

## When You Are Unfairly Treated

### The Big Picture --

What we are about to read is the story that took a few \_\_\_\_\_ to happen but changed Paul's life for the next 5 \_\_\_\_\_.

We will see the \_\_\_\_\_ of men and how sometimes a person can be \_\_\_\_\_ accused – yet God is still in \_\_\_\_\_.

### 1. The Perspective

*Acts 21:17 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.*

1. Probably the year \_\_\_\_\_ and Paul and his group (still with Luke) have just returned from the \_\_\_\_\_ adventure after 5 years. They wanted to be in Jerusalem for the \_\_\_\_\_ – \_\_\_\_\_.
2. They visited with \_\_\_\_\_ (Jesus' half-brother) and told them in \_\_\_\_\_ what had happened on their journey. It caused \_\_\_\_\_, but . . .

### 2. The Problem

*Acts 21:20 . . . 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,*

1. Many Jews had become \_\_\_\_\_ but they held \_\_\_\_\_ to the law. Luke uses the word "\_\_\_\_\_."
2. The word on the \_\_\_\_\_ was that Paul taught:
  - That Jewish-Christian parents can \_\_\_\_\_ circumcision.
  - That Jewish Christians can ignore the "\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_." (dietary customs, feast days, the dress, rituals of the Torah and tradition)
3. Paul was \_\_\_\_\_ that these people were \_\_\_\_\_ for him!

### 3. The Plan

*Acts 21:23 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.*

1. Four Jewish believers had taken a \_\_\_\_\_ vow- \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Paul was told he should "\_\_\_\_\_ " with these men by taking care of their \_\_\_\_\_. This would be a "\_\_\_\_\_ " or good deed.
3. The church leaders \_\_\_\_\_ the decision of the Jerusalem council concerning the \_\_\_\_\_ of Gentiles.
4. Paul would need to be "\_\_\_\_\_ " because he had been outside the country, traveling among \_\_\_\_\_. He notified a priest of the \_\_\_\_\_.

### 4. The Plaintiffs

*Acts 21:27 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.*

1. Before he could show his commitment to the \_\_\_\_\_, some Jews who were old "enemies" \_\_\_\_\_ Paul.
2. They made three accusations – all \_\_\_\_\_:
  - That Paul spoke against \_\_\_\_\_.
  - That he spoke against the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - That he took Gentiles onto \_\_\_\_\_ areas of the temple.
3. The people \_\_\_\_\_ these accusations and attacked Paul, \_\_\_\_\_ him off the temple mount and attempting to kill him.

### 5. The Prisoner

*Acts 21: 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!"*

1. Fortunately, the Roman soldiers were \_\_\_\_\_ and they stopped the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Paul.
2. Since they couldn't get to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the problem, the soldiers took Paul into custody and actually had to \_\_\_\_\_ him for his own safety.
3. The crowds shouted \_\_\_\_\_ words.

### The Purpose of Our Study Today . . .

This is a reminder that "it's our \_\_\_\_\_ to be \_\_\_\_\_!"  
This is a reminder that \_\_\_\_\_ is in \_\_\_\_\_ (even in bad times)!