

Acts 21:18-26 **Report to the Church in Jerusalem – Advice for Purification**

Paul's Report to James and the Elders of the Church in Jerusalem

18 On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. 19 When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

Jews zealous for the Law

20 And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; 21 but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. 22 What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come.

Advice to Purify self to satisfy Jews

23 Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. 24 Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.

Confirmation of law for the Gentiles

25 But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality."

Paul complied with the advice of the Church leaders

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Paul's Report to James and the Elders of the Church in Jerusalem

- ✚ On the following day **Paul went in with us** to James, and **all the elders** were present. When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. [Acts 21:18-19]
- ✧ Paul, Luke, and their traveling companions went to the leadership of the Church in Jerusalem bringing the gifts from the Gentile Churches. [Acts 24:17]
- ✧ James the brother of Jesus still appears to be the head of the Elders of the Church since he is singled out specifically by name as he was in other situations. [Acts 12:17, 15:13, 21:18, 1 Corinthians 15:7, Galatians 1:19, 2:9, 12, Jude 1:1]
- ✧ When the Leadership of the Church heard the report from Paul and his associates, they glorified the Lord. [Acts 21:20]

Jews zealous for the Law

- ✚ And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. [Acts 21:20-22]

- ✧ The Elders of the Church in Jerusalem told Paul of the myriads of Jews in Jerusalem who have become believers.
- ✧ The Jews in the Church of Jerusalem had the same zeal for the law (customs of the Jews) in common with the Jews who had been causing trouble wherever Gentiles were converted to faith in Jesus by the ministry of Paul.
- ✧ This problem had dogged Paul wherever he had gone among the Gentiles from Antioch of Syria, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Lycaonia, Galatia, Phrygia, Mysia, Asia, Macedonia, Achaia, Greece, Lydia.
- ✧ There is a problem, because the Jews who rejected the message of Paul in the cities of the Gentile Churches had come to the Church in Jerusalem and informed them that Paul had taught Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Judaism, its laws and traditions including Torah and circumcision, and customs of Judaism.
- ✧ Though the charge is false, the people will hear that Paul has arrived in Jerusalem and will come out against him.

Advice to Purify self to satisfy Jews

- ✧ Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law. [\[Acts 21:23-24\]](#)
- ✧ To head off the problem, the Elders advised Paul to take four men who were under a vow the people trust and be purified with them as witnesses, paying their expenses.
- ✧ This is to convince the Jews that the report about Paul was false, but that Paul himself followed the traditions of the Jews.

Confirmation of law for the Gentiles

- ✧ But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality." [\[Acts 21:25\]](#)
- ✧ The Church leaders in Jerusalem confirmed that they had made the ruling that Gentile believers were not under the traditions of Judaism, but were expected to keep pure from things God had restricted for the Gentiles. Namely that they should **keep away from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.**
- ✧ These were the things they had written to the Gentiles when the question of circumcision had first manifest itself by the Judaisers and demanded a decision by the chief leadership. [\[Acts 15:1-31, 21:25\]](#)

Paul complied with the advice of the Church leaders

- ✧ Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them. [\[Acts 21:26\]](#)
- ✧ Paul desiring to avert trouble in Jerusalem if possible, did as advised.
- ✧ The next day (at the end of the seven day purification process), Paul went into the Temple to conclude the ritual of Purification publicly and to make an offering for each of the men who were his witnesses and had joined him in the purification process.