

ACTS 21:16 *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 brings us to consider Mnason of Cyprus. Perhaps he was one of Barnabas' old acquaintances. Maybe even a convert to Christianity because of Barnabas, however we don't know this for sure, because the scripture doesn't tell us any more than we read here in verse 16. The term "old disciple" doesn't necessarily mean he was aged, but rather means that he was among the first converts to Christianity. Whether this means he was a disciple of Jesus, we are not told. Perhaps he was among the three thousand who got saved on the day of Pentecost in ACTS 2, but again we are not told this information concerning him in scripture. Certainly he was a seasoned Christian. In fact the only things we no of Mnason is what we read of him here in ACTS 21:16. We know he was from Cyprus, as was Barnabas. We know he had a place in Jerusalem big enough to accommodate the Apostle Paul, and his group. And it appears from reading this scripture that Mnason traveled from Caesarea to Jerusalem as a part of this group of disciples that went with Paul. We do know from this verse that Paul and his group did stay at the house of Mnason when they got to Jerusalem.

Traveling with that many people made the 65 to 75 mile journey pass quickly. Perhaps two days journey time was all that was necessary, but again we don't know for the scripture doesn't tell us. Certainly had there been any perils along the way, Luke would have mentioned them. The last thing Luke mentions in this verse is that Paul and his company were to lodge in the house of Mnason while staying in Jerusalem.

Paul's fifth visit back to Jerusalem after being Saved

In ACTS 21:17 we find the Apostle Paul, and those traveling with him arriving safely in Jerusalem, no doubt a few short days before Pentecost. ACTS 21:17 *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*

This is the fifth time the Apostle Paul gets to visit Jerusalem after being saved, and this will be his last visit there. Those of you who have an old Scofield reference Bible will find that he only mentions four of the visits in his footnote three (3) from ACTS 9:26. Let's quickly review where to find the previous four visits Paul made back to Jerusalem, before we begin to study about this his fifth visit here after being saved. This may help bring our thinking as to where he is in his life back into a better perspective.

Recall in Paul's early life that he left Tarsus, and furthered his education in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel. Gamaliel was a famous Jewish Rabbi doctor of the law of Moses, who is noted in history to also have born the title of "Rabban," meaning he was the head of the Jewish Sanhedrin. As a Pharisee, and a doctor of the law, Gamaliel was held in high esteem among the Jews of Jerusalem. It truly was a feather in the Apostle Paul's cap (so to speak) to be able to learn the law of Moses at the feet of Gamaliel. This helped Paul become a leading Pharisee as a young man. It also helped his worldly esteem that Paul was the son of a Pharisee, (ACTS 23:6). Thus we have found early in this study how it was that Saul of Tarsus, who now is the Apostle Paul, became a prominent leader in Jerusalem before his getting saved. He was well known among the Sanhedrin before he got saved. However after Paul got saved he became a marked man, and a wanted man by those religious Jews of Jerusalem. Thus he wasn't able to return to his Jerusalem home for approximately three years. Remember how Paul after he got saved on the road to Damascus, was a man really without a home. But the Lord Jesus Christ Himself revealed Himself unto him as he spent some time in the desert of Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. These facts are recorded for us in GALATIANS 1, and ACTS 9.

GALATIANS 1:11 *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. 13 For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. 15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I*

conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. 18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. 20 Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.

Paul's first visit back to Jerusalem three years after his getting saved, which we just read about in GALATIANS 1, is also recorded in ACTS 9:26-30. ACTS 9:26 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. 29 And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. 30 Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

Several years pass before the events recorded in ACTS 11:25-30 happen. Paul goes to his boyhood home of Tarsus, continues his ministry, suffers many of this things found in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:23-33, then we read the following account. ACTS 11:25 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: 26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. ...27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: 30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Paul (then still called Saul) and Barnabas may have spent the better part of a year here at Jerusalem before they once again returned to Antioch in ACTS 12:25. This then would be Paul's second visit to Jerusalem after his being saved on the road to Damascus.

From Antioch, Syria Paul and Barnabas go on what is called Paul's first missionary journey, which is recorded in ACTS 13 and 14. At the conclusion of Paul and Barnabas missionary journey in ACTS 14 they returned to Antioch, Syria, and in ACTS 14:28 we read: *And there they abode long time with the disciples.* Next in ACTS 15:1 & 2 we read: *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.* Paul writes about this, his third visit back to Jerusalem after being saved, in GALATIANS 2:1-10, and this event is also recorded in ACTS 15:1-29. {Study again these verses on your own}. GALATIANS 2:1 reads: *Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also.* (The "fourteen years after" references Paul's first visit to Jerusalem after he was saved; after he escaped Damascus by being let down by the wall in a basket. {See again ACTS 9:25 and 2 CORINTHIANS 11:32 & 33}.

This then was Paul's third visit back to Jerusalem after being saved, and as noted above in GALATIANS 2:1. This was fourteen years after his first visit to Jerusalem when he stayed with Peter fifteen days, (see GALATIANS 1:18). Kind of hidden in the background here is the fact that Paul now felt comfortable with the brethren at Jerusalem, and more importantly they had accepted him as the man of God he was, and not the former destroyer known as Saul of Tarsus.

After the events of ACTS 15 Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch, Syria, and then split up, and Paul then takes his second missionary journey, where he goes for the first time into Macedonia, Athens and Corinth, visiting many cities, and making many new friends. Chief among them are Aquila and Priscilla, whom take Paul in as an associate in the business of tent making. Aquila and Priscilla in the mean time become devout followers of the Apostle Paul. All of this is recorded in ACTS 18. After a year and a half, Paul travels with Aquila and Priscilla to Ephesus, and leaves them there after first

visiting the synagogue of the Jews there in Ephesus. ACTS 18:20-22 records Paul's forth visit to Jerusalem after his being saved like this: 20 When they (of Ephesus) desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; 21 But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus. 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up, and saluted the church, he went down to Antioch. This would then be the forth time Paul had visited Jerusalem since being saved some seventeen or eighteen years earlier. Such a brief and uneventful visit was this that Luke barely makes mention of it, only stating that Paul "saluted the church." Then just as briefly Luke mentions that Paul once again visited his Christian home church of Antioch, Syria, from which he started his third missionary journey that we have just been studying about.

This brings us back to our current study verse of ACTS 21:17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.

There are two more points to consider from this verse. First, who "the brethren" were, and second how it was that they "received us gladly."

The term "the brethren" here references fellow Christians, that is fellow believers on Christ; those who have accepted Jesus as their own personal Saviour. "The brethren" here then references all that are in the body of Christ. Let's read a couple of portions of scripture that the Apostle Paul has already written, which helps explain this.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: 25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

ROMANS 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; 7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. 9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. 10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; 13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. 14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. 15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. 17

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. 18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

What we should note from the above passages of scripture is that "the brethren" references a wide and diverse collection of believers, each a particular member of the body of Christ; each individual, and unique, with different ambitions, emotions, and desires; yet each one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

This in general terms explains our second point a little better on how it was that they "received us gladly." Our text of ACTS 21:17 reads: *...the brethren received us gladly,...* and this shows the kind of treatment that the Apostle Paul, and his fellow travelers were getting from the disciples everywhere they went. The Greek word translated "gladly" here is only used twice in scripture; once here in verse 17, and once in ACTS 2:41 *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized:...* "Gladly" means they were received with joy and gladness, with delight, or delightedly. By the brethren here at Jerusalem receiving this group of disciples gladly we see manifest once again the fundamental principle and commandment that Jesus left his disciples with in action: JOHN 13:34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* {Review page 679 of these notes, where we found the Apostle John re-emphasizing this commandment several times: JOHN 13:35 *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* JOHN 15:12 *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.* JOHN 15:17 *These things I command you, that ye love one another.* 1 JOHN 3:11 *For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.* 1 JOHN 3:23 *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.* 1 JOHN 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.* 1 JOHN 4:11 *Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.* 1 JOHN 4:12 *No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.* 2 JOHN 1:5 *And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.*}

Again the last of ACTS 21:17 reads: *...the brethren received us gladly.* The Apostle Paul was the focal point of this group he was traveling with, and we will find that the Apostle Paul nearly gets killed here in Jerusalem in a few short days. The brethren may have received the Apostle Paul, and his traveling companions gladly, but the Jews in Jerusalem at this time didn't receive him gladly. We read a few days later in ACTS 21:30 - 32 of this event: *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. 31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul.* Where were the brethren that gladly received Paul and his companions at this point in time? We will find answers to this question later in this study, Lord willing, but for now suffice it to note that even these brethren had their differences with Paul. Some may have even been a part of the crowd that tried to destroy Paul!

And isn't it the same today? You will find brethren that will receive you gladly, for a time, and yet distance themselves from you when you began to talk about some of the deeper truths you have learned, such as eternal security, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, ranks in the resurrection, the Bride of Christ, and how the whole church is not going to be the Bride of Christ, and other such deeper truths. Often times what separates such brethren is the doctrines of Paul. The doctrine of Paul is what separated himself from the other disciples here at Jerusalem. And this was mainly because he was the anointed Apostle unto the Gentiles, and the Jews were the ones in prominence in Jerusalem. The Jews of Jerusalem seemed to always have a hard time accepting the doctrines of the Apostle Paul during his lifetime, and the same is still true today for the most part.

ACTS 21:18 *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.*

Before we get to what James has to say, let's review some important facts about James himself. We went over these same points some time ago, however it never hurts to review. The Apostle Paul wrote this about the first time he went to Jerusalem after being saved. GALATIANS 1:18 *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. 19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.* This brings up another question, when did James the Lord's brother become an Apostle? To properly answer this, let's go back and see when James the Lord's brother became a believer. In MATTHEW 13:55 and 56 we read of Jesus brothers and sisters, that is children of the same mother: 55 *Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? 56 And his sisters, are they not all with us?* So we see that Jesus had brothers and sisters, and that he had a brother named James, the next oldest to Jesus. In JOHN 7:5 we find that during the time of Jesus ministry here on earth, his brothers did not believe in him; JOHN 7:5 *For neither did his brethren believe in him.* (The word brethren here means: children of the same Mother, the same as was used in MATTHEW 13:55). Jesus brothers and sisters didn't believe in Him until after His resurrection, as we will see here in a minute. That is why while Jesus was dying on the cross he entrusted the care of his mother Mary to the disciple whom He loved, whom we know was the Apostle John. JOHN 19:25 *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.* Jesus would have loved to entrust the care of His mother into the hands of her next oldest son, which was James, but as we pointed out above, at the time of the cross, Jesus brothers and sisters didn't believe in Him, ...yet. So we see here in JOHN 19:27 that John was entrusted the care of Jesus Mother. No doubt this was a low blow to Jesus brothers who should of had the care of their Mother, but again, at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus they were not yet believers in Him.

So when did James the Lord's brother become a believer? It was after the resurrection of Jesus, and Paul is the one author in scripture who writes about it. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.*

How did the Apostle Paul know that Jesus appeared unto James the Lord's brother after His resurrection? By interviewing James during this first visit to Jerusalem after he was saved, an event recorded by Paul in GALATIANS 1:19. GALATIANS 1:19 *19 But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.* So we see that after His resurrection Jesus appeared unto James his brother, and James became a believer in Jesus much the same way the Apostle Paul did. Furthermore Jesus other brothers became believers also, and ACTS 1:14 helps point this out. Starting in ACTS 1:9 *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. 12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.* (These are the Apostles of Jesus at that time). 14 *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.* (Again brethren here means: children of the same Mother). So Jesus brothers may not have been believers at the time of His crucifixion, but they certainly were believers by the time of Pentecost some fifty days

later. And when Paul first gets acquainted with James the Lord's brother in GALATIANS 1:19, which we read above, James the Lord's brother is referred as an Apostle.

So when did James the Lord's brother become an Apostle? This bit of information is not told us in scripture. Was he chosen as a replacement Apostle for James the brother of John who was killed in ACTS 12:27 (ACTS 12:1 *Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. 2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.*) Scripture doesn't so state. The only conclusion that we can draw is that somewhere along the line James the Lord's brother became an Apostle, for the Apostle Paul refers to him as an Apostle. And he was an Apostle to the Jews, ACTS 15 and 21 plainly point this out. Further the Apostle Paul refers to James as one "...who seemed to be pillars..." (GALATIANS 2:9) in the church at Jerusalem. Obviously this could not be James the brother of John for he was killed in ACTS 12:2, and the events of GALATIANS 2 refer to the same events which took place during the time frame of ACTS 15. Then in JAMES 1:1 we read: *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.* Thus we see James the Lord's brother was an Apostle to the Jews, in other words a kingdom Apostle. And he was now the Pastor of the church at Jerusalem, just the same as he was in ACTS 15.

ACTS 21:18 *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.* Let's look again at "the elders" of the Christian church here in Jerusalem. This was a group of men that the Apostle Paul was familiar with, and a group he had dealings with before. Recall from ACTS 11:30 that Paul and Barnabas went unto the elders of Jerusalem, bringing relief from Antioch to the drought stricken Saints of Jerusalem. This was Paul's second journey back to Jerusalem after being saved. ACTS 11:27 *And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: 30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.*

The third time Paul visited Jerusalem after being saved, he was with Barnabas again, and they went to Jerusalem to settle the question of whether or not a man needed to be circumcised in order to be saved. ACTS 15:1 *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question.* In ACTS 15 we find the Apostles and elders spoken about separately, and yet they all were elders, and we should keep this thought in the back of our mind. Peter later even wrote a little about this stating in 1 PETER 5:1-3 these words: The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.* Of course you may recall from JOHN 21:15-17 how Jesus questioned Peter, and encouraged him to also "feed the flock of God" when He so strongly admonished Peter to "Feed my lambs," and to "Feed my sheep." Peter obviously learned the lesson Jesus was teaching him there, and taught these same things to the elders he was instructing. One wonders how many of these elders at Jerusalem were also, like Peter, witnesses to the ministry of Jesus Christ while he was here on earth, and witnesses of His sufferings. Perhaps the majority of the elders here at Jerusalem fit this category.

The end result of the conference at Jerusalem was two fold. First, the Apostles and elders of Jerusalem wrote a letter stating: *...For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well...* (ACTS 15:28 & 29), and noting further that circumcision and the keeping of the law was not a requirement to being saved. {Study ACTS 15:19-29}. The second result of this conference at Jerusalem is

not recorded in ACTS 15, but is recorded by Paul in GALATIANS 2 concerning a private meeting that Paul had with some while visiting Jerusalem at this time, and Paul writes about this in GALATIANS 2:9 & 10, which reads: *And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. 10 Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.* In plain English what is said here is that Paul, and Barnabas, were noted to be the Apostles unto the Gentiles, and that Paul had agreed to also remember the poor Saints of Jerusalem, which is why he took a collection for them nearly every where he went. This again was the main reason Paul came to Jerusalem at the conclusion of his second, and third missionary journeys, to bring relief of the poor there at Jerusalem. This is exactly what Paul told the governor Felix in ACTS 24:17 when he stated: *Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.* Alms by definition is a donation to the poor. Paul's bringing this rather large offering unto the Saints of Jerusalem would have completed the obligations of his third missionary journey, yet no mention of this is made until ACTS 24:17, which we just read above. Perhaps, however, this is part of the reason we read in ACTS 21:17 *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*

What happened to this offering Paul and the brethren with him brought to Jerusalem? We have previously answered this question before in this study, {review pages 579-584 of these notes}, however as a quick review I believe ACTS 2 and ACTS 4 give us the answer. In ACTS 2:42-47 we read: *42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* ACTS 4:32-35 speaks again of those Saints in Jerusalem, and states this: *32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.*

We see in the following verses of ACTS 21 that the focus was not upon Paul's bringing a large offering unto the Saints of Jerusalem, but rather on what had been accomplished in the hearts and lives of Gentiles throughout all of the places Paul and visited. This is quite different than the emphasis in most assemblies today, where the focus is upon giving, and not upon receiving God's word. Brother Hill often emphasized that the purpose of this his assembly was not on what you had, but rather our focus was upon what had you. He made sure everyone who attended this meeting knew his focus was upon Jesus, and having God's best, and that is what he wanted for us all. Some of the poorest of the poor have been the most faithful to his ministry, and in eternity some of these very same Saints will be the ones ruling and reigning with Christ Jesus, not because of what they had, or didn't have, but because of the work they allowed the Holy Ghost to complete in their own lives. There is a TV commercial out there right now that asks: "what's in your wallet?" meaning that a certain credit card can solve most of your financial problems. Of course we know that a certain credit card can not solve your problems, but we can ask a better question, "what's in your eternal wallet?" Have you filled it with the exceeding abundantly above all riches of God's grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, by the help of the mighty power of the Holy Ghost that worketh in us? The Apostle Paul did, and this was his emphasis, even to the elders at the Church at Jerusalem.

ACTS 21:18 *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. 19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what*

things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. The word "particularly" here means: step by step, or one by one. Imagine listening to the Apostle Paul recount his every step during his third missionary journey, and how God had moved through the lives of so many Gentiles during this time. As evidence he could point to the faithful seven who had traveled with him, and each of them could have given testimonies as to what the Lord had done for them, but our text tells us that it was Paul who *...declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.*

We can imagine that Paul's recalling his third missionary journey went something along these lines. He no doubt told of returning unto Antioch, Syria from where all his missionary journey's had started, and spending some time there, as noted in ACTS 18:23. But while in Antioch he felt compelled to also make a return visit unto Galatia, and Phrygia, and if possible visit again Ephesus, where he had left his good friends Aquila, and Priscilla. It would be hard to imagine Paul taking this journey alone, for ever since he hooked up with Barnabas back in ACTS 11:30, Paul has seldom traveled alone, except in dire circumstances. It is also hard imagining Paul revisiting Galatia without Timothy, so even though the scripture doesn't tell us one way or another whether Timothy was with him at the finish of his second missionary journey, and the start of his third, we can strongly suggest that he was.

If this was the case then, Paul, as he declares "particularly," step by step, his travels since his last visit to Jerusalem, could have show cased Timothy first unto James, and the rest of the elders there in Jerusalem. They would have remembered him from Paul's last visit, if indeed Timothy traveled with Paul at the conclusion of his second missionary journey as we have assumed he did. Paul, no doubt, spoke of Timothy as *...my own son in the faith...*, (1 TIMOTHY 1:2) meaning a disciple of Paul since his first missionary journey. Paul's thoughts on Timothy are probably best summed up in his own words in a portion of scripture we have read before, found in PHILIPPIANS 2. PHILIPPIANS 2:20 *For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.* 21 *For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.* 22 *But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.* To the Corinthians Paul wrote again of Timothy in 1 CORINTHIANS 4:17 *For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.* In 2 TIMOTHY 3:10 & 11 Paul writes of the fact that Timothy *...hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.* (The persecutions that came to Paul at Antioch, Pisidia, and Iconium and Lystra are all recorded in ACTS 13 & 14, which are events of Paul's first missionary journey of which Timothy would have been very familiar with.) So we can see that the Apostle Paul had a great opportunity here to tell of the great aid Timothy has been with him in his ministry, and the spreading of the gospel unto the Gentiles. Timothy's name means: "honouring God," and certainly Timothy did honour God in spreading Paul's gospel.

The second man that was now standing with Paul before James and the elders of Jerusalem, who Paul could introduce to them for the first time, was another product from his return visit unto Galatia early in his third missionary journey, a man named Gaius of Derbe. Perhaps he was an old friend of Timothy, however this information is not given us in scripture either. We do know from ACTS 20:4 that this Gaius of Derbe was traveling with Paul as he headed for Jerusalem at the conclusion of this his third missionary Journey. No doubt Paul told of all of the assistance that this Gaius of Derbe had been to him during his third missionary journey. Gaius name means "on earth" by some dictionaries, and "lord" in others. Combining these two meanings we come up with "lord on earth," or as we may think of it, a nobleman. Certainly this Gaius of Derbe was a nobleman in the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Paul would have continued his step by step recollection of the events that happened unto him on his third missionary journey by describing his two to three year stay at Ephesus. Two more men, Gentiles, from ACTS 20:4 fame are here with Paul as he stands before James and the Jerusalem elders; Tychicus and Trophimus, men from Ephesus, and products of this third missionary journey. No doubt this was their first visit unto Jerusalem, and imagine their excitement to see first hand the brethren of

Jerusalem, which they had no doubt heard much about from the Apostle Paul. These two Gentile converts of the Apostle Paul, Tychicus and Trophimus, were faithful traveling companions with the Apostle Paul the rest of his life, and were living testimonies to the work that the Lord had done among the Gentiles on Paul's third missionary journey.

Tychicus is found mentioned by name in five (GRACE) scriptures. Tychicus name means "chance," or "fortuitous." In EPHESIANS 6:21 & 22 Paul refers to Tychicus as *...a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord,...* and able to make known unto them *...all things.* 22 *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.* Obviously Paul had spent much time with Tychicus in order to write such a statement about him. Again in COLOSSIANS 4:7 Paul writes this concerning Tychicus: he is *...a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord.* Additionally TITUS 3:12, and 2 TIMOTHY 4:12 indicate that Tychicus was willing to go wherever the Apostle Paul sent him in those later years. Without question Tychicus was a valuable assistant unto the Apostle Paul as he ministered unto the Gentiles.

Trophimus is mentioned in three scriptures, and as being with Paul here in Jerusalem in ACTS 21:29. Trophimus is also mentioned in 2 TIMOTHY 4:20, probably Paul's last letter, where Paul notes that Trophimus has been left by Paul at Miletum very sick. Trophimus' name means "nourishment," and no doubt he, as a minister for Jesus Christ, gave out nourishment for many, including even spiritual food for the Apostle Paul. Trophimus is only mentioned in these three scriptures: ACTS 20:4; ACTS 21:29, and 2 TIMOTHY 4:20.

Paul's discussion about these two men, Tychicus and Trophimus, would have been most interesting to hear. Paul would have told how each came to know Jesus as his personal Saviour there at Ephesus. Perhaps one of them was a disciple before Paul ever got to Ephesus, and learned of the infilling of the Holy Ghost from the mouth of Paul. We know from ACTS 19:1-7 that about a dozen Ephesian disciples got filled with the Holy Ghost this way upon Paul's first arriving there on his third missionary journey. No doubt both Tychicus and Trophimus spent much time learning Paul's gospel from the mouth of Paul as he taught those two years plus in the school of Tyrannus. Maybe even this is where they spent all of their time. Perhaps these men may have had a large families in Ephesus, whom they brought to hear Paul's gospel. Maybe even most all of these family members got saved, and even filled with the Holy Ghost. Some of their family may have even strongly supported Paul's ministry. Of course we don't know exactly what took place in Ephesus as a result of these two men, but certainly much was added to the ministry of Paul because of Tychicus and Trophimus. Perhaps one of these two was hopelessly traveling down the wrong worldly path when one of their friends told them about Jesus, and the preaching of the Apostle Paul, and then they became a believer. Certainly ACTS 19:11-20 describes how special miracles were wrought from God by the hands of the Apostle Paul, and that all the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus heard of Paul, and his preaching. No doubt in the course of Paul's two plus years of preaching in Ephesus, thousands heard his gospel, and hundreds became believers. Many of these became faithful followers of Jesus, and learned the doctrines of the Apostle Paul. Some still couldn't get enough, so they frequented the house of Aquila and Priscilla, where Paul's gospel was further expounded. And a couple devoted disciples, like Tychicus and Trophimus, forsook all their worldly ambitions, and followed the Apostle Paul, and traveled with him for most of the rest of his life.

Paul could have then told James, and the elders of Jerusalem of his leaving Ephesus after so much good was accomplished for the eternal glory of God, and how he then revisited Macedonia, where he renewed old acquaintances, and once again expounded unto them the gospel message. Then he would tell of paying another visit to Corinth, and returning again through Macedonia on his way here to Jerusalem. There three more men from Macedonia joined him as he journeyed to Jerusalem: Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus. {Study ACTS 20:4}.

Sopater of Berea was no doubt one of the scripture searching Saints of Berea mentioned in ACTS 17:11, where we find: *These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.* Again, Sopater's name means "saving father," which indicates the testimony that all full overcomers give of God as being that

"Saving Father," the One who sent His only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, (study JOHN 3:16).

Paul could have next introduce Aristarchus, and as he did so Paul would have the biggest smile of satisfaction on his face, for even if he could have been the Apostle to just one Gentile, and that Gentile be Aristarchus, Aristarchus would have made it all worth while. We find Aristarchus mentioned five (GRACE) times in scripture, all in association with the Apostle Paul. Truly Aristarchus was a GRACE Saint. Aristarchus probably was a product of Paul's second missionary journey, but he had really taken a hold of Paul's gospel during Paul's third missionary journey. Aristarchus had spent much time in Ephesus being one of the many who studied hard, and with an open heart full of the Holy Ghost, really learned Paul's gospel during Paul's time in Ephesus. Aristarchus is noted in ACTS 19:29 to have been one of Paul's close traveling companions. We will also find him traveling with Paul as he heads for Rome in ACTS 27:2. This means Aristarchus stuck with Paul through the good times, and the bad. He was a true workfellow, and fellow labourer with the Apostle Paul. One of the kind you don't hear much about, but one of the ones who was a pillar in the ministry of the Apostle Paul. One who accomplished much behind the scenes, so to speak, even if it was only being a prayer warrior. Aristarchus name means: "the best prince," or "best ruler," or "the chief of princes," or "the prince of chiefs," and as such he points us to having the best place that a church age Christian can have, that being one of the ones found in that small company of believers known as the Bride of Christ. Aristarchus is found mentioned with Paul most of the rest of Paul's life. In PHILEMON 1:24 he is mentioned as a fellowlabourer, and in COLOSSIANS 4:10 he is noted to be a fellowprisoner of the Apostle Paul. Look for Aristarchus in heaven as one of the ones ruling and reigning with Christ Jesus!

The next man that came with Paul to Jerusalem from Macedonia whom Paul would have introduced unto James and the elders of Jerusalem would have been Secundus, of whom we know little about. Secundus was a Roman, and his name means "second," possibly because he was his fathers second son. He obviously was one of the Thessalonian Gentiles who latched onto Paul's gospel, and who loved his message so much that he too followed Paul, as he followed Christ.

Finally the Apostle Paul could continue telling his step by step progress on his third missionary journey by introducing Luke unto the elders and James. Luke is not one of the faithful seven mentioned in ACTS 20:4, but joined up with them in ACTS 20:5. Luke of course was also a product of Paul's early ministry, and one who joined up with Paul the first time on Paul's second missionary journey. We know from scripture that Luke spent most of the rest of Paul's life with him after re-joining up with Paul as he progressed towards Jerusalem at the conclusion of this his third missionary journey. In COLOSSIANS 4:14 Paul calls Luke, "the beloved physician," who with out a doubt provided much comfort, and relief for the Apostle Paul as he grew older. In 2 TIMOTHY 4:11 we find that Luke is still with Paul. Luke's name is contracted from Latin Lucanus, and he is found also in scripture mentioned as Lucas. Luke and Lucas means "light-giving." This is very appropriate, for Luke shed light on many thoughts and themes and lives that we otherwise would know nothing about. Obviously Luke kept good notes, and wrote two books of New Testament scripture. Perhaps Luke first got this idea of writing what he had observed, and what he had been told after this meeting that Paul, and his traveling companions had here in Jerusalem with James, and the elders of the church here at Jerusalem, as noted once again in ACTS 21:17-20. ACTS 21:17 *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. 18 And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. 19 And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.* Luke was another one of those Gentiles, who latched onto the gospel of Paul, and from this point forward also stayed with Paul, and was one of his closest friends.

Think about this meeting with James and the elders of Jerusalem a little differently here for a moment. Have you ever considered that most all of the New Testament writers could have been present in one room at one time, and this would have been the time! Paul was meeting with James, and we just read that all the elders were present. Quite possibly the Apostles were present also! If this was so, the only Author of

New Testament scripture not present in this room would have been John Mark. Paul we know wrote fourteen of the New Testament books. The Apostle John wrote five. Peter wrote two. Luke wrote two. James wrote one. Matthew wrote one. Jude wrote one. That totals twenty six of the twenty seven books of the New Testament, whose authors could have been present at this meeting! Yet none of them realized this either, for the New Testament had yet to be fully written.

Perhaps the Apostle Paul concluded his declaring point by point *...what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry...* by presenting this large collection that he, and those that he had introduced unto them, had taken for the poor Saints at Jerusalem. Paul had wrote about this before in several places, one of which was 1 CORINTHIANS 16. 1 CORINTHIANS 16:1 *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. 4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me.* Obviously these men Paul has introduced to James, and the elders of Jerusalem, were the ones who went with Paul as noted above in 1 CORINTHIANS 16:4.

ACTS 21:19 *And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.* One more thing to consider before we leave this verse. We can see that this was no short meeting, nor are we to think that it was. Perhaps this is where Luke got part of the information as to what took place on Paul's third missionary journey before Luke once again joined up with him. This would have been some meeting to have attended.

ACTS 21:20 *And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: 21 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.* Notice the tone here. First they politely listened to Paul, who particularly expounded unto them the marvelous things that God had wrought among the Gentiles because of his ministry. Brother Copley rightly notes here that the Apostle Paul rehearsed in their ears, one by one, the things that God had accomplished among the Gentiles by his preaching this grace message. In EPHESIANS 2:5 Paul writes, in part: *...by grace ye are saved;...* and three verses later he continues: *...8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:...* . James and the Jews Paul was addressing here in Jerusalem then glorified the Lord because of the marvelous work of grace manifest in the lives of these Gentiles Paul had spoken about, and in the same sentence turn their attention to the Jews of Jerusalem, and said: *Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: 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.* In other words we could say that James and the elders of Jerusalem, (and most, if not all of these men were also present at this conference of ACTS 15), didn't really accept the fact that one is saved by grace wholly apart from any works of the law, and any works of righteousness. Of course we are not surprised by this fact because it is Paul's gospel that teaches us these truths, and like we said before, those of Jerusalem were basically void of Paul's gospel. Those of Jerusalem held fast to the old traditions and customs of Moses. Still these nearly two thousand years later we can say the same thing, those of Jerusalem, and the Jews in general are basically void of Paul's gospel. In Jewish synagogues today is still preached the law of Moses. They have rejected Jesus, and thus they have rejected the doctrines of the Apostle Paul, who received his message directly from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. GALATIANS 1:11 *But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

Let's narrow our focus to what is stated in verse 20, *...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe;...* . James, and the elders of Jerusalem,

here are specifically addressing the Apostle Paul: *...Thou seest, brother,...* . They had glorified the Lord for the work that had been accomplished in the lives of the many Gentiles Paul had spoken about, but then they now wanted Paul to focus his attention on the many thousand of Jews there in Jerusalem, which too are believers. And we have also noted this fact from earlier portions of the book of ACTS how thousands of Jews were saved ever since the day of Pentecost back in ACTS 2. ACTS 2:41 *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. ...47 ...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. ...5:14 And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. ...6:1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied,...* . And this multiplication of the believers in Jerusalem had continued still even up until this day when Paul, and his traveling group met with James and the elders. Thus they could state with all confidence what they declared unto Paul here in verse 20, *...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe;...* and this was a true statement. Yet none of these Jerusalem Jews had received Paul's gospel.

Proof of the fact that these Jews of Jerusalem had not received Paul gospel is found in the next statement of James, and the Jerusalem elders found in verse 20: *...and they are all zealous of the law:...* . The word "zealous" come from the term "a zealot" meaning: an uncompromising partisan. Vines Dictionary tells us that *"...the "Zealots" was a name applied to an extreme section of the Pharisees, bitterly antagonistic to the Romans."* Whether or not old Saul of Tarsus was a part of this faction of the Pharisees we are not told in scripture, however the Apostle Paul, himself a Pharisee, stated this concerning himself before he got saved: GALATIANS 1:13 *For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: 14 And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.* In light of what we have just learned then we could state that the Apostle Paul considered himself more of an uncompromising partisan of the law, and the traditions of the Jews who lived before him, than most, if not all, of the Jews that he knew. So when James and the Jerusalem elders state *...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:...* the Apostle Paul could identify with this type of attitude, for he himself had been there until the Lord Jesus Christ Himself revealed His grace unto him on the road to Damascus. Being more exceeding zealous of the law, and the traditions of his fathers is a part of what took Paul to that lowly place he identified himself as going, achieving the rank of chiefest of sinners, (study 1 TIMOTHY 1:15). It was the grace of God, and not his zealousness of the law, that took the Apostle Paul to that lofty height of being the chiefest Apostle, (study 2 CORINTHIANS 11:5 & 12:11).

Consider this. In JOHN 1 we find these statements: 14 *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. ...16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* We see here that Jesus Christ is full of grace and truth, and His grace was endless, grace upon grace. When we accept Jesus Christ as our own personal Saviour, and ask Him to forever live in our heart, we then have living within us Jesus who is full of grace and truth. In GALATIANS 2:20 Paul writes: *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* Saul of Tarsus pursued the law of Moses, but on the road to Damascus old Saul of Tarsus met Jesus Christ full of grace and truth, whose grace Saul of Tarsus accepted into his own sinful life, where grace upon grace was revealed to him, and in him, to the point where he became the Apostle Paul, reflecting to others the grace and truth that had been revealed unto him! Thus Paul was able to write in ROMANS 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* Paul knew this to be a fact, for in his own life he had been there, and done that.

Now let's return to our setting here in Jerusalem, and realize the perspective that was Paul's as he hears James, and the Jerusalem elders tell him in ACTS 21:20 *...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all*

zealous of the law: 21 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. Again it is obvious that these believing Jews in Jerusalem were ignorant of Paul gospel. He didn't preach they ought not circumcise their children, or forsake the customs of Moses. They hadn't been taught ROMANS 10:4 which we just went over above: *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* Some how up to this point in time they had missed the gospel of grace and glory that had been revealed unto the Apostle Paul. They had missed the gospel message of Paul, for if you think about it, the gospel message of Paul hadn't been allowed to be preached by Paul yet here in Jerusalem. Unfortunately this is still true today, many have missed the gospel of grace and glory that is found in Paul's gospel, for even yet so many Pastors don't preach the grace message revealed unto Paul. Thus we find even today that many are still *...zealous of the law...* . We would expect this to be the case in the Jews religion, for the Jews were the ones given the law of Moses in the first place, but we wouldn't expect this zealousness of the law to be prevalent amongst the Gentiles, yet it is. Brother Copley in his commentary on the book of ACTS notes this also stating: *"Many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law."* The same can be said today of the Gentiles. How strange! What a conglomeration! Men believe on Jesus, and the embodiment of grace, the Savior by His grace, the absolute fulfillment of the Mosaic code, but are zealous for the very law, of which *"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."* -- ROMANS 10:4. Oh, how ignorance and self-righteousness rob Christ of His dearly-bought glory. Paul did not teach, either Jews, or Gentiles to "forsake Moses;" but he taught everywhere that Christ was the living Substance of which Moses' dead letter was only the shadow. Why go on with a type, a shadow, when the real satisfying Substance had come? Cold, cruel legality habitually carries a pail of paint and brush, seeking to blacken the pure, white truth of divine grace. We are often accused of saying, or writing things which are absolutely false. Christ is our theme, from whom we never deviate, but seek to glorify Him to the uttermost."

"Today people do not continue the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, or *"walk after the customs;"* but they continue the spirit of the types and shadows. Some insist on water baptism, or sabbath keeping, or feet washing, etc., as necessary to salvation. Others insist that after we are born again thru faith in Jesus (JOHN 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*), we must keep the law of Moses, or be damned at last. Reader, how often have you broken the law since you were saved? And did you mend that break by keeping the law afterward? Or did you come to the Father thru the "Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous One?" -- 1 JOHN 2:1. Do you know that if you break God's law, you must be forgiven of Him, and no keeping of it afterward can atone for, nor pardon that offence? Why not rest forever on HEBREWS 7:24 & 25? -- *But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.* Oh, thank God for the efficacy of the death of Christ, and for the constancy and sufficiency of His intercession in our behalf. All that is grace, needed grace, abounding grace." End of quoting Brother Copley).

Let me give a couple of facts that I have found in my research, and some of these facts we have covered before. The word "grace" is used by the Apostle Paul more than any other scripture writer. About eighty per cent of the scriptures that mention the word "grace" are found in Paul's gospel records! Stated another way, the grace of God became one of the main themes of the Apostle Paul. Paul mentions the word "grace" over a hundred times in his writings. And remember the concept of "grace" was not something Paul learned as a Pharisee or the son of a Pharisee, nor at the feet of Gamaliel. Late in life the Apostle Paul wrote to Titus in TITUS 3:7 *That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.* Again let me remind you of a couple of scriptures we just read above (see page 698): in EPHESIANS 2:5 Paul writes, in part: *...by grace ye are saved;*... and three verses later he continues: *....8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*

It was by revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that the Apostle Paul became an expert on "grace," and thus he could expound upon this doctrine of "grace" like no other gospel writer.

By his upbringing by a Pharisee Father, the Apostle Paul also became an expert about "the law," and, in fact, the Apostle Paul also has much to say about "the law," mentioning "the law" in about one hundred verses that he penned. Stated another way, approximately forty per cent of the scriptures that mention "the law" are written by the Apostle Paul! So who better was there of the gospel writers to contrast "the law" with "grace?" This is why the Apostle Peter wrote in 2 PETER 3:15 & 16 these words concerning the Apostle Paul: *...that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood,...*

We noted early in this study, {see page 5 of these notes}, that the heart and center piece of Jewish Religion is "the law." Over one hundred times in scripture the Apostle Paul references "the law." Paul was an expert in "the law." Few if any have ever known "the law" like Paul knew "the law." ACTS 22:3 tells us that Paul was brought up *...at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law*. We have previously noted that no one on earth was more expert on "the law" than Paul, this proud young Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee. "The law" indeed was the life of the Pharisee. Paul's knowledge of "the law," and his further learning "the law" from Gamaliel is what made him an expert in "the law." One would think that all of this training in "the law" would have gone to waste after Paul got saved, but that was simply not the case. Jesus took all of this knowledge that Paul had learned about "the law," and revealed more of Himself to Paul through "the law" he knew so well. No wonder then that the Apostle Paul references "the law" more than a hundred times in scripture. What is a wonder though is the fact that the expert on "the law" became the head spokesman, and the expert on the doctrine of grace. Truly grace and truth were revealed unto the Apostle Paul by our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

In ACTS 13 Paul preached a sermon to those Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, and this sermon we noted to be a pattern sermon of what it was Paul preached upon his first arriving in a city. Keep in mind this sermon was preached mainly unto the Jews in the Jewish synagogue. It wasn't until a week later that a multitude of Gentiles also came to hear Paul's preaching his grace message. Let's again note what it was the Apostle Paul stated in this sermon in ACTS 13:38 & 39 -- *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (Jesus Christ, your Messiah) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses*. Here we see Paul telling the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia that "the law" of Moses couldn't justify one from all things, but Jesus Christ could, and did, justify all them that believe from all things. Could the law of Moses offer forgiveness of sins? No, so Paul preached to the Jews *...that through this man (Jesus Christ, your Messiah) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins...*

The forgiveness of sins is a benefit to the believer derived from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, wholly apart from the works of the law. Jesus told the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus in ACTS 26:18 that he was also to preach this message of *...the forgiveness of sins...* unto the Gentiles, which he made a career doing. Back to the Jews, we find that when Paul wrote to the ROMANS he covered this same point of focus concerning *...the forgiveness of sins...* using different words that we find in ROMANS 10. ROMANS 10:1 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. ... 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

In ACTS 13:39 the Apostle Paul introduces the doctrine of justification. Brother Hill defined "justification" for us when he taught the book of ROMANS as being "just as if I've never sinned." ACTS 13:39 again reads: *And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

Brother Copley explains the differences between the "forgiveness of sins" (verse 38) and "justification" (verse 39) this way in his commentary on ACTS: "An offended party can forgive an offence, because he chooses to do so; but he cannot justify the offence, nor the offender. In fact, the offender remains the offender forever. The offence was committed once forever. But the offended Jehovah can justify the offender. He not only "forgives our iniquity," but He "covers our sins" (ROMANS 4:7), so that offended justice can see them no more. The ungodly, when forgiven, stands as if he had never been ungodly; the offender is counted as never having offended. He stands righteous before the highest tribunal in the universe. "It is God that justifieth." (ROMANS 8:33). {End of quote from Brother Copley}.

The American Tract Society Dictionary defines "justification" like this: "The being regarded and treated as if innocent; or acquittal from the consequences of guilt before the tribunal of God. "Justification by faith" means that a person, on account of the true and living faith in Christ as manifested by good works, will be delivered from condemnation on account of his sins; that is, his sins will be forgiven, and he be regarded and treated as if innocent and holy. Thus, besides the remission of sins and their penalty, it includes the restoration and everlasting enjoyment of the favor of God. We obtain justification by faith in Christ. Yet neither this nor any other act of ours, as a work, is any ground of our justification. In acquitting us before his bar, God regards not our works, in whole or in part, but the atoning work and merits of Christ. He was treated as a sinner, that we might be treated as righteous. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," (ROMANS 8:1). The moment we believe, our justification is as perfect as the infinite worthiness of our Redeemer. Its validity does not depend on the measure of our assurance of hope, nor on spotless holiness of life." (End of quote from The American Tract Society Dictionary).

The following scriptures also adds these important points for us to note concerning the "forgiveness of sins" and "justification." PSALMS 103:12 *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.* ISAIAH 38:17 *...for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.* ISAIAH 43:25 *I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.* MICAH 7:18 *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. 19 He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.* HEBREWS 10:17 *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*

Back to ACTS 13:39 and the thought of justification: *And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* Notice that the Apostle Paul uses the word "justified" twice in verse 39, and we don't read this word before or again in the book of ACTS! With this statement Paul contrasts some of the differences between the Old Testament and The New Testament, and in HEBREWS 9:15 Paul states that Jesus Christ *...is the mediator of the new testament,...* Paul admits here that there were things *...from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,* which is to say in other words from The Old Testament. After years of preaching and explaining the differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament to the Jews, Paul writes to them a further clarification in his epistle to the HEBREWS. HEBREWS 10:1 *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. 2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. 3 But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. 5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh*

away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

John the Baptist, in his introduction of Jesus to the world, stated this in JOHN 1:29: *...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* Thus we see that during Old Testament times while under the law of Moses it was not possible to be justified from all things by the blood of bulls and goats, but after the Saviour Jesus came and died once a sacrifice for sins forever it is possible to be justified from all things because by Him all that believe are justified from all things, for He came to take away the sin of the world. Adam Clarke's Commentary on ACTS 13:39 states: "By the Law of Moses there is neither justification nor salvation: in Jesus Christ there are both, and all the sure mercies of David. Therefore, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be *justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*"

Let's closer look at the first part of what is said here in ACTS 13:39, for it is within this first part of the verse that we have contrasted the New Testament thinking that Paul was bringing out for the first time to the hearers of this sermon. ACTS 13:39 *And by him all that believe are justified from all things,....* . This justification *...from all things...* is only made possible *...by Him*; that is by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the One upon whom Paul is putting the spotlight in this sermon; *by him all that believe are justified from all things...* . What Paul is getting to here is the positive results that are afforded to those who that believe in their heart by faith that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead, and that by Him is the forgiveness of sins, then are they justified from all things, even from the things which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. An explanation of Paul's thinking here is expounded for us in Paul's epistle to the ROMANS. ROMANS 3:19 *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* 20 *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* 21 *But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;* 22 *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:...* ...28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* This phrase "*justified by faith*" that we just read in ROMANS 3:28 is one of those unique Pauline phrases, which he uses a total of three times: ROMANS 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* ROMANS 5:1 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: and GALATIANS 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

In ROMANS 2:12 the Apostle Paul writes: *For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.* Again in ROMANS 3:20 Paul writes: *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* In ROMANS 7:7 Paul writes: *...Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law.* Going to GALATIANS we read in 2:21 these words of Paul: *I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.* Again Paul writes concerning "*the law*" in GALATIANS 3:11 *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.* In GALATIANS 3:21 Paul informs us: *...if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.* Then in HEBREWS 9:22 Paul emphasizes: *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* Going back to ROMANS 8:2 Paul writes: *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Thank God for having Paul explain to us the purpose of the law, and showing us that we are not under law, but under grace. ROMANS 6:14 *For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

So we see that Paul, this Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, was expert in "the law" of sin and death, but Jesus freed him from "the law." One song writer expressed it like this in our Grace and Glory song book: "Free from the law, O, happy condition, Jesus hath bled, and there is remission, Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall, Grace hath redeemed us once for all." This song writer knew Paul's gospel, which Jesus Christ had given him, and had learned such statements as found in GALATIANS 3:13 written again by Paul, which reads: *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* Jesus used Paul's knowledge of "the law" to reveal Himself unto Paul, who in turn taught us the purpose and place of "the law."

Let me again give a couple of scriptures from ROMANS that Paul the Apostle wrote unto us after he himself received, and learned the grace message from Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, which help explain his great appreciation of grace, and how it contrasts with the law. Probably no other portion of scripture sums up the contrast between law and grace better than this portion from ROMANS 3. ROMANS 3:19 *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (an appeasing sacrifice) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. 27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.* Again Paul didn't learn this lesson from his Pharisee father, nor was he taught this by that great teacher of the law, Gamaliel. These facts were learned after Paul himself was shown the extreme limits of the grace of God on the road to Damascus, but we will get to that part of Paul's life later in this study. In ROMANS 5:1 & 2 we read: *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.* Later in ROMANS 5 Paul wrote: *8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. 12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. 20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded,*

grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here are some scriptures already written by Paul, which expound upon his thinking concerning "the law" from the book of GALATIANS.

GALATIANS 2:15 We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. 17 But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. 18 For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. 19 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

GALATIANS 3:1 C foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. 5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. 12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. 19 Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

ACTS 21:20 ...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: 21 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. In verse 21 we find several accusations against Paul; that he teaches all of the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses; that Paul teaches they ought not to circumcise their children; and that Paul teaches these very same Jews not to walk after Jewish customs, or follow

traditional Jewish ways. Simply put these are all false accusations. We have been studying about Paul's ministry, and have now looked at all three of his missionary journeys, where is it recorded that he taught all the Jews amongst the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither walk after the customs? Paul was a grace preacher, a grace teacher, a grace evangelist, and a grace Apostle. Paul didn't preach you ought nought to do this, and you ought not to do that, but rather Paul preached *"...Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;..."* {1 CORINTHIANS 1:23}.

As a further example of this, let's read a little more of what the Apostle Paul has already written unto the GALATIANS about law keeping. GALATIANS 5:1 *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.* 2 *Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.* 3 *For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.* 4 *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.* 5 *For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.* 6 *For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.* 7 *Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?* 8 *This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.* 9 *A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* 10 *I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be.* 11 *And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased.* 12 *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.* 13 *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.* 14 *For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* 15 *But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.* 16 *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.* 17 *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* 18 *But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*

We see here in this portion of scripture that the Apostle Paul preached that Jesus Christ has made us all, both Jew and Gentile, free from the law. We even see in verse 14 of GALATIANS 5 above that Paul repeated a law of Moses found in LEVITICUS 19:18, which reads: Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD. Question: does this sound like the Apostle Paul was teaching to forsake Moses, or not to walk after the customs that the Jews were taught? No, but it does show that the Apostle Paul truly understood that Jesus *...Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* {ROMANS 10:4}. This is why he wrote in GALATIANS 3:24 *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.* Again Paul taught what is written in ROMANS 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

In ACTS 21:21 we find this statement made by James and the elders of Jerusalem: *...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.* The word "informed" found here in verse 21 is also used in verse 24, and simply means that these Jews of Jerusalem were instructed, or taught orally, that is by word of mouth, that the Apostle Paul taught against Jewish customs, which we know by studying Paul's life, and Paul's gospel, was not the case. So the word "informed" here in verse 21 and 24 really speaks of being misinformed, as we will see shortly. We do not find James, or the elders further asking Paul if he in fact taught the Jews to forsake Moses, they just repeated accusations him of doing this. In James defence we find in verse 24 that he sides with Paul being a follower of the customs of Moses, stating: *and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.* However, back here in verse 21 we find the elders of Jerusalem, and James, obviously had heard these false things about Paul from somebody, or many some bodies. How do rumors and gossip get started? Perhaps you remember an exercise that your

teacher may have had you participate in at school to show how rumors or gossip get started, where the whole class room passes on, one by one, a statement whispered by the teacher in the first students ear. By the time the last student repeats what they heard from the one before him, the whole story is totally different, and contains few, if any, correct original facts. The statement *...they are informed of thee...* begs the question, where did this misinformation come from? And how did these rumors, and gossip get started? Usually this kind of thing gets started by one repeating something they thought they heard from someone else, who may have been the last one in a long chain of people who repeated something that they assumed was a fact, when in reality it was not. To bad James and the elders didn't practice what PROVERBS 11:13 states: *A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*

If Paul taught *...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...* then why did Paul circumcise Timothy back in ACTS 16:3? We answered this question in lessons past, stating this concerning Timothy: ACTS 16:3 *Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.* Paul circumcised Timothy because of the Jews. An explanation of what Paul was trying to accomplish in his ministry is found in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23, which also helps explain a little of why he circumcised Timothy at this point in time. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.* Brother Copley notes that by circumcising Timothy this "shadowy rite would not affect Timothy's standing with God, but it would give him more freedom among the Jews who were still weak in the faith." {Review page 314 of these notes}. By studying this portion of scripture that we just read in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23 we get a little better picture of just how humble the Apostle Paul was, and find revealed a little more of what his heart attitude was. Simply put he had the heart of a very concerned Apostle.

So the bottom line back here in Jerusalem in ACTS 21 is that the Apostle Paul didn't teach *...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...* (ACTS 21:21). These statements then were false accusations, made from false assumptions. Who is the accuser of the brethren? Satan. REVELATION 12:9 & 10 plainly tells us this stating: *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. Again JOHN 8:44 further tells us where lies come from, stating in part this concerning Satan: ...He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

One more portion of scripture we will now read concerning Paul's thoughts about the law of Moses, which further shows that the Apostle Paul didn't teach *...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...* (ACTS 21:21). 1 TIMOTHY 1:8 *But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; 9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; 11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.* So we see that the law contains many elements that

are good, that can magnify sound doctrine, if put under the magnifying glass of Paul's gospel message.

We know from reading ahead in ACTS 21 that the Apostle Paul was nearly killed by the Jews at Jerusalem, most of whom truly believed that Paul taught *...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...* (ACTS 21:21). James himself, I think, learned a valuable lesson here about watching what we say, and what we repeat. Note what he later wrote in JAMES 3. JAMES 3:1 *My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. 2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. 7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: 8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

Consider this as a little side light. There were no novices who penned scripture. Paul wrote in his last epistle, 2 TIMOTHY, some facts concerning scripture. He stated in 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 & 17 these words: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* The inspiration of God came by the power of the Holy Ghost, who enabled devout, and yielded men to put their experiences into words. Brother Hill even noted this in his The Shepherd's Psalm book. He stated: "Some have thought that the 23rd Psalm was written in David's youth, but strength, maturity and depth of it are not compatible with youth. It reveals a life of spiritual maturity: one whose varied experiences in life fully tested the Shepherd's grace, love, mercy, and power. It expresses the gratitude of the redeemed child of God who has learned the meaning of God to his life." {End of quoting Brother Hill.} These words that we just read above in JAMES 3, written by this same James we find in our text of ACTS 21, were, no doubt, penned with some of the wisdom, and lessons he learned during this period of time of Paul's last visit to Jerusalem. Had James realized the out come, would he have stated the following?

ACTS 21:20 *...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: 21 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. 22 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; 24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. 25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.*

Perhaps after the events of Paul's visit here to Jerusalem James may have realized he lacked some wisdom. So he was later able to write this next statement found in JAMES 1:5 *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.* Then a little later in JAMES 3 we find James expounding a little more concerning wisdom. JAMES 3:13 *Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is*

earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

In ACTS 21:20-25 we find a couple of "to do" lists. The law keeper always has a "to do" list. This is just the nature of law keeping. The law of Moses contained an accounting of "thou shalt," and "thou shalt not," in other words an extensive "to do" list. The legalist then always has a mind set of "thou shalt," and "thou shalt not," thus causing him, or her, to constantly think that they must be doing something, with their focus being on not breaking the law. Saul of Tarsus was probably one of the best law keepers there ever was before he got saved, and with this legal mind set when he met the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus immediately he asked Him, "*Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*" {ACTS 9:6}. Almost instantly old Saul of Tarsus must have realized that all of his law keeping didn't bring him salvation, and that there was really nothing more that he could do, but to only believe! To believe that there is salvation only in the name of Jesus, ...*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved....* ACTS 4:12. The Philippian jailor in his greatest moment of despair, cried out unto the Apostle Paul, and Silas, and said: ...*Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* {ACTS 16:30 & 31}. The Apostle Paul, that former legalist who tried to keep the law as Saul of Tarsus, had learned that there really was only one thing a person could do to be saved, and that was to ...*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...* . The Apostle Paul had already written along these very same lines in ROMANS 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* When on the cross Jesus ended the "to do" list of the law when He stated ...*It is finished...* {JOHN 19:30}. Thus the Apostle Paul was able to write that scripture we have gone over many times before, found in ROMANS 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* However James, and the elders of Jerusalem, were not familiar with this doctrine of Paul's, nor did they understand his grace gospel message, thus they relied on their "to do" lists, and they had a "to do" list for everybody it seems.

There are over a thousand scriptures that contain "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements. The majority of them have something to do with the keeping of the law. The Apostle Paul, our expert on the law, summarized the outcome of the "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements in a few simple words found in ROMANS 13. ROMANS 13:8 *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.* {Review the following scriptures and page 679 of these notes concerning loving one another: JOHN 13:34; 15:12; 15:17; ROMANS 13:8; 1 THESSALONIANS 4:9; 1 PETER 1:22; 1 JOHN 3:23; 4:7; 4:11 & 12; and 2 JOHN 1:5.}

Among the more than thousand scriptures that contain "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements, eight are found in GENESIS 24, the chapter that has to do about getting a Bride for Isaac. However there is much more to this chapter than just a story about a Bride for Isaac. This chapter contains much typical teaching concerning the preparation of the Bride of Christ. For those truly interested in being in the Bride of Christ the study of GENESIS 24 is a must, and we have in lessons past spent much time here in Sunday School going over GENESIS 24. It is hard to talk about the Bride of Christ and not mention something about the 24th chapter of GENESIS. We also did a study about the meaning of Bible numbers several years ago, and in that study we discovered that there are several meanings for the number eight, one of which has to do with the Bride

of Christ. So when I came across the fact that GENESIS 24 contained eight "thou shalt" statements, my hearts interest perked up, and felt like further examination was required.

Here is what I found. The eight "thou shalt" statements found in GENESIS 24 can be divided into two groups. The first four statements are "thou shalt" statements made by Abraham unto his eldest servant, no doubt Eliezer of Damascus (see GENESIS 15:2). Recall in GENESIS 24 that Abraham is typical of God; Eliezer is typical of the Holy Ghost; Isaac is typical of Jesus; and Rebekah is typical of the Bride, the Bride of Christ if you will. The second four "thou shalt" statements found in GENESIS 24 are repetitions of the first four statements, with Eliezer repeating to the family of Rebekah what Abraham had sent him to do. The first four statements made by Abraham to Eliezer are these: GENESIS 24:3 *And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: 4 But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. ...7 The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. ...8 And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.* The repetitions of the first four statements made by Eliezer unto the family of Rebekah are found in the following verses from GENESIS 24. GENESIS 24:37 *And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: ...38 But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son. ...40 And he said unto me, The LORD, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house: 41 Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.*

Now let's put all of this information together. The message we should be getting here is that Rebekah, the future Bride in our story, was never given any "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements! Why? Because if Rebekah was ever going to be a Bride to Isaac, she needed to follow the leading and guiding of Eliezer. Eliezer was already given all of the any "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements! There was nothing else she could do but follow his leading! The only thing she could do to become the Bride to Isaac was to commit her life, and her immediate care into the hands of Eliezer, and go the way that he would lead her. She does so in GENESIS 24:58, where we read of her family calling unto Rebekah: *And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.* Rebekah's journey to Isaac riding those old nasty camels was a long and dirty one, during which time she learned much about her future husband Isaac from the mouth of Eliezer. Thus in an important way Eliezer prepared the heart and mind of Rebekah to be ready to marry Isaac. And he did so without giving her any "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" rules!

Let me repeat something I said in my GENESIS 24 study that helps bring a little more light on what we are noting here today. "Eliezer's name means "God of help," or "God is help." Isn't that why the Holy Ghost was sent, to help us in all things along life's pathway? If we want God's best we will following the leading of the Holy Ghost, just like Rebekah followed Abraham's eldest servant (Eliezer), and in the end we too will be found in the Bride of Christ! These are Jesus words: JOHN 14:16 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, (Moffatt translates this: to give you another Helper) that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. ...26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* JOHN 15:26 *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: JOHN 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall*

he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you. In these verses we have seen that the Son, Jesus Christ, prayed to the Father, and that the Father (on the day of Pentecost in ACTS 2:4) sent the Holy Ghost, who is to be with us from that day forward forever. The Holy Ghost, also known as the Comforter, and the Spirit of truth, was sent from God the Father on the behalf of Jesus to not only be a Comforter, but to be a teacher of all things, and to help you remember all things, that is the important things of God. The Holy Ghost will be a guide to us, and is given to further glorify Jesus, and to shew us important things to come especially things concerning Jesus. To those who will qualify to be in the Bride of Christ they will be taught of the Holy Ghost, they will be guided by the Holy Ghost, and will learn more and more about Jesus, having been shown these things by the Holy Ghost, and this will happen for the most part after that they recognize and learn the importance of daily riding the camels. Not all Christians who have received the Holy Ghost since they believed ever ride the camels. The reason why is that they fail to recognize that the everyday tests and trials, whether big or small, and these often unpleasant situations in life, whether big or small, are fore ordained of God; a fine tuned orchestration of events between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Are you willing to ride the camels? In order to marry the Bridegroom you must ride the camels." A little later in that study I also noted this concerning the camel paraphrasing the Apostle Paul from ROMANS 8:18: "For I reckon that the everyday tests and trials, whether big or small, and the often unpleasant situations that comes our way, the camels of this present time, and the tests and the sufferings that they represent, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." {End of quoting my GENESIS 24 study.}

The Apostle Paul was the first Bridal Saint, our example to follow. He was raised knowing all of the "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements in Old Testament scripture. But the "thou shalt," and "thou shalt not" statements didn't help him one iota in being a Bridal Saint. When he got saved on the road to Damascus he wanted to know from the lips of Jesus, who was appearing unto him, just exactly what it was that "he shalt," or that "he shalt not" do. We read in ACTS 9:6 that Paul asked: *And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* Our kind loving Saviour told him in "thou shalt" words this old legalist could understand: *And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.* Physically blinded by this experience, this legal Pharisee of the Pharisees, three days later was prayed for by a very devout Holy Ghost filled Christian named Ananias. ACTS 9:17 & 18 tells us: *And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.* The "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements Paul had followed all his life never again were part of his everyday living. From that day on Paul followed the leading, and guiding of the Holy Ghost, and rode some of the nastiest camels any of us could have ever imagined to win Christ as his Bridegroom! Note again what Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 3:7-17 -- *But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after,...* (Follow after what? Follow after the leading of heavenly Eliezer, the Holy Ghost, who directs our steps on this bridal race course.) *...if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward*

the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. 16 Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. 17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

The only "thou shalt," or "thou shalt not" statements Paul ever wrote fell into two categories. The first was his repeating what the law had said, as we read above in ROMANS 13:8 Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Paul never wrote any "thou shalt not" statements that were independent of his repeating the law. The second category of Paul's making "thou shalt" statements consists of the positive results found by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. For example to the Philippian jailor Paul stated in ACTS 16:31 Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. In ROMANS 10:9 Paul writes: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 1 TIMOTHY 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Jesus Himself when on earth made many positive "thou shalt," and "ye shall" statements too. Perhaps His greatest "ye shall" statements are found in ACTS 1. ACTS 1:5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. ...8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Bring all of this down to you and me. When Jesus said ...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you,... a part of what He meant was that ...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you... to be apart of that company known as the Bride of Christ. Will each of us, individually, like Rebekah in GENESIS 24, forsake our worldly ambitions, and say in our own heart "I will go," and follow the leading of the Holy Ghost to our heavenly Bridegroom?

Back to our studying the life of the Apostle Paul. ACTS 21:20 ...Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: 21 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. 22 What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; 24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. 25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

The passage we just read above in ACTS 21:20-25 really contains two "to do" lists. James gave a "to do" list unto the Apostle Paul, which we will discuss in a moment, and he gave an accounting of the "to do" list that was previously given unto the Gentiles in ACTS 15:19-29. The "to do" list given unto the Gentiles by James, and signed onto by those Christian rulers in Jerusalem is again summarized in ACTS 21:25, and contains four things for the Gentiles "to do:" (1) to keep themselves from things offered unto idols, (2) to keep themselves from drinking blood, (3) to keep themselves from eating things strangled, and (4) to abstain from fornication. When we studied that portion of scripture we noted that the Gentiles observing these four items went a long way toward the peace and the mutual good understanding of both Jew and Gentile believers who assembled in one place. We also noted that these four items have nothing to do with ones salvation. If a believing Gentile chooses to not follow any of these four suggestions from James "to

do" list, he is still saved. James signed on to this agreement out of concern for the Jews. Paul signed on to this agreement out of concern for the Gentiles. Paul also realized that these four items have nothing to do with ones salvation, but if followed these four items are a good testimony to others. Paul wanted the Christian Gentiles to be a good testimony unto the Jews. If a Gentile believer chooses not to follow these guidelines, it probably is because he is not seeking God's absolute best. {Study again ACTS 15, and pages 296-300 of these notes.} Paul always wanted to be a good testimony to others, and he absolutely wanted God's best. That is one of the reasons he wrote what he did in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23 that we read above, and will repeat here. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.* Knowing this portion of scripture also gives us a better perspective of why the Apostle Paul would go along with James' "to do" list. Paul wanted to gain them that were under the law, he wanted to gain the Jews, that is he wanted them to see, as he had been shown by Christ Jesus, the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to realize as he had been shown that *...by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.* {EPHESIANS 2:8 & 9, and see also EPHESIANS 3:8}. He couldn't preach this message unto the Jews unless he could first get their attention. And here at Jerusalem, Paul knew that these thousands of Jews which believe in Jerusalem were also very zealous of the law, as James had already noted in ACTS 21:20. Paul wanted to gain them, that is win them over, from following the law, and to realize that *...Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth...* as he had already written in ROMANS 10:4.

Let's again note that James, and the elders of Jerusalem, were not familiar with the doctrine of Paul's, nor did they understand his grace gospel message, thus they relied on their "to do" lists, and they had a "to do" list for everybody it seems, because they were law keepers. Let's now look at the "to do" list James gives Paul in ACTS 21:22-24 by reading these verses from the James Moffatt translation: 22 *What is to be done? They will be sure to hear you have arrived. 23 So do as we tell you. We have four men here under a vow; 24 associate yourself with them, purify yourself with them, pay their expenses so that they may be free to have their heads shaved, and then everybody will understand there is nothing in these stories about you, but that, on the contrary, you are guided by obedience to the Law.*

The essence of what it being said here concerns the Jews perception of Paul. They were of the opinion that he had forsaken Jewish traditions since he was now the Apostle unto the Gentiles. These Jewish leaders here in Jerusalem, starting with their Pastor James, whose main concern was for the Christian Jews, thought that if Paul would submit to this purification, mentioned in ACTS 21:24, that all would be well as far as the Christian Jews of Jerusalem were concerned. This plan of James may have worked had there not been underlying prejudices in the hearts of so many Jews against the Apostle Paul.

What we need to understand here is that the Apostle Paul did not for one moment compromise his gospel message, but rather was unto the Jews becoming a Jew, that he might gain the Jews for Christ, as he noted in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19 & 20 above. {1 CORINTHIANS 9:19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;... .}* How he could win other for Christ was always at the fore front of the Apostle Paul's mind. May we to have such a thought process, and heart attitude.

The law contained a great deal of information concerning vows. The tradition of making vows starts in scripture with Jacob in GENESIS 28. GENESIS 28:20 *And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and*

will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, 21 So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: 22 And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee. You can see here that Jacob's vow was unto the Lord. You may also recall the story of the Mother of Samuel, whose name was Hannah, and how she vowed a vow unto the Lord in 1 SAMUEL 1:11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. The Lord heard her prayer, and granted her request, and the prophet Samuel was the result of her vow. If you read the story of Hannah in 1 SAMUEL 1 you will see that she followed instructions concerning a vow that were given by Moses, unto the children of Israel, back in DEUTERONOMY 23. DEUTERONOMY 23:21 When thou shalt vow a vow unto the LORD thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the LORD thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. 22 But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. 23 That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the LORD thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth. This scripture was a part of what was behind James encouraging Paul here in ACTS 21:24 to ...be at charges with them,...

The vow that these four Jewish men of ACTS 21:23 had taken concerned, it seems, the vow of a Nazarite found in NUMBERS 6. NUMBERS 6:1 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 2 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow a vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the LORD: 3 He shall separate himself from wine and strong drink, and shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat moist grapes, or dried. 4 All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the vine tree, from the kernels even to the husk. 5 All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. 6 All the days that he separateth himself unto the LORD he shall come at no dead body. 7 He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die: because the consecration of his God is upon his head. 8 All the days of his separation he is holy unto the LORD. 9 And if any man die very suddenly by him, and he hath defiled the head of his consecration; then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it. 10 And on the eighth day he shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons, to the priest, to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 11 And the priest shall offer the one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make an atonement for him, for that he sinned by the dead, and shall hallow his head that same day. 12 And he shall consecrate unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering: but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled. 13 And this is the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: 14 And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings, 15 And a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and wafers of unleavened bread anointed with oil, and their meat offering, and their drink offerings. 16 And the priest shall bring them before the LORD, and shall offer his sin offering, and his burnt offering: 17 And he shall offer the ram for a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the LORD, with the basket of unleavened bread: the priest shall offer also his meat offering, and his drink offering. 18 And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. 19 And the priest shall take the sodden shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them upon the hands of the Nazarite, after the hair of his separation is shaven: 20 And the priest

shall wave them for a wave offering before the LORD: this is holy for the priest, with the wave breast and heave shoulder: and after that the Nazarite may drink wine. 21 This is the law of the Nazarite who hath vowed, and of his offering unto the LORD for his separation, beside that that his hand shall get: according to the vow which he vowed, so he must do after the law of his separation.

Now let's sum up the above information we are now armed with, and see if we can better understand what was being requested of Paul in ACTS 21:23 & 24. James had said this in ACTS 21:23 & 24 – *Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; (probably the vow of a Nazarite, which we read above, ...to separate themselves unto the LORD... NUMBERS 6:5), 24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, (which is to follow the guide lines set forth in NUMBERS 6:3-7 above concerning the abstaining from wine, or strong drink, nor eating grapes moist or dried, or coming near to a dead body), and be at charges with them, (that is to share with them the expenses of this Nazarite vow, which in their case would have include eight lambs, four rams, besides the oil and flour, the unleavened bread, and some wine), that they may shave their heads: (according to NUMBERS 6:18 ...and put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings...) and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law... (so that the perception would be that Paul was not an enemy of Moses, but rather considered the law to be holy, just, and good). In fact in 1 TIMOTHY 1:8 Paul would later write: *But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;...**

ACTS 21:26 shows that the Apostle Paul went along with James request. The fact that Paul went along with James request once again gives us another glimpse into the heart attitude of the Apostle Paul. We know he wanted God's best. He also knew that all eyes in Jerusalem were upon him. He wanted to have a good testimony before all men, but more importantly he wanted to have witness a good testimony before God. And the Lord knew his heart, and what was in his heart. He had expressed his own hearts attitude a few days earlier as he left the Ephesian elders. ACTS 20:22 *And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* We once again see here that Paul knew of the possibility of being arrested in Jerusalem existed, yet above and beyond that he was not moved by this, but rather wished to continue testifying of the gospel of the grace of God. And who more needed to hear it than these zealous of the law Jews in Jerusalem? Again in ACTS 21:13 Paul had in recent day stated: *...for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.* Within twenty four hours of ACTS 21:26 Paul was arrested, and did nearly die for the name of the Lord Jesus in Jerusalem.

So why did the Apostle Paul go along with James request? A big part of our answer is once again found in that portion of scripture we have referenced many time already in studying this visit to Jerusalem by Paul, where we found in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:22 and 23 these thoughts, and words of Paul, which again were already penned by this time in his life: *...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake,...* Paul was following James request in part, because he hoped by all means to save some. Paul, in other words, was hoping that by doing those outward shadowy things of the law, that he might explain them and give there spiritual application, and in the process he would be magnifying our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The book of HEBREWS was later written by the Apostle Paul, and addressed to the Jew anonymously, so that the Jews would read, and potentially see that Jesus Christ *...is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* {ROMANS 10:4}. Paul would write to the Jew in HEBREWS 10:1 *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.* Paul wanted the law keeper to know that the shadow of good things to come spoke of Jesus. So he continues in HEBREWS 10:3 *But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of*

sins every year. 4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins. 5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. 8 Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; 9 Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: 12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; 13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15 Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, 16 This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.

These then were some of the thoughts in the heart and mind of Paul. Here in Jerusalem we know that the Apostle Paul was being led of the Holy Ghost. He used the plan of James, and the elders of Jerusalem, as a step to get a foot in the door, so to speak, so that he could at long last maybe get to preach unto his nation, the Jews. He will get this opportunity in a few hours from this point in time, however I doubt if it was like Paul imagined it to be. Yet this opportunity was exactly like the Lord wanted it to be, as we will see when we get to ACTS 22.

ACTS 21:26 *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.* Conybeare and Howson translate ACTS 21:26 as follows: "He (Paul) entered into the Temple, giving public notice that the days of purification were fulfilled, (and staid there) till the offering for each one of the Nazarites was brought."

Note first of all that word "signify" in our King James version was correctly translated by Conybeare and Howson as "giving public notice," which simply means that Paul loudly announced to the priests in the temple his purpose of observing this vow with the four men. It was proper that such an announcement should be made beforehand, in order that the priests in charge might know that all the ceremonies required by the law had been observed. This public announcement was a way of showing that the Apostle Paul was intending to share with them (...be at charges with them... ACTS 21:24) the expenses of completing this vow.

In ACTS 24:18 we read that Paul indeed was found "*purified in the temple,*" meaning again that he followed the guide lines set forth in NUMBERS 6:3-7 above concerning the abstaining from wine, or strong drink, nor eating grapes moist or dried, or coming near to a dead body. Paul did this in support of the four men who had taken on this vow.

We haven't mentioned up until now the significance of the number four in this study, but since there were four men here who had a vow upon them (ACTS 21:23), let's note a little of what we have learned about the number four. In our meaning of the Bible numbers study we found that the number four also had four meanings associated with it: HUMAN WEAKNESS; MAN'S WEAKNESS; CREATION; and it is an EARTHLY NUMBER. God created the heaven, and the earth, and every living thing that moveth, {study GENESIS 1:1; 1:21; and 1:27}. GENESIS 2:7 tells us: *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.* It would be hard to find something weaker than dust, so we begin to see a little of why the number four speaks of HUMAN WEAKNESS, and MAN'S WEAKNESS, and how it is an EARTHLY NUMBER. As far as CREATION is considered, note the following points. God also created four different kinds of flesh, as noted in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:39 *All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.* REVELATION 7:1 indicates that there are four corners on the earth, and four directions on the earth which God created: North,

South East and West. REVELATION 5:9 speaks of four divisions of the human race: (1) kindred, (2) tongue, (3) people, and (4) nation.

In one respect 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 & 48 picture how weak man is, especially when compared with the strength of the Lord. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:47 *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. 48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.* 1 PETER 3:7 speaks of the wife as the weaker vessel, when compared with the husband. Certainly this is true when humanly weak redeemed man, the potential full overcomer, and bride to be, is compared with our heavenly Bridegroom Jesus. Interestingly Eve, Adam's wife, is only mentioned four times in scripture by name: {see GENESIS 3:20; 4:1; 2 CORINTHIANS 11:3; and 1 TIMOTHY 2:13}.

In GENESIS 1:14-19 you can read of God creating the fourth day, and on the fourth day the sun, moon and stars become visible. They were the "...lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:..." {GENESIS 1:14}. Note these lights were given four functions: ...for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:.... The greatest of these lights that divide the day from the night is, of course, the sun. Jesus is the greatest light the world has ever seen, and we have many times discussed how the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus witnessed that light greater than the noon day sun (see ACTS 26:13). Jesus is called the "Sun of righteousness" in MALACHI 4:2, which reads: *But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.* The biggest reason Paul associated with these four men who had a vow on them was to try and get them to see, as he had seen, this light of the Sun of Righteousness, whose light is greater than the noon day sun.

So what is the significance of these four men mentioned in ACTS 21:23-26? They picture the helplessness, and vanity, of humanly weak man trying to achieve God's best through works of the law. These four men were doing their best to follow every letter of the law having not yet been taught that Jesus ...*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* {ROMANS 10:4}. This was Paul doctrine that wasn't yet being preached in Jerusalem. These four men didn't know as yet that ...*the letter killeth...* (2 CORINTHIANS 3:6). This too is Paul's doctrine, which these four men didn't know. "The letter" in Paul's gospel references the law. Paul wrote in ROMANS 7:6 *But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.* He wrote again of his ministry in 2 CORINTHIANS 3:6, and stated the following concerning "the letter" of the law: *Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.* In total the Holy Ghost inspired the Apostle Paul to use the term "the letter" in reference to the law five times. {See also ROMANS 2:27 & 2:29}. Five is the number of GRACE. Certainly the Apostle Paul was a grace minister, a grace preacher, a grace teacher, a grace evangelist, and a grace Apostle, which is one reason why the Holy Ghost allowed Paul to use the term "the letter" in reference to the law five times. You can bet that these four men mentioned in ACTS 21:23-26 got an earful of the grace message from the Apostle Paul as they went through with this Jewish ritual in the temple while being accompanied by the Apostle Paul, as we will see shortly.

ACTS 21:26 *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.* Again Conybeare and Howson translation of ACTS 21:26 reads: "He (Paul) entered into the Temple, giving public notice that the days of purification were fulfilled, (and staid there) till the offering for each one of the Nazarites was brought." Let's now focus upon the offering brought for each of the four Nazarites mentioned here.

Imagine the expense of eight lambs, four rams, besides the oil and flour, the unleavened bread, and some wine, which would have been the offering for the four Nazarites. How much would such a request cost in today's market, if you could find such items? It would be considerable. So where did Paul get such funds? Some suggest that James and the elders allowed some of the alms, and offerings that Paul had brought unto them to be applied to the expenses of these four men who had a vow upon them. This

very well may have been the case here. We must also remember that the Apostle Paul himself wasn't exactly poor either. Recall that his parents had sent him from Tarsus to Jerusalem to get his formal legal education, and not just from any school, but rather he got educated at the feet on one of the greatest teachers of his day, Gamaliel. This kind of education had to cost a considerable sum, and even if one could afford such an education, it wasn't available to everyone who had money either. So we see that Paul grew up in a family who had money. As an adult, and as an Apostle, we know that Paul also worked as a tentmaker, (study again ACTS 18:3). When Paul arrived at Thessalonica he also worked, as noted in 1 THESSALONIANS 2:9 *For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.* Again in 2 THESSALONIANS 3:8 & 9 Paul wrote: *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: 9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.* So we see that the Apostle Paul wasn't afraid to work to get make his own living. Consider this also, from the end of ACTS 21 until the end of the book of ACTS we will find that the Apostle Paul will be a prisoner. He will be afforded some liberty, as noted in ACTS 24:23, in part because he was a Roman citizen, and because the governor Felix hoped that money should also be given him of Paul, as noted in ACTS 24:26. Felix must have know that the Apostle Paul had some money in order for this statement to be made. Then a few years later we read in ACTS 28:30 that *...Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house...* even though he was still a prisoner of Rome. By the time of this statement Paul had been a prisoner more than four years, without working, and still was able to afford his own hired housing. So we see that the Apostle Paul wasn't exactly poor at this point in time in his life. However by the time Paul nears the end of his life, he makes this statement found in PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ...* . Then in his last letter written unto Timothy Paul writes in 2 TIMOTHY 4:13 *The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee...* . If Paul was freezing cold in his prison cell, and had any money, don't you suppose that he would have spent it on a coat? I am sure he would. At the end of his life Paul probably died penniless, but oh how rich he was in the things that mattered the most. Any friends that Paul may have had here on earth, who were his friends because he had some money, had by the end of his life, long ago left him. Note Paul's parting words to Timothy in 2 TIMOTHY 4:16-18 *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. 17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 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. Amen.*

Back to our text in ACTS 21:26. We have noted how the Apostle Paul joined with the four men who had taken this vow of a Nazarite, announced the accomplishment of their days of purification unto the priests in the temple, paid their expenses, and the last point we observe in ACTS 21:26 is that Paul stayed there *...until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.*

These offerings according to NUMBERS 6 were for a sin offering, a burnt offering, a trespass offering, a meat offering, a drink offering, a wave offering, and a peace offering. Seven offerings all together! Recall that seven is the number of SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION. Seven is a number that describes Jesus, and points us to Jesus, for who else is the epitome of SPIRITUAL COMPLETION or SPIRITUAL PERFECTION? Each one of these seven offerings mentioned in NUMBERS 6 in association with fulfilling the vow of a Nazarite then pointed to one or more aspects of Jesus Christ.

The sin offering pointed to Jesus who upon the cross took upon Himself all the sins of the world. Paul preached in ACTS 13:38, and stated: *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (Jesus Christ) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:...* . Paul taught in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 *For I delivered unto you*

first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.

The burnt offerings were always totally burned to God, and pictures the total obedience of Jesus Christ to do the will of God the Father. Jesus said in JOHN 4:34 *...My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.* Again in JOHN 8:29 Jesus stated: *...And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*

The Apostle Paul alluded to the trespass offering of Jesus Christ on the believers behalf when he wrote in EPHESIANS 2:1 *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.* A similar thought is expressed in COLOSSIANS 2:13 *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

The meat offering according to the law of Moses was to be prepared by fire. The fire speaks to us of Christ's sufferings, for the meat offering was to be "baken in an oven," or "baken in a pan," and was termed a sweet savour offering. Sin and trespass offerings were never termed sweet savour offerings, therefore suffering for sin is not pictured here. However the suffering life of Christ is portrayed here. The Apostle Paul knew this and wrote in EPHESIANS 5:2 *And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.* The priests were allowed to eat the meat offering that remained after first offering this sacrifice unto the Lord. REVELATION 1:6 tells us: *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* Since Jesus Christ has made us kings and priests unto God, we too are allowed the benefit of eating this meat offering. The Apostle Paul tell us how this is done. ROMANS 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Our sufferings with Christ are a sweet savour unto the Lord. The Apostle Paul further acknowledges this in PHILIPPIANS 3. PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; 11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. 12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*

The drink offering pictures a complete pouring out unto the will of God, with no offer of resistance. ISAIAH 53:7 speaks this of Jesus: *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.* Jesus Christ offered no

resistance when He offered up His life on the cross. HEBREWS 7:27 states in part that Jesus *...offered up himself...* and He did so on the cross. The drink offering spoken of in association with the vow of a Nazarite was a strong wine, and is symbolic of the invigorating, intoxicating life of Christ, which Jesus so freely and willingly poured out unto God the Father on our behalf there on the cross of Calvary!

The wave offering of the Nazarite is explained in NUMBERS 6:18-20, {see pages 714-715 of these notes above}, where we read that the Nazarite has put in his hands by the priests the shoulder and breast of the ram, along with the unleavened bread, and he then waves them before the Lord. All of this is done after his hair is shaven, showing that the days of separation have been accomplished. These different items waved unto the Lord are symbolic to us. The shoulder of the ram pictures the shoulder of Christ, whom we need to continually lean upon in order to overcome every obstacle placed on our race course. The breast pictures the affections of Christ. The Apostle John leaned on Jesus breast at the last supper, showing the close relationship and deep love that he had with Christ. {Study JOHN 13:23-25 and JOHN 20:20.} The full overcomer leans on Jesus breast all of the time realizing the fact of PHILIPPIANS 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* The full overcomer knows how much Jesus loves, and realizes with the Apostle Paul no matter what the obstacles, the facts of ROMANS 8:37 still hold true: *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.* The unleavened bread portion of the wave offering again points to Christ, the true Bread from heaven, who is without evil in any form. Jesus gave a discourse on the bread of life in JOHN 6. JOHN 6:48 *I am that bread of life. 49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

The peace offering of Jesus Christ can be summed up in one verse: ROMANS 5:1 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The peace offering, found in LEVITICUS 3 & 7, was a fellowship offering, which was divided almost equally between God and the priests. It pictures Christ bringing God and man together on the basis of a common sacrifice. Jesus Christ the Son of God, and the Son of Man was the only One who could possibly do this.

To recount, the seven offerings according to the vow of a Nazarite found in NUMBER 6 were; (1) a sin offering, (2) a burnt offering, (3) a trespass offering, (4) a meat offering, (5) a drink offering, (6) a wave offering, and (7) a peace offering. It would be safe to acknowledge that the Apostle Paul didn't stand idly by *...until that an offering should be offered for every one of them...* as noted in ACTS 21:26. No doubt as each one of these offering were administered by the priests of the temple, the Apostle Paul explained there meaning as it pertained to Jesus Christ, for as we noted above, each of these offerings pictured a different aspect of the sacrifice Christ Jesus made upon the cross of Calvary for our sins. This could mean that the Apostle Paul gave explanation as many as twenty-eight times; seven for each of the four men who had taken this vow on them. Twenty-eight is the number that has to do with ETERNAL LIFE, and this too points to Jesus. 1 JOHN 5:11 *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

Paul Arrested in Jerusalem

ACTS 21:27 *And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,...* . Another translation of this verse, which may help our understanding of it reads: "But just before the period of seven days was up, the Jews from the province of Asia caught a glimpse of him in the temple, and excited the whole crowd into an uproar, and grabbed hold of him."

The seven days referenced in verse 27 are to be thought of in association with the four men who had a vow on them, not with the Apostle Paul. Remember that ACTS 21:23 in part states: *...We have four men which have a vow on them;...* . They had this vow on them before the Apostle Paul came upon the scene here in Jerusalem. Then recall also