

**Acts 21: 1-36 NIV Study Guide**

**1** After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to Cos. The next day we went to Rhodes and from there to Patara. **2** We found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, went on board and set sail. **3** After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. **4** Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. **5** But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. **6** After saying good-bye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home. **7** We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them for a day.

**8** Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. **9** He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. **10** After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. **11** Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" **12** When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. **13** Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." **14** When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."

**15** After this, we got ready and went up to Jerusalem. **16** Some of the disciples from Caesarea accompanied us and brought us to the home of Mnason, where we were to stay. He was a man from Cyprus and one of the early disciples. **17** When we arrived at Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. **18** The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. **19** Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. **20** When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. **21** They have been informed that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. **22** What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, **23** so do what we tell you. There are four men with us who have made a vow. **24** Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everybody will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. **25** As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality." **26** The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.

**27** When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul at the temple. They stirred up the whole crowd and seized him, **28** shouting, "Men of Israel, help us! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against our people and our law and this place. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple area and defiled this holy place." **29** (They had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with Paul and assumed that Paul had brought him into the temple area.) **30** The whole city was aroused, and the people came running from all directions. Seizing Paul, they dragged him from the temple, and immediately the gates were shut. **31** While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. **32** He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd. When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. **33** The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. **34** Some in the crowd shouted one thing and some another, and since the commander could not get at the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. **35** When Paul reached the steps, the violence of the mob was so great he had to be carried by the soldiers. **36** The crowd that followed kept shouting, "Away with him!"

**This is not the complete chapter but the breaking point will work better for our study if we end here. Please read these 36 verses over once or twice before moving on to answer the questions. You will need another blank sheet of paper to write your answers on. This is a very important turning point in the book of Acts, let's stop and pray and ask God to speak clearly to us as we study His Word.**

Be sure to look at your maps and locate the towns Paul is traveling through. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17, are there any parts of the Bible that are not important or just filler?

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Every word in the Bible was written for a purpose, it is our responsibility to dig in and find the rich treasures for ourselves.

1. Paul arrived in Tyre and found the believers living there. What was their response to hearing he was on his way to Jerusalem? Why would they respond this way to his going to Jerusalem?
2. How do you handle those who would try to persuade you not to do something God is calling you to do?

It is often hard enough to get our own selves in line with God's will and then others come and begin pointing out the reasons why it would be dangerous or possible harm that might come. This is not helpful. That is why it is so important to clearly hear from God, to know it is His will.

3. When they could not persuade him to avoid Jerusalem what did they say? vs.14
4. How do you handle it when a friend or loved one is insistent on following the Lord's call into what could be a very dangerous situation?
5. What would your response be to your pastor, or a member of your church staff, or to one of your young adult children if they told you they were going to work with
  - a. the homeless on the streets of New York City
  - b. have an outreach to those caught up in drugs
  - c. minister in a Muslim country
  - d. reach out to runaway teens

These are all potentially dangerous ministries but if God is calling them he will protect them. Wouldn't you rather be in the center of God's will and look to your great shepherd for care than to be in safety and disobedient to God's plan?

6. Look back and see the Apostle Paul's action as he left their city. What did he do with these dear friends before leaving? Vs.5

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7. This is not busy work, you are studying the Bible “line upon line” this is crucial for a real understanding. Highlight or underline what he is praying for them.
- a. Phil. 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, **10** so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, **11** filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God.
  - b. Col. 1:9-11 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. **10** And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, **11** being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully
  - c. 1 Thess. 3:12-13 May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. **13** May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.
  - d. 1 Thess. 5:23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - e. 2 Thess. 1:11 With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.
  - f. Romans 10:1 Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved
  - g. Romans 15:5-6 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, **6** so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
  - h. Eph. 3:14-19 For this reason I kneel before the Father, **15** from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. **16** I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18** may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, **19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

There are many others prayers of Paul's but these will give you an insight. How are you praying for other Christians?

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8. When Paul arrives in Caesarea a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea and put on a small drama. Draw a sketch of the sequence of events in verses 8-14, use all or just some of the boxes. Stick people are fine.


Notice how quickly it sounds as if they left Caesarea and simply arrived in Jerusalem. This was no little journey. It is approximately 62 mile from one to the other by road. Paul's ministry was also physically demanding. How do you handle the physical demands of ministry?

Everything we do in the name of Jesus is ministry.

9. What is the response of the brethren in Jerusalem toward Paul and his companions? Vs.17
- When friends arrive back from a mission project or trip are you excited to see them and hear the details or are you kind of ho-hum about their report?
  - When you get an email with pictures of their trip do you look at them as people God loves and cares for also or are you unconcerned and disinterested? These are people Christ died for. We should be longing to hear what God is doing in other areas.

10. What did Paul do when he got together with the brethren in Jerusalem that first day? What events did he not focus on? Vss.18-19

11. What is Paul facing again in Jerusalem that he has faced everywhere he has traveled?

Had Paul rejected his Jewish heritage as was being said about him?

What do you base your answer on?

What had he ask Timothy to do when they first joined in ministry together?

What had Paul entered into in Acts 18:18?

12. Has your daily walk of faith ever been misunderstood? How did you handle it?

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13. Romans 12:18 *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone”* How does this apply to Paul’s response to being misunderstood?

What did he do to show he did not desire to do away with the law of Moses? vs.26

14. What has the Lord been speaking to you as you studied this chapter concerning the return of Paul to Jerusalem?

Remember this is not a text book that we are trying to get through but it is the Word of God to us. This is a love letter from Him and our instruction manual on living a life worthy of our calling.

15. Spend some time asking God what he is teaching you from this section of scripture.

There are three parts of studying scripture properly.

The first is observation (what is the scripture teaching),

The second is interpretation (what does it mean),

The third is application (how does this apply to my life).

We must be diligent in all three areas.