

Journey to Jerusalem

Acts 21, 22

March 1, 2017

“And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value, or as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:23-24

Paul and team headed to Jerusalem for Pentecost (Acts 20:16)

- Pentecost (Festival of the Harvest) was celebrated in May/June
- It is a festival of joy; offerings presented to the Lord from the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, to express thankfulness for the Lord’s blessing.

Paul’s Desire:

To _____ with the church in Jerusalem

To give thanks to the Lord for the _____ among the Gentiles

To testify to the _____ by introducing believers from Macedonia, Asia & Galatia

To allow these believers to present gifts of love from their churches. I Cor 16:1-4, II Cor 8, 9

Warm Welcome!

- Escorted and received into the home of Mnason of Cyprus
- James and elders in Jerusalem _____ when they heard Paul relate one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry

Solemn Warning!

- Jewish believers have heard a rumor that Paul has been teaching Jews among the Gentiles to _____ the law of Moses (circumcision and Jewish customs)
- These believers are offended by this report.
- Recommended that he diffuse this rumor and promote unity in the church by helping four of their men to complete their Nazarite vows.
- For the sake of unity, the elders reiterate the letter on Gentile freedom and abstinence

For Love of Jesus’ Church

Paul complies and demonstrates his willingness to become “all things to all people” (1 Cor 9:20)
Paul entered the temple with the four men.

- Purified himself along with them
- Paid money for the completion of their vows
- Set the date for their vows to be completed in one week

However, what was meant to bring unity, resulted in an uproar by _____.

Paul Arrested in the Temple

- Jews from Asia (probably Ephesus) see Paul in the temple and sound the alarm!
- Call out “Men of Israel, help!” **This is the man who is teaching everyone, everywhere:**
 - Against the people
 - Against the law
 - Against this place

He even brought Greeks into the _____ and has _____ this holy place!!!!!!!!!!

Huge offense!!!!

Capital offense for Gentiles to penetrate the inner court of the temple.

Notices in Greek and Latin were fixed to the barrier at the foot of the steps leading up to the inner precincts, warning them that death was the penalty for those who went past that point.

- This accusation caused an immediate reaction.
- People seized Paul, dragged him out of the temple, and at once shut the temple gates
- Ready to kill him NOW!

BUT GOD HAS MORE PLANS FOR PAUL TO TESTIFY TO THE GOSPEL OF HIS GRACE

- Tribune (over 2,000 soldiers) stationed in Tower of Antonia. Alerted to situation
- He rushed with centurions and soldiers to break up the riot
- Unable to discern what Paul had done. Soldiers chain him and carry him away
- Crowd cries _____ (Reminiscent of Jesus’ arrest and trial) Luke 23:18
- Paul begs the tribune permission to speak to the people

Paul Defends His Ministry Before a Captive Audience

- Paul tells of his heritage and upbringing
- Paul tells about his conversion
- Paul tells about his commission to the Gentiles

The Jews listened intently to see if he would confess his sin of defiling the temple. But when he said that God told him to “Go for I will send you far away to the Gentiles”... they were outraged!

“Away with such a fellow from the earth! He should not be allowed to live!” they cried.

Paul to be Examined by Flogging

Tribune quickly aborted plan to torture Paul when he discovered he was a Roman citizen. Instead Paul will receive a fair trial. And will have more opportunities to testify to God’s grace.

