THE APOSTLE PAUL ARRIVES IN JERUSALEM

**DATE: 8/4/10, 8/11/10 Wed.**

**TEXT: Acts 21:15 – 40**

**INTRODUCTION – vs. 15, 16**

God has seen fit to warn Paul of the impending danger that awaits him as he travels back to Jerusalem

**Acts 20:22, 23 *– “And 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 abide me”***

The Brethren have tried to persuade him not to go

**Acts 21:4 – “*And finding disciples … who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem”***

**Acts 21:12 – *“And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem”***

But; Paul is determined to go (despite the pleads not to)

**Acts 21:13 – *“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”***

Paul believed this was God’s will for his life!

**Acts 20:22 – *“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem,”***

This is where we left off in this chapter as we continue following the Life of Paul

**Vs. 15, 16 – *“And after those days we took up our carriages,*** (simply luggage) ***and went up to Jerusalem”  
“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”***

This was a journey by foot which would have taken a full day to complete

It may have taken longer due to the number in the group

Because by this time, Paul’s company as grown quite large

It consisted of:

Luke – signified by the ***“we”*** found 26 times in this chapter

Eight others – who have been with him since he began his journey back - **Acts 20:4**

Members of the Church at Caesarea – **v.16a**

Mnason – an elderly saint, in whose home this company would stay in Jerusalem – **v.16b**

Let’s pray and look at ***“The Apostle Paul as he Arrives in Jerusalem”***

**~~~OPENING PRAYER~~~**

**I. THE “ARRIVAL” - vs.18-26**

Paul’s arrival in Jerusalem signals the end of his 3rd Missionary Journey

His purpose for coming to Jerusalem was twofold:

→ was to hand over the offering taken up by the Gentile Churches

**Romans 15:24-26; I Corinthians 16:1-**3

→ for the opportunity to witness to his own people

**Romans 9:1-…**

**A. Paul’s ‘Reception’ – v.17**

***“And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly”***

The brethren give Paul a warm welcome

His last visit came at the end of his 2nd Missionary Journey and the scriptures seem to indicate his stay was short

**Acts 18:21, 22** around 54 A.D. (**21:15 – *“gone up”****)*

This is something of a contrast to the reception he got the first time he came to Jerusalem

**Acts 9:26-28**

There is no jealousy among these men of God

So should it be with Christians and Pastors today

**I Corinthians 12:12-27** (esp. **vs.25 & 26**)

**B. The Pastor’s ‘Conference’ – vs.18-20a**

**v*.* 18 - *“And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present”***

At this time Paul covered the events of his 3rd missionary journey in detail

The word ***"particularly"*** in **v.19b** means *one by one, in detail, step by step*

**Note:** it had been about 5 years since Paul had last visited in the church at Jerusalem

Paul gives all the credit to God for what had been done—without exception

**v.19b – *“he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry”***

It was ***“what God had wrought”***, not what he had done or what anyone else had done (made carefully w/ detail)

The churches and the believers were the result of God's glorious grace and power

It was James and the Jerusalem elders who glorified God, not Paul …

It is important to note this, for it shows that they supported Paul and were not among those who opposed Paul

**v.20a *–“And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord,”***

Note some lessons for churches and believers of every generation

→ Churches should stay informed of what their missionaries are doing while in the field and at home

**Acts 14:26, 27**

→ God alone should be recognized and credited with being the Person who does the work

→ God alone should be praised for what is ***“wrought”***

[**John 15:8**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Jn+15%3A8) ***-“Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples”***

[**Hebrews 13:15**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A15) ***-“By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His Name”***

[**Psalm 107:22**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+107%3A22) **- *“And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing”***

**II Corinthians 10:12, 17, 18**

**C. A ‘Problem Presented’ – vs.20b-22**

Notice though, almost immediately James declares a problem (that proverbial “BUT”)

***“and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:”***

The false teaching of Judaism had not gone away

There were still 1000’s of Jewish converts who had not separated from the Law of Moses

They still maintained their Jewish customs

Judaism is the teaching that salvation was more than just Grace through Faith

Many were teaching that you had to DO something in addition to your faith in the finished work of Christ

Circumcision, ceremonial laws etc. **Acts 15**

The Threat of a Great Split in Christendom loomed

**Vs. 21, 22 – *“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”  
“What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come”***

The rumors were that Paul taught total rejection of Moses

Kind ‘a like the way they twisted Stephen’s words in **Acts 6:8-14**

Fortunately the Elders didn’t believe this way

These men did it the right way, they wanted to heard from Paul’s own mouth

**Matthew 18:16; II Corinthians 13:1; I Timothy 5:19**

These men wanted to settle the matter before the church came together

This was the wise thing to do for they were acting to protect the flock from unnecessary confusion and conflict

**D. A ‘Solution Offered’ – vs. 23 -25**

So the elders offered a Solution

Paul was Not against the Law

Paul understood the place of the Law in God’s plan

The leadership therefore urged Paul to place himself under a Jewish vow

(probably a Nazarite vow—see **Numbers 6:13-15**)

Four men in the church were already in the process of doing so

Typically, men would undertake such a vow for a specified number of days, usually 30

First shaving their heads so there would be no need for a haircut in the meantime

They therefore urged Paul to place himself under such a Jewish vow

It should be noted that though Paul clearly taught Gentiles believers that they were under no obligation to observe Jewish customs …

He himself, as a Jew, though, still voluntarily observed various Jewish customs

**Acts 16:1-3**

This, no doubt in part, was for the purpose of not being a stumbling block to the Jews

**I Corinthians 9:19 - …**

Also, in part, it probably had to do with loyalty to his cultural heritage

They further encouraged Paul to personally underwrite the expenses of these other Jewish believers who were about to observe a vow

**v. 24b – *“and be at charges with them”*** means *to pay their expenses*

This no doubt was to further exemplify his sincerity

**Note:** It has been advanced by some that Paul’s father had passed away and he had inherited his father’s estate, becoming independently wealthy in his latter years

There is no scriptural proof of this, though it would seem to make sense considering the church urged him to underwrite these others at his own expense

The whole point of course was to demonstrate that he,

still kept the law and walked ***“orderly”***as a Jew

**v.24c – *“and 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”***

The whole point was to remove the slander which had become a stumbling block for Paul at Jerusalem for the believing Jews

They also no doubt hoped to defuse the antagonism against Paul by the unbelieving Jewish establishment

**E. Did Paul ‘Blunder’? – v.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”***

Does Paul’s action mean he turned back to what he had in the past, taught against?

**Galatians 1:6 – *“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:”***

**Galatians 4:9 – *“the weak and beggarly elements,”***

I personally believe that what Paul did, was motivated by his love for the Jewish people …

It was an effort to convince them that he did not stand in opposition to the Law of Moses

**Romans 7:7 -14**

Taking thevow in and of itself was not wrong

Paul knew Whom he had believed – **II Timothy 1:12**

He knew he was saved by grace and grace alone

His desire was the advancing of the cause of Christ

The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem had not yet recognized ***“the perfect law of liberty”*** (**James 1:25**)

They had not become fully aware that Christ offered one sacrifice – ***“once for all”*** (**Heb.10:10**) forever

People have to be lead, you cannot drive them

They have to see for themselves or they won’t see at all

It is much harder to unlearn something then it is to learn

Especially in religious matters

If this question of *Law vs. Grace* had been agitated in Jerusalem it would have brought about resistance that would have hindered the advancement of Christianity to great degree

Also, in God’s Divine providence He knew the time was near when Jerusalem would be laid waste 70 A.D. …

Putting an end to the sacrifices in the Temple and closing the Mosaic rites customarily held there

**II. THE “RIOT” – vs.27-36**

The events of the second part of the chapter take place in Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost – early summer 58 A.D.

Roman historians have indicated the probability of some 2 million Jews in Jerusalem for this festival (from all over the world)

**A. Paul is ‘Recognized’- v.27**

***“And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews who were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,”***

**Acts 20:17 – 19**

Probably Ephesus

**B. The ‘Accusations’ – vs.28, 29**

These Jews stirred up the people by making 2 actuations against Paul (8 other times that phrase “stirred up” is used)

→ that he taught against Israel, Moses, and the Temple

→ that he brought a Gentile into the Temple

This, by the way was ***“supposed”*** – **v.29** (we should never suppose) **Ps. 19:12, 13** presumption –something believed without the facts

The Jewish Temple was made of 2 sections

→ The Outer court

→ The Inner court

The Outer court was called the “The Court of the Gentiles”

It was open to everyone

But, the Inner court, called “The Court of Israel” …

Was open Only to the Jew

These courts had a wall of partition separating them

At this middle wall or partition stood pillars with an inscription of warning written in both Greek and Latin

The warning advised the Gentiles not to enter the Inner court

The penalty was death

If Paul had been guilty as charged (which he was not)

of bringing a Greek into the Inner court …

It would have been the height of insult and desecration

**Ephesians 2:14-16**

**I Corinthians 12:13**

Trophimus – **Acts 20:4; II Timothy 4:20**

**C. Taken by the Mob – v. 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”***

The commotion was such that the doors of the Temple were shut

It wasn’t long and ***“all the city*** ***was moved”!***

**v.31** says ***“that all Jerusalem was in an uproar”***

It seems that wherever Paul went, he brought about either a Revival of a Riot!

**Acts 17:5** (Thessalonica); **Acts 19:40** (Ephesus)

**D. Roman Soldiers to the Rescue – vs. 31, 32**

Here we find God over ruling, to protect His servant

Paul is in the process of being beaten to death when word comes to the Captain of the Guard of the Roman Garrison stationed in Jerusalem

We’re not told how he heard, but in God’s Divine providence He see to it

Thus spearing Paul’s life

The servant of God can entrust his life into God's keeping through all sorts of trials (even in the midst of mob attack)

No matter the trial, God is working out His will in the believer's life

[**Romans 8:28**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ro+8%3A28) **- *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”***

[**Philippians 1:6**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Php+1%3A6) **- *“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”***

[**II**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Ti+4%3A18) **Timothy 4:18 - *“And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever”***

[**Hebrews 13:6**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Heb+13%3A6) **- *“So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me”***

[**II Peter 2:9**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=2Pe+2%3A9) **- *“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished”***

[**Psalm 28:7**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+28%3A7) ***-“The lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise Him”***

[**Psalm 91:3**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Ps+91%3A3) **- *“Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence”***

[**Isaiah 41:10**](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Isa+41%3A10) ***–“Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness”***

**E. Paul is Bound – v.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”***

**F. Paul is taken into Custody – vs. 34-36**

Utter confusion prevailed because of the frenzied mob

**V. 34 -*“And some cried one thing, 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”***

The situation was so dire thatthe soldiers literallypicked Paul up and carried him on their shoulders up the stairs of the castle

**V.35 -*“And when he came upon the stairs, so it was, that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people”***

The castle was the garrison fortress Antonia that was located in the NE corner of the Temple precinct

It was built by Herod in honor of the Emperor of Rome Mark Anthony

**III. “PROTECTIVE CUSTODY” – vs. 37-40**

**A. Paul’s ‘Request’ – v.37**

The captain was amazed to learn that Paul could speak Greek

This was evidence that he was a educated man

**B. ‘Mistaken Identity’ – v.38**

As mentioned before, the land was filled with insurgents

**Acts 5:36, 37**

According to Josephus, this particular Egyptian was a Jewish false prophet who predicted the collapse of the walls of Jerusalem at his command and the imminent overthrow of the Roman occupation

He arose about 55 A.D.

His rebellion was put down by Felix, although he apparently escaped

**C. Paul’s ‘True Identity’ Revealed – v.39**

Paul shows himself to be a Jew in order to receive permission to speak to the Jews

He does not reveal though his Roman citizenship

**D. Paul Prepares to Preach – v.40**

This was the burning desire of the apostle – to preach to his people

Notice that he spoke to the crowd in Hebrew

Whereas he spoke to Lysias, the chief captain, in Greek

**CONCLUSION**