

ACTS 21:1-26 THIRD JOURNEY ENDS IN JERUSALEM: PAUL WARNED NOT TO GO

Paul and his team, having bid farewell to the Ephesian elders at Miletus, continue their journey to Jerusalem to deliver the offering collected from the Gentile churches. As Paul gets closer to his destination, the warnings not to continue intensify.

21:1-6 From Miletus (Asia) to Tyre (Syria): WARNINGS AT TYRE

v. 1 Miletus to Coos to Rhodes to Patara: Paul obviously is on an island hopping _____.

v. 2, 3 Changing ships, the sail on another freighter to _____.

v. 4 ANOTHER WARNING TO PAUL

"And finding the disciples"*

*"finding" = "_____ " (ανευρισκω/aneurisko)

The idea: "We heard that there were believers in Tyre..."

"We searched diligently for them..."

"We found them and spent _____ days with them."

THE MAIN POINT: "Who _____ Paul..."

"Through (δια/dia) the _____" = the _____.

"NOT to go up to Jerusalem."

Note: for previous multiple warnings, see 20:22, 23.

v. 5, 6 Note the warmth and intensity of fellowship that developed in seven days!

21:7-15 From Tyre to Caesarea: WARNINGS FROM THE PROPHET AGABUS

v. 7 One day stop at _____ (ancient Acco) to greet believers.

v. 8, 9 CAESAREA

- Named and rebuilt for Caesar Augustus by Herod the Great
- Headquarters and home of the Roman Governor of Judea
- Chief garrison of the Roman army in Judea
- Where Cornelius, the Centurion, was saved (Acts 10) ab. 16 years previously.
- Where Paul, within weeks, will be imprisoned for two years.

PHILIP THE EVANGELIST

- Last seen in Acts 8:40 in Caesarea after winning the Ethiopian eunuch.
- Formerly of the seven servants in the Jerusalem church, chapter 6.
- Houses Paul and his team! What a meeting!?!
- Father of four daughters with the gift of prophecy.

v. 10-14 Prophecy to Paul: Warning from the _____ through Agabus.

v. 10 Agabus the Prophet foretold the coming famine in 11:28.

v. 11 Agabus communicates _____ of the Holy Spirit.

Did this prophecy come to pass? _____

v. 12 Response of Paul's Team and Others

"We and they _____ him not to go to Jerusalem.

v. 13 Paul's Reaction

"I am ready 1) _____ and 2) _____ for the name
of the Lord Jesus."
(OVER)

Paul's determination was fixed; his desire was to help Jerusalem believers and to reach Jewish unbelievers with his testimony regardless if it cost him his life.

v. 14 Paul's team commits the entire scenario to _____.

21:14-17 From Caesarea to Jerusalem (and to bonds/chains)

v. 15 "took up our carriages" = "packed-up our bags." Included was the large offering for the destitute Jewish believers in Jerusalem.

v. 16 God provided them lodging in Jerusalem with _____.

v. 17 The believers in Jerusalem welcomed Paul and his team.

21: 18-26 The Elders Bad Advice: Paul's Strange Response

v. 18, 19 Paul's Detailed Report to James and the Elders: minimally he rehearsed the third journey. HE NO DOUBT PRESENTED THE LARGE OFFERING TAKEN OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS.

v. 20-25 **The Elder's Advice:** "Conciliate the Jewish Believers"

v. 20 "How many thousands" = "how many _____ (countless numbers) of believing Jews are zealots of the (Mosaic) Law."

v. 21 "Paul, you are accused of
1) teaching dispersed Jews to _____ from Moses;
2) by telling them not to _____ their children;
3) and not to conduct their lifestyles in Mosaic customs."

Was Paul guilty of these accusations? Not as stated. He only opposed any observation of Mosaic Law or custom as a means of justification and sanctification. He did not oppose Jewishness or Jewish customs. For example, on circumcision, see I Cor. 7:17-19; Acts 16:3 (where he has Timothy circumcised).

v. 22 "You will be the center of attention due to your reputation."

v. 23-25 "THEREFORE, DO THIS...(conciliate; appease, fence-straddle)

- v. 23b four believers have taken Nazirite vows,
- v. 24a purify yourself with them,
- v. 24b incur the cost of their purification,
- v. 24c this will result in all knowing the charges against you are false." OH, REALLY!
- v. 25 As we agreed at the Jerusalem council, Gentiles need no identity with the Law of Moses.

v. 26 PAUL'S STRANGE RESPONSE (he complies)

He does as they advise! Did the plan work? To the contrary, he almost loses his life. And where were the Jewish believers when he was beaten, chained, & arrested? Did they come to his rescue? NO.

Issue: Was Paul Right in Going to Jerusalem Despite the Warnings of the Holy Spirit?

Did Paul's zeal for the salvation of Jerusalem Jews make him deaf to the Holy Spirit? Note the repeated warnings:

- 22:17, 18 warned years before by the Lord in a vision
- 20:23 warned everywhere he went by the Holy Spirit
- 21:4 warned by the Holy Spirit through prophets
- 21:10-14 warned by the Holy Spirit through Agabus

Was he defiantly disobedient? Answer: Minimally, he was unwise, yet willing to bear the consequences. Maximally, he simply disobeyed the Holy Spirit's leading.