet a crowd.

b. It is amazing how a crowd can be controlled by a simple gesture of the hand.

4. **people-** Gr. **laos**

C. And when there was a great silence,

1. **great-** Gr. **polus**

2. **silence-** Gr. **sige-** *hush*

a. There were many saying "hush" and then complete silence.

D. he spoke to them in the Hebrew language,

1. **spoke-** Gr. **prosphoneo**

2. **Hebrew-** Gr. **Hebrais**

a. *The language which was spoken by the Jews, which was then a mixture of the Chaldee and Syriac, called Syro-Chaldaic. This language he doubtless used on this occasion in preference to the Greek, because it was understood better by the multitude, and would tend to conciliate them if they heard him address them in their own tongue. The following chapter should have been connected with this. The division here is unnatural. -Barnes Commentary*

3. **language-** Gr. **glossa-** *tongue*

E. saying- Gr. **lego**