

ACTS CHAPTER 20 - CONTINUING ON WITH PAUL'S 3RD MISSIONARY TRIP

ACTS 20:1-3

Why did Paul go to "Macedonia" (Acts 20:1) and "Greece" (Acts 20:2)?

To visit and encourage the churches there, as well as to round up those who will be carrying the financial gift from these churches to the church in Jerusalem, which once again (see [Acts 11](#)) was suffering through a famine.

Where in "Greece" (Acts 20:2) did Paul go and how long did he stay?

He most likely spent the **"three months"** (Acts 20:3) at Corinth, as he had also written to the Corinthians before leaving Ephesus:

How did Paul adapt his plans after learning that "the Jews plotted against him" (Acts 20:3)?

Instead of taking a ship to **"sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia"** (Acts 20:3) and take a ship from there.

ACTS 20:4-6

How many disciples sailed from Corinth in Greece to wait for Paul at Troas in Turkey?

Seven.

Why so many?

They were carrying the financial gift from their respective churches to the church in Jerusalem: **"Sopater of Berea"** (Acts 20:4) in Macedonia; **"Aristarchus and Secundus"** (Acts 20:4) of the church in Thessalonica, which is also in Macedonia; **"Gaius of Derbe"** (Acts 20:4), which was in Galatia of Turkey; and **"Tychicus and Trophimus"** (Acts 20:4) from the other churches in Turkey.

Who was carrying the gift from the church in Corinth?

Most likely **"Timothy"**. (Acts 20:4)

Where did Paul spend "the Days of Unleavened Bread" (Acts 20:6)?

He spent the Days of Unleavened Bread, also called the Passover, at **"Philippi"** (Acts 20:6), from where he sailed to Troas to rendezvous with the others.

Why does the Bible say "we sailed" (Acts 20:6)?

Paul left Philippi with Luke, who wrote Acts and who most likely was carrying the financial gift from the church at Philippi.

ACTS 20:7-12

Why did the "disciples" (Acts 20:7) come together?

To celebrate the Lord's supper - **"break bread"** (Acts 20:7) - on the Sunday - **"the first day of the week"** (Acts 20:7) - before Paul's departure **"the next day"** (Acts 20:7).

Why were there "many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together" (Acts 20:8)?

The upper room was most probably packed with people and many lamps had been lit so that everyone could see Paul as he **"spoke to them"** (Acts 20:7).

Why did "Eutychus" (Acts 20:9) fall asleep?

Paul's message could have been very boring (unlikely) or Eutychus could have been very tired. Since Luke

mentions "**there were many lamps**" (Acts 20:8) just before Eutychus falling asleep, the heat from those lamps may have been a, if not the, contributing factor.

Did the fall kill Eutychus or did the people mistakenly think that he had been killed?

Luke observed that he was "**dead**" (Acts 20:9).

Why does Luke's observation carry weight?

He is a doctor: "**Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.**" (Colossians 4:14)

What happened after "Paul went down, fell on him, and" (Acts 20:10) embraced him?

His life was returned to him: "**his life is in him**" (Acts 20:10).

What did Paul do thereafter?

He went back "**up**" (Acts 20:11) and continued his message "**even till daybreak**" (Acts 20:11), and then departed.

ACTS 20:13-15

Where is "Assos" (Acts 20:13)?

Assos was a small port about 25 miles south of Troas.

Why did Paul tell the others to take the ship to Assos while he went "on foot" (Acts 20:13)?

Unless he met someone along the way, he probably wanted to spend some time alone in prayer, as Jesus often did: "**However, the report went around concerning Him [Jesus] all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.**" (Luke 5:15-16)

Where are "Mitylene" (Acts 20:14), "Chios ... Samos ... Trogyllium ... Miletus" (Acts 20:15)?

Mitylene is the capital of Lesbos, a large island that faces Assos. Chios is another large island that is to the south of Lesbos. Samos is yet another island that is to the southwest of Chios (all three islands are close to the coast of Turkey), and Trogyllium is a rocky extremity of Turkey that almost touches Samos and just next to which is a place for ships to anchor. Miletus is a major port city southeast of Samos and 30 miles south of Ephesus.

ACTS 20:16-17

Why was Paul in a hurry? Verse 16, He was hastening to return to Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost.

Why did Paul call "for the elders of the church at Ephesus" (Acts 20:17) to come to him in Miletus?

Paul "**was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost**" (Acts 20:16). Had he sailed into Ephesus, he would have had "**to spend time**" (Acts 20:16). Perhaps he would have had to make the rounds and see everyone in the Ephesus' church, who would have been eager to see Paul. Lacking time, Paul just wanted to speak to the elders.

Can someone who is unable to teach the Bible become an elder/bishop?

Not according to God, who said the person should be "**able to teach**" (Acts 20:2).

Can a greedy and/or violent person become an elder/bishop?

Not according to God, who said the person should be "**not violent, not greedy for money**" (Acts 20:3).

Can a woman become an elder/bishop?

Not according to God, who said the person should be "**a man**" (1 Timothy 3:1) and a "**husband**" (1 Timothy 3:2).

ACTS 20:18-21

Why does Paul say that he came to "Asia" (Acts 20:18)?

In 1st century AD, 'Asia' referred to the region that is largely today's Turkey, in which Ephesus is located.

How did Paul teach "publicly" (Acts 20:20) in Ephesus?

He taught at the synagogue **"to Jews"** (Acts 20:21) and at the **"school of Tyrannus"** (Acts 19:9) **"to Greeks"** (Acts 20:21).

Why would Paul shed "many tears ... by the plotting of the Jews" (Acts 20:19)?

Knowing the Old Testament prophecies, they should have been the first to recognize and worship Jesus as the promised Messiah. Yet all that many of them did is to plot against Paul, to their own loss, so his heart broke for them.

ACTS 20:22-25

What does Paul mean by, "you ... will see my face no more" (Acts 20:25)?

This will be the last time they see him alive.

What did Paul know about "the things that will happen to" (Acts 20:22) him in Jerusalem?

Paul didn't know specifics but **"in every city"** (Acts 20:23), the **"Holy Spirit"** (Acts 20:23) had been telling him that **"chains and tribulations"** (Acts 20:23) awaited him.

How did Paul feel about that?

"None of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24)

ACTS 20:26-27

Why does Paul say, "I am innocent of the blood of all men" (Acts 20:26)?

Since he has **"not shunned to declare ... the whole counsel of God"** (Acts 20:27), he had fulfilled his **"ministry"** (Acts 20:24)

Is Paul showing off?

No, he is encouraging them to do likewise.

ACTS 20:28-32

Why does Paul tell the elders to "shepherd" (Acts 20:28) the church?

He is telling them to be true shepherds who lay down their lives to defend the flock instead of fleeing against wolves, as Jesus declared: **"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them."** (John 10:11-12)

From which direction will "savage wolves" (Acts 20:29) attack?

From the outside, they will **"come in"** (Acts 20:29).

What will happen from within their own ranks?

"Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves" (Acts 20:30) instead of Jesus.

How should they identify and defend against those who say such "perverse things" (Acts 20:30)?

Rely on **"God and to the word - the Bible - of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified"**. (Acts 20:32)

ACTS 20:33-38

Acts 20:33-36 Paul refused stipends from the church and its members. He worked and took care of himself.

Acts 20:37

A kiss on the cheek was a sign of respect, which is what Judas feigned when he kissed Jesus to identify him to the arresting mob the night before His crucifixion. To this day, men in parts of the Middle East kiss each other on the cheek to greet each other and to express respect.

ACTS CHAPTER 21 - FINISHING UP PAUL'S 3RD MISSIONARY TRIP

ACTS 21:1-3

Who are "we" (Acts 21:1)?

Paul, Luke and the disciples Timothy, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Tychicus and Trophymus who were carrying the financial aid from their respective churches to the church in Jerusalem. (see Acts 20)

Who are "them" (Acts 21:1)?

The elders of Ephesus who had come to meet Paul in Miletus (see Acts 20), from where Paul and his entourage **"set sail"** (Acts 21:1).

Where are "Cos ... Rhodes, and ... Patara" (Acts 21:1)

Cos is an island about 50 miles south of Miletus. Rhodes is an island about 50 miles southeast of Cos. The ship is island hopping along the coast of Turkey. Patara is a port on mainland Turkey about 50 miles east of Rhodes.

Why did they change ships in Patara?

Since Paul was **"hurrying to be at Jerusalem"** (Acts 20:16), he may have wanted to cover the remaining 400 miles of sea voyage non-stop. Indeed, the latter ship they took didn't even stop at the island of **"Cyprus"** (Acts 21:2), instead passing south of it.

Where is "Tyre" (Acts 21:3)?

Tyre is a port city in today's south Lebanon (north of Israel), where **"the ship was to unload her cargo"**. (Acts 21:3)

ACTS 21:4-7

Why did they wait "seven days" (Acts 21:4) to board the ship in Tyre?

Since they boarded **"the ship"** (Acts 21:6), it was most likely the same ship, which may have needed 7 days to **"unload her cargo"** (Acts 21:3) and to load new cargo.

How far was "Ptolemais" (Acts 21:7) from Tyre?

About 25 miles to the south, toward Jerusalem.

Then why didn't they just walk that distance, which would have taken only one day?

The **"disciples"** (Acts 21:4) they found in Tyre may have needed discipling and/or pleaded with Paul for seven days to stop him from going **"to Jerusalem"**. (Acts 21:4)

Wasn't Paul "hurrying to be at Jerusalem" for the Pentecost (Acts 20:16)?

Pentecost is 50 days after Passover, which Paul celebrated in Philippi just prior to leaving for Jerusalem. He probably felt comfortable about arriving there on time since Jerusalem is only 120 miles south of Tyre and the less predictable 900 mile sea voyage from Philippi to Tyre had been covered in 30 days:

5 days from Philippi to Troas (Acts 20:6)

7 days in Troas (Acts 20:6)

1 day (estimated) from Troas to Assos (Acts 20:13)

1 day (estimated) from Assos to Mitylene (Acts 20:14)

1 day (estimated) from Mitylene to Chios (Acts 20:15)

1 day from Chios to Samos/Trogyllium (Acts 20:15)

1 day from Samos/Trogyllium to Miletus (Acts 20:15)

1.5 days (est.) for a messenger to travel from Miletus to Ephesus (Acts 20:17)

1.5 days (est.) for the elders to travel from Ephesus to Miletus (Acts 20:18)

1 day (estimated) spent with the Ephesian elders in Miletus (Acts 20:18-38)

1 day (estimated) from Miletus to Cos (Acts 21:1)

1 day from Cos to Rhodes (Acts 21:1)

1 day (estimated) from Rhodes to Patara (Acts 21:1)

6 days (estimated) from Patara to Tyre (Acts 21:2-3)

30 days total

How can the 400 miles from Patara to Tyre be sailed in 6 days when it took 5 days to sail the 150 miles from Philippi to Troas?

While the crossing from Philippi to Troas took 5 days this time, Paul's first crossing of the same 150 miles from Troas to Philippi-Neapolis took only 2 days (75 miles/day), including a stopover at Samothrace (Acts 16:11). The distance sailed depends on the direction of the wind, which appears to have been blowing eastward since Paul's ship covered about 50 miles per day during the island hopping phase of his journey. The second ship sailed directly from Patara to Tyre. Without the overnight stops at ports, it would have averaged at least 70 miles per day, a speed which would cover the 400 miles in 6 days.

Since the disciples in Tyre "told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem" (Acts 21:4), was the Holy Spirit against Paul going to Jerusalem?

The original Greek word translated "**through**" (Acts 21:4) is *dia*, a preposition whose many meanings include "on account of". The Holy Spirit most likely communicated to the disciples the harm that awaited Paul in Jerusalem, on account of which they tried to keep him from going. But going to Jerusalem and via Jerusalem to Rome was very much what God wanted.

ACTS 21:8-10

Where is "Caesarea" (Acts 21:8)?

The capital of the Roman province of Judea, Caesarea is 30 miles south of Ptolemais.

Who went to Caesarea "on the next day" (Acts 21:8)?

Luke wrote, "**we who were Paul's companions**" (Acts 21:8), so those accompanying Paul, including Luke. Since they stayed "**many days**" (Acts 21:10), Paul most likely joined them later.

Who was "Philip" (Acts 21:8) who had the "four virgin daughters who prophesied" (Acts 21:9)?

"**One of the seven**" (Acts 21:8) deacons chosen originally by the church in Jerusalem: **And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.**"(Acts 6:1-6)

Why is Philip called "the evangelist" (Acts 21:8)?

He evangelized to the Samaritans - **"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them."** (Acts 8:5), as well as to the Ethiopian eunuch

About what had "Agabus" (Acts 21:10) previously prophesied?

The previous famine: Read again Acts 11:27-30.

ACTS 21:11-14

Who are "the Gentiles" (Acts 21:11) to whom the Jew will deliver Paul?

The Romans.

Why does the Holy Spirit keep communicating the harm that awaits Paul in Jerusalem?

Most likely to prepare Paul, as well as the disciples so that when Paul is bound and later martyred in Rome, they will know that his suffering and death wasn't in error but in obedience to God's will.

Why would God want Paul to die?

To those who truly believe in Christ, death on earth is a promotion to heaven.

Was Paul ready for his promotion?

"... I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13)

ACTS 21:15

Why did they "pack..." (Acts 21:15) to go to Jerusalem?

The 65 miles from Caesarea to Jerusalem, which is inland, had to be traveled on foot.

Who went with them?

Some **"disciples from Caesarea"** (Acts 21:15), as well as **"Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to lodge"**. (Acts 21:16)