

## BUILDING YOUR FAITH: EXPLORING SCRIPTURE WITH THE PASTORS

*Sent by Love: A Study of Acts, Part 2 - November 21, 2021*

**Acts 21:1-14 - "3rd Missionary Journey Ends; Paul Goes to Jerusalem"**

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### OUTLINE

**I. Greet one another, begin with prayer, and read Acts 21:1-14.**

**II. Remind the class of the discussion from Acts 20:13-38.**

**III. Discuss Paul's journey to Tyre in Acts 21:1-6.**

A. Primarily sea travel to Syrian province of Phoenicia, 400+ miles away

B. Stay with congregation in Tyre for a week; probably came into being with exodus from Jerusalem after Stephen's martyrdom

C. Prophecy by Christians to Paul: do not go to Jerusalem

D. Response? "When we returned to the ship at the end of the week..." (20:5, NLT)

—*A theme is developing about Paul's future treatment in Jerusalem and beyond. How will this be important to the plot of Acts as stated by Jesus in Acts 1:8?*

**IV. Discuss Paul's trip to Ptolemais and Caesarea in Acts 21:7-9.**

A. Short 27-mile trip to Ptolemais, then to Caesarea (port city built by Herod the Great)

B. Reappearance: Philip "the Evangelist," one of the initial seven deacons, noted for his missionary work in Samaria and with the Ethiopian eunuch, based in Caesarea (Acts 8)

C. Daughters all have the gift of prophecy (unmarried probably because of age)

—*Look back on Philip's prior work as a missionary in Acts 8:4-12, 26-40. What stands out to you as you review it? Why is the Christian church different today because of Philip's work?*

—*It seems Philip finished one season of ministry in Acts 8 and now is in a different season in Caesarea in Acts 20. Have you experienced the ending of one season of service that then led into a different service? Describe your experience and how you see God working through it.*

**V. Discuss Agabus' prophecy regarding Paul in Acts 21:10-14.**

A. In a very Old Testament type enactment of prophecy, Agabus takes Paul's belt and binds himself with it, saying this shows how Paul will be treated in Jerusalem and beyond

B. Much urging of Paul not to go to Jerusalem by both the team ("we") and the local believers

C. Paul refuses their counsel, stating he's ready to be jailed and to die for Jesus as needed

D. Some parallel with Jesus at Gethsemane in terms of willingness to do the Lord's will despite dire consequences

—*Agabus' prophetic action communicates strongly to the gathered believers in Caesarea? How does the action mesh with the message? How has God used a combination of means to communicate with you in the past?*

—*Look in Hosea 1, Ezekiel 37, Amos 7, and Jeremiah 13 for vivid examples of God using objects and events to communicate to His prophets. Pick one that stands out to you and describe it to the group. What makes the one you have chosen so significant to you?*

—*The Heidelberg Catechism begins: "What is your only comfort, in life and in death? That I belong—body and soul, in life and in death—not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. At the cost of his own blood he has fully paid for all my sins and has completely freed me from the dominion of the devil. He protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head. Indeed, everything must fit his purpose for my salvation..." How might this confessional statement describe Paul's faith as shown in this*

passage? How do you struggle with such an expression of faith in your life? How might you draw from it what you need to face your own set of challenges?

## VI. Close in prayer.

### SCRIPTURE (NLT)

**1** After saying farewell to the Ephesian elders, we sailed straight to the island of Cos. The next day we reached Rhodes and then went to Patara. **2** There we boarded a ship sailing for Phoenicia. **3** We sighted the island of Cyprus, passed it on our left, and landed at the harbor of Tyre, in Syria, where the ship was to unload its cargo.

**4** We went ashore, found the local believers,<sup>[a]</sup> and stayed with them a week. These believers prophesied through the Holy Spirit that Paul should not go on to Jerusalem. **5** When we returned to the ship at the end of the week, the entire



congregation, including women<sup>[b]</sup> and children, left the city and came down to the shore with us. There we knelt, prayed, **6** and said our farewells. Then we went aboard, and they returned home.

**7** The next stop after leaving Tyre was Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and sisters<sup>[c]</sup> and stayed for one day. **8** The next day we went on to Caesarea and stayed at the home of Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven men who had been chosen to distribute food. **9** He had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy.

**10** Several days later a man named Agabus, who also had the gift of prophecy, arrived from Judea. **11** He came over, took Paul's belt, and bound his own feet and hands with it. Then he said, "The Holy Spirit declares, 'So shall the owner of this belt be bound by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem and turned over to the Gentiles.'" **12** When we heard this, we and the local believers all begged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.

**13** But he said, "Why all this weeping? You are breaking my heart! I am ready not only to be jailed at Jerusalem but even to die for the sake of the Lord Jesus." **14** When it was clear that we couldn't persuade him, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."

#### Footnotes

**21:4** Greek *disciples*; also in **21:16**.

**21:5** Or *wives*.

**21:7** Greek *brothers*; also in **21:17**.