

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 3



PAUL TRAVELS TO JERUSALEM

Scripture Text: Acts 21:1-17

After his parting with the Ephesian elders at Miletus, Paul and his group traveled on by ship toward Jerusalem. Touching at a few cities, they came to Tyre.

The Spirit talked to these disciples at Tyre. He showed them a future event. We see that not only apostles and evangelists receive messages from the Spirit, but humble saints do too. These were in a spiritual state where He could talk to them. In their fellowship, they showed great respect for one another, having their minds stayed on God. Unbelief, worldly thinking, self-seeking, contention, lightness, and foolishness will drown the Spirit's voice. He will talk to us if we keep the way clear.

MEMORY VERSE: *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

—*John 13:35*

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**John 13:21-35** A new commandment.

Tue.—**1 Thessalonians 4:9-18** An appeal for love and labor.

Wed.—**1 Corinthians 12:1-14** Different gifts are in unity.

Thu.—**1 Peter 1:13-25** Purified souls and unfeigned love.

Fri.—**James 2:1-13** True faith impartial.

Devotional Reading: Ephesians 5:1-20 Light and darkness.

Fellowship at Tyre and Caesarea

Acts 21:1-9 At Tyre the ship docked **to unlade her burden**. Paul and his group came ashore. **Finding disciples**—Many things might have been found, but they were looking for disciples. They stayed with them seven days. The disciples **said to Paul through the Spirit**—the Spirit had told them—**that he should not go up to Jerusalem**. Paul had heard the same message before (**Acts 20:23**). After a week of fellowship, the whole church, including women and children, walked with Paul out of town to the seashore. There they **kneeled down . . . and prayed**. Then they parted, Paul's group to board a ship and the others to return home.

When the ship arrived at Ptolemais, Paul and his group spent a day with the church there. At Caesarea, they stayed with Philip many days. Philip was **one of the seven** deacons chosen in Jerusalem to care for the poor (**Acts 6:1-6**). Now he had moved to Caesarea and was an evangelist. His four unmarried daughters prophesied, or preached God's Word.

Should women preach? This is a question about which there is difference of opinion. The Bible gives answer to this question loud and clear, through this Scripture and others in the Old and New Testaments. When one prophesies, he speaks **unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort . . . He that prophesieth edifieth the church (1 Corinthians 14:3-4)**. This is preaching. Philip was **of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom**. His influence did not cause his daughters to draw back, but rather encouraged them to preach. There is no thought of disapproval suggested in this account. Paul seemed happy to linger in the home. Prophecy is a gift of the Spirit (**1 Corinthians 12:10**). When God gives the gift, should we refuse its use, wherever given? God forbid!

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 3

The Prophecy of Agabus

Acts 21:10-11 While Paul was at Caesarea, Agabus came from Judaea. He was a prophet and previously at Antioch had by the Spirit correctly foretold a dearth (**Acts 11:27-28**). Now he bound his hands and feet with Paul's girdle (belt). He said the Holy Spirit had told him that Paul would be thus bound by the Jews of Jerusalem and delivered to the Gentiles. Gentiles (Romans) ruled Jerusalem and held the authority of final judgment upon prisoners. Thus again, as at Tyre, Paul was warned of danger awaiting him.

Paul's Determination

Acts 21:12-14 It was the judgment of all the brethren, both of Caesarea and of Paul's companions, that Paul should not go on to Jerusalem. To their pleadings and tears, Paul would not yield, but declared his readiness to be bound and even **to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus**. The brethren, seeing protest was useless, resigned the matter to **the will of the Lord**.

We may wonder why Paul did not heed the repeated warnings of the Spirit and turn back from Jerusalem. Was he right or wrong in going on? We cannot say because we are not told. It is clear he was convinced he was right. He must have had strong reasons not told. Perhaps it was the souls needing help, or he needed help from the Apostles there. Perhaps he had a direct command from God. We can be sure he felt his purpose for going was the will of God. It was great enough that Paul called it, **for the name of the Lord Jesus** and was willing to die for it.

A Happy Reunion at Jerusalem

Acts 21:15-17 From Caesarea **we took up our carriages**—the trip was continued over land. Brethren from Caesarea went along with Paul. One was an old man, Mnason, a disciple from Cyprus, who apparently had a house in Jerusalem which he would open to Paul and the others. Upon reaching Jerusalem, they received a glad welcome from the brethren. **The brethren received us gladly.**

Paul's journey to Jerusalem was a march of triumph showing the liberty these saints had found in the salvation provided by Jesus' love through the Gospel. In every town, there was a tender meeting and joyful fellowship in Christ. All were strengthened by it. Many of them had received the Gospel by Paul's ministry. The tears of sorrow at parting were not tears of despair. They were warm with hope of a heavenly reunion. To Paul, it was a bit of reaping from the sowing of years of devoted labor for Christ.

There is much gained by the meeting of saints with saints. The meeting of the elders with Paul was enriching in each city. We are exhorted to not forsake assembling together (**Hebrews 10:25**). Each gains strength from this spiritual fellowship. We should put forth every effort to attend every service of the church. The unity of the saints is a precious relationship. Do not wait to start serving God. Waiting increases neither ability nor opportunity. To do God's will is more to be desired than to save one's life.

JUST A THOUGHT

Fears, not years, make us old.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
It is revised and posted here with written permission from
(c) Bible Paths Publications, PO Box 299, Keithville, LA 71047