



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

Paul's Face Set as Flint Toward Jerusalem

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Acts 21:7-14 *And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and after greeting the brethren, we stayed with them for a day. 8) And on the next day we departed and came to Caesarea; and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him. 9) Now this man had four virgin daughters who were prophetesses. 10) And as we were staying there for some days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11) And coming to us, He took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, "This is what the Holy Spirit says: 'In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" 12) And when we had heard this, we as well as the local residents began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13) Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." 14) And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, "The will of the Lord be done!" (NASB)*

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JANUARY 16: ACTS 21:15-25 THE FALSE ACCUSATIONS OF THE UNBELIEVERS
- JANUARY 23: ACTS 21:26-36 THE SPECIFIC ACCUSATION LEADING TO MURDER

Peter made the same mistake. He had just recognized the great truth that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God and Christ had honored him for it. Both Matthew 16:23 and Mark 8:33 then reveal Peter's response to Jesus predicting His own suffering, death and resurrection: "Far be it from you, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" Jesus answered Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." When Luke records the same event, Peter's mistake is left out (Lk 9:22), maybe because of Luke's similar error in our passage. It is possible that this very event is one thing Luke is overcoming when he writes Luke and Acts, paralleling the commitment of Paul to his Lord in his willingness to die at Jerusalem. Jesus was emphatic: "Let these words sink down in your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men" (Lk 9:44). "Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go up to Jerusalem" (9:51). "But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem" (9:53). "Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, 'Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again'" (18:31-33). Christ did not flinch but embraced His cross as He went to Jerusalem.

"ONE CANNOT BUT ADMIRE THE WONDERFUL DETERMINATION AND WHOLE-HEARTED DEVOTION WHICH BREATHE IN THESE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE. HE HAD INDEED SET HIS FACE LIKE A FLINT TO GO UP TO JERUSALEM, WHATEVER THE COST MIGHT BE."
ARNO GAEBELEIN

What are the parallels Luke presents between Jesus and Paul? Are these strategic cities in which Paul ministers? Why does Paul stay so long at Philip's home when earlier he was in such a hurry to get to Jerusalem? Does Luke the author make a mistake here that may have led him to overcome it with his writing? Why is Paul so determined to go to Jerusalem?

"THE SON OF MAN MUST SUFFER MANY THINGS, AND BE REJECTED BY THE ELDERS AND THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND SCRIBES, AND BE KILLED, AND BE RAISED THE THIRD DAY."
JESUS CHRIST (LUKE 9:22)

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 3RD FLOOR ROOM 300B

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3RD FLOOR ROOM 300B

Virginia

Paul's Face Set as Flint Toward Jerusalem

I. A PERFECT FELLOWSHIP

ACTS 21:7-9

They had left Tyre, the capital of Phoenicia, and stayed for a day in the strategic city of Ptolemais whose bay, Walter A. Elwell notes, has “provided the finest harbor in both ancient and modern Palestine” (p. 16). It later became “the last capital of the Kingdom of Jerusalem” under the Crusaders (2009 Map of Israel). However, Paul found his former enemy, “one of the seven” (Acts 6:5) to be a true friend as he stayed with “Philip the evangelist” in Caesarea, the Roman Capital over Judea. Philip is the only one in Scripture called an “evangelist” and his ministry was in capitals (Samaria & Caesarea) and to leaders such as the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:5, 26-40). Paul, as the Apostle to the Gentiles (9:15), had a lot in common with Philip because they both ministered to Gentiles. Philip was the first to evangelize Caesarea and probably pastoring that primarily Gentile church. Peter had also evangelized a Gentile leader with his family and friends in Caesarea, Cornelius, and had a lot of explaining to do when he got back to Jerusalem (Acts 10-11). Philip’s four virgin daughters were prophetesses, fulfilling prophecy (Joel 2:28), and helping their father in ministry. Philip with his family and Paul with his team had so much in common their fellowship was closest to perfect.

“PAUL AND LUKE AND THEIR PARTY MET UP WITH PHILIP AND SURELY HAD A WONDERFUL TIME HEARING ALL THAT HAD TRANSPIRED AMONG THE CHRISTIANS THERE IN CAESAREA.” R. C. SPROUL

II. A PROPHESED BETRAYAL

ACTS 21:10-11

Since the church probably assembled in Philip’s home his daughters do not prophesy to Paul or his team (1 Cor 14:34-36, 1 Tim 2:11-15), though they had stayed with him literally “many” days. Instead another prophet, Agabus, who had already prophesied for Paul and had occasioned Paul’s second trip to Jerusalem with an offering (Acts 11:27-30), now came and provided an

unusually vivid prophecy. He took Paul’s long cloth sash used as a belt around one’s robe and imagining it as a chain, bound his feet and hands. By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit he prophesied, “*In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.*” The word “deliver” has the meaning of “betray,” so that the same animosity and betrayal by the leaders in the capital, Jerusalem, against Jesus Christ earlier would now be demonstrated against Paul.

“THE PEOPLE PLEAD WITH PAUL NOT TO GO TO JERUSALEM, THOUGH AGABUS APPARENTLY DOES NOT DO THIS (V. 12). FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT SEEMS, PAUL’S TRAVELING COMPANIONS (CF. LUKE’S “WE”) ALSO JOIN IN THE PLEA.” AJITH FERNANDO

III. A PAINFUL RESOLVE

ACTS 21:12-14

Paul, who is so passionate in presenting the Gospel that he will often accompany his preaching with tears, now experiences an emotional avalanche as at least Philip, his four gracious daughters, those of his church, and Paul’s Mission team: Sopater of Berea, Secundus, (likely politarchs) and Aristarchus of the Thessalonians, Gaius of Derbe, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus of Asia, (Acts 19:4) and even Luke, the faithful physician and likely pastor of the Philippian church, all plead with Paul weeping in their petitions for him not to go to Jerusalem! Paul may be weeping himself at the overwhelming response of concern for him, yet he knows what he must do (Acts 9:15-16, 19:21, 20:22-23). So Paul stops it all with his exclamation, “*What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.*” Paul was willing to follow his Master no matter what the price! All are silent, except in matching the words of Christ as He prayed in the Garden “*The will of the Lord be done!*”

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Does your love and fellowship with others center around your commitment to give the Gospel to the lost?
- 2) Do you allow others to persuade you, even when you know it is not what the Lord wants you to do?
- 3) Are you committed to Christ and His Word so that you are willing to die for His name?