

THE LIFE OF PAUL

LESSON XI

PAUL REACHES JERUSALEM PART I (Paul the Nazarite)

1. How was Paul received upon arriving in Jerusalem? Acts 21:7 (**Acts 21:17 - And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.**) It was a warm greeting, probably with a holy kiss (I Thess. 5:26).
2. Who did Paul meet with on the following day? Acts 21:18 (**Acts 21:18 - On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.**)
3. What did they talk about? What did the elders of the church want Paul to do? Acts 21:19-24 (**Acts 21:19-24 - When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. 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; "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. "What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. "Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. "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.**)
4. Why did the elders want Paul to do this? Is this a scriptural thing for Paul to do? Can Paul do this as a part of the law and still be faithful to Christ? I Cor. 9:19-21; 7:19-20; Rom. 14 **The elders wanted Paul to take a vow with four other men so the Jews would know that Paul was not teaching contrary to the law of Moses. The Jews feared that Paul was teaching the Jews not to keep the law. (1 Cor 9:19-21 - For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law, to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;) (1 Cor 7:19-20 - Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters. Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.) (Rom 14:1-5 - Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.)** For Paul to take part in activities or events contained in the law, was not because Paul was trying to follow the Old Testament. By this I mean that Paul was not acting in accordance with a commandment of God. On the other hand, I am convinced that Paul was not acting contrary to any commandment of God. Paul makes it quite clear that to be circumcised, to participate in a special day as described in the law, or to eat or not to eat of a particular meat, meant

THE LIFE OF PAUL

nothing to God. Paul was acting out of all good conscience and was faithful to Christ. Paul was simply following a Jewish tradition.

5. What was to be bound upon the Gentile Christian? Acts 15:19-20,28-29 (**Acts 15:19-20** - "Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, "but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.) (**Acts 15:28-29** - For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.)
6. Describe the vow of the Nazarite. Num. 6:1-21; 15:5-7 (**Num 6:1-21** - Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When either a man or woman consecrates an offering to take the vow of a Nazirite, to separate himself to the LORD, 'he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink; he shall drink neither vinegar made from wine nor vinegar made from similar drink; neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. 'All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grapevine, from seed to skin. 'All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. Then he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. 'All the days that he separates himself to the LORD he shall not go near a dead body. 'He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is on his head. 'All the days of his separation he shall be holy to the LORD. 'And if anyone dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles his consecrated head, then he shall shave his head on the day of his cleansing; on the seventh day he shall shave it. 'Then on the eighth day he shall bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of meeting; 'and the priest shall offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, because he sinned in regard to the corpse; and he shall sanctify his head that same day. 'He shall consecrate to the LORD the days of his separation, and bring a male lamb in its first year as a trespass offering; but the former days shall be lost, because his separation was defiled. 'Now this is the law of the Nazirite: When the days of his separation are fulfilled, he shall be brought to the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 'And he shall present his offering to the LORD: one male lamb in its first year without blemish as a burnt offering, one ewe lamb in its first year without blemish as a sin offering, one ram without blemish as a peace offering, 'a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and their grain offering with their drink offerings. 'Then the priest shall bring them before the LORD and offer his sin offering and his burnt offering; 'and he shall offer the ram as a sacrifice of peace offering to the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread; the priest shall also offer its grain offering and its drink offering. 'Then the Nazirite shall shave his consecrated head at the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and shall take the hair from his consecrated head and put it on the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offering. 'And the priest shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram, one unleavened cake from the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and put them upon the hands of the Nazirite after he has shaved his consecrated hair, 'and the priest shall wave them as a wave offering before the LORD; they are holy for the priest, together with the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the

THE LIFE OF PAUL

heave offering. After that the Nazirite may drink wine.' "This is the law of the Nazirite who vows to the LORD the offering for his separation, and besides that, whatever else his hand is able to provide; according to the vow which he takes, so he must do according to the law of his separation.")

- a) What was the purpose of the Nazirite vow? To separate oneself unto the Lord and away from the world. Often times the poor could not afford the vow and a wealthy Jew would help the poor so they could take the vow. Both Josephus and the Talmud indicate that the vow normally lasted for thirty days.
 - b) What were the conditions of the vow?
 - i) It could be a man or a woman, who took the vow. 6:2
 - ii) The participant could not drink wine or any other strong drink. 6:3
 - iii) The participant could not eat of any food from which strong drinks were made. 6:4
 - iv) The participant could not cut even one hair from their head. 6:5
 - v) The participant could not come in contact with a dead body. 6:6
 - c) What ceremony took place at the conclusion of the vow?
 - i) The participant went to the door of the tabernacle. 6:13
 - ii) The participant offered the following sacrifices:
 - a) One he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering. 6:14
 - b) One ewe lamb without blemish of the first year for a sin offering. 6:14
 - c) One ram without blemish for a peace offering. 6:14
 - d) A basket of unleavened bread. 6:15
 - e) Cakes of fine flour mingled with oil. 6:15
 - f) Wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil. 6:15
 - g) A grain offering with their drink offering. 6:15
 - iii) The participant shaved his head at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation and placed his hair in the fire under the peace offering. 6:18
 - iv) The priest then took the boiled shoulder of the ram and one unleavened cake from the basket and one unleavened wafer and put them on the hands of the Nazirite, after he shaved his hair. 6:19
 - v) The priest then waved a wave offering. 6:20
 - vi) The priest also waved the wave breast and the heave shoulder. 6:20
 - vii) The Nazirite could then drink wine. 6:20
7. How could Paul afford the expense for all five of the men? We don't really know the answer to this question. Some think the church paid for all of them.
 8. What effect did all of this have upon the Jews in Jerusalem? Acts 21:27 **(Acts 21:27- And 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,)**
 9. What were the claims against Paul? Acts 21:28-29 **(Acts 21:28-29 - 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." {For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.})**
 10. Were the claims against Paul true? First of all, Paul did not teach against the law or the Jews, but against binding the law upon the Gentile Christians, which many of the Jews

THE LIFE OF PAUL

wanted to do. Secondly, the Jews thought that Paul took Tophimus, a Gentile from Ephesus, into the temple. Paul was not guilty of any of their claims.

11. What were the people ready and willing to do to Paul? Acts 21:30-31 (**Acts 21:30-31 - 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. Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.**)
12. Who saved Paul from the mob? Acts 21:31-33 (**Acts 21:31-33 - Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 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.**)
13. Who did the Roman authorities think Paul to be? Acts 21:33,38 (**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.**) (**Acts 21:38 - "Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?"**)
14. Where did the Roman commander then take Paul? Acts 21:37 (**Acts 21:37 - Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks {castle}, he said to the commander, "May I speak to you?" He replied, "Can you speak Greek?"**)
15. What request did Paul make of the Roman commander? Acts 21:39-40 (**Acts 21:39-40 - 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." 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,**)
16. Summarize Paul's address to the people? Acts 22:1-21 (**Acts 22:1-21 - "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now." And when they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent. Then he said: "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, "as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished." Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. "And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' "So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.' "And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. "So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.' "And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. "Then one, Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with**

THE LIFE OF PAUL

all the Jews who dwelt there, and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. "Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 'For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' "Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance "and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.' "So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. 'And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.' "Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.'")

17. What part of Paul's speech caused the audience to become greatly disturbed? Acts 22:21-23 (Acts 22:21-23 - "Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.'" And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!" Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air,)
18. To what extent were the Jews disturbed about what Paul said to them? Acts 22:22-23 (And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!" Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air,)
19. What were the immediate actions taken by the Roman authorities? Acts 22:24-25 (Acts 22:24-25 - the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?")
20. What prevented the Roman soldiers from continuing their original instructions? Acts 22:25-29 (Acts 22:26-29 - When the centurion heard that {that Paul was a Roman uncondemned}, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman." Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen." Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.)