

# Paul's Final Journey

## Acts 19:1-23:35





After the riot in Ephesus Paul stayed on for a little longer to encourage the believers there, but God was calling him onward; Paul met with the church elders and spoke one last time.

“You know how I lived and served among you from the first day I came here. I served God and told you everything I knew. I preached to the Jews and to the Greeks repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Now, I go to Jerusalem, I do not know what will happen, but the Holy Spirit tells me it will be pain and prison.

“But, I do not hold my life as valuable. To die is gain, and to live is Christ. I know I will not return to see you again. Therefore, remember to shepherd the flock, protect it from the wolves that will come in and try to destroy your church. Do not let God’s church be destroyed.”

Then Paul knelt and prayed for the church. Everyone moved in to hug Paul before he headed off to Jerusalem.



Paul sailed the next day, stopping on his journey to encourage each of the churches he founded. One of his final stops was Troas, and he stayed there for seven days encouraging the church

Paul spoke to them for a long time on the final day, and everyone had worked a long hard day at their jobs, and one young man sat in the window. The heat of the room slowly made him fall asleep, and he slipped out the window to the ground.

Paul hurried out to where the man fell and prayed over him, then looked up at the Christians looking down from the window, "Do not worry, there is life in him yet," and the man got up and they all went upstairs and continued talking until dawn when Paul sailed to his next destination.



Paul finally arrived in Israel, landing at Caesarea. There they stayed at the house of Philip, an evangelist and believer. While there a prophet came to Paul with news from God.

“This is how the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt when he goes to that city,” and the prophet took Paul’s belt and tied his hands and feet. “They will deliver him unto the hands of the Gentiles.”

Everyone heard this and turned to Paul, begging him not to go to Jerusalem.

“No,” Paul answered. “This may be how God wishes me to reach Rome. I have made a vow to go to Jerusalem, and I will not be swayed.”





Paul arrived in Jerusalem and met with the elders of the Jerusalem church, James and several others. He told them about the many new churches, and how God had done miraculous things.

“Wonderful news Paul,” James said. “We have a word of warning for you. Many Jews here believe you’ve been preaching Jews should abandon Moses and the Laws. They have vowed to kill you, and said they will not eat until they do. Take the men you are with and purify yourselves. Go to the temple, be seen praying, they will be more receptive then.”

Paul nodded his head, this all made sense. He and the young men traveling with him all went through the purification rituals to be allowed in the temple.



Paul led his friends to begin the purification ceremony, and the temple leaders accepted the sacrifices. But, before the seven days of purification were done a crowd of Jews seized Paul.

“This is the man who is trying to destroy God’s Laws. And look, he brought Greeks into the temple!” The mob seized Paul and dragged him out of town towards where Stephen, the first martyr had died. “Let’s kill him for this sacrilege!”

Word reached the Roman tribune, and he brought soldiers to stop the mob and arrest those responsible for the riot.

Paul was dragged from the crowd in chains, and the Roman tribune took him away to learn what caused this riot.



Just as Paul was dragged through the barracks, he said, “Wait, may I speak to them?”

“Aren’t you the man who led a revolt here recently?” The tribune asked.

Paul shook his head, “I am a Jew from Tarsus, let me speak.” The tribune waved Paul to the crowd.

“My fellow Jews, I was born in Tarsus and was educated by Gamaliel, the esteemed teacher. He taught me to follow the Law, and I persecuted Christians. Then God sought me and blinded me going to Damascus. Then Ananias, who God told me to find gave me my sight back. God chose me to teach about His Son, Jesus. I was baptized that day. God sent me to teach the Gentiles about Him.”



But, when Paul said he was sent to the Gentiles the crowd started yelling again. They started throwing their coats off, and pushing at the soldiers, “Flog him! Whip him! The man deserves to be jailed.”

The centurion to keep the peace grabbed Paul and readied him to be whipped.

Paul looked over at the man and asked a question, “Can you flog a Roman citizen who has not been tried and found guilty?”

The centurion paused with his whip in the air. He asked the tribune what to do, “We can’t whip a Roman citizen without trial, sir.”

So Paul was taken away and brought before the tribunal the next day.





Paul stood before the tribunal and started to speak, “My brothers, I have done all that God commanded to this day.”

The high priest heard this and ordered Paul struck. Paul straightened up and replied, “God will strike you, you white-washed crypt.”

The entire tribunal of Sanhedrin gasped, “How dare you speak that way to the high priest?”

“I apologize,” Paul replied, “I did not realize who he was, and God has said “Do not speak evil of the ruler of your people.” Then he realized there were Sadducees and Pharisees there. “Brothers I am on trial because I believe in the resurrection of the dead.”

Pharisees believed in the resurrection, but the Sadducees do not. Instantly the two sides started arguing.



The argument grew so violent the Roman commander sent Paul back to the jail, for fear the Sanhedrin would kill him right there.

While Paul sat in jail, a group of Jews conspired together, “Let us convince the Romans to bring him back before the tribunal. While they are transporting him there, we will kill him.” They left to arrange the meeting.

Unknown to them, a young boy, Paul’s nephew, had overheard the whole thing. He ran to Paul and told him the whole thing. Paul asked for the Roman commander, and they were able to convince him of the whole plot.

The Roman commander sent Paul with a detachment of soldiers to the Roman governor, Felix, and the plot was foiled.

Felix read the letter sent to him and said, “I will hear your case when your accusers get here.”

## Questions

### Younger Kids

1. Why did Paul decide to go back to Jerusalem?
2. Did Paul's friends want him to go to Jerusalem?
3. What happened to Paul once he reached Jerusalem?

### Middle Kids

1. Read Acts 20:22-24. Did Paul know what was going to happen? Why do you think he still went to Jerusalem knowing what was going to happen?
2. What does Paul charge the Ephesian elders with? Read Acts 20:28-31. Who are the wolves?
3. Read Acts 21:10-13. What is Paul's response to the news? Could you answer so cavalierly?
4. Read Acts 23:16. Who did God put in place to save Paul?

## Older Guys

1. Read Acts 20:21. What did Paul teach? Why did he teach that? What does he charge them to teach? Read Acts 20:32.
2. Read Acts 20:18-19. How did Paul live with them, and what example can you follow from that? Read 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12 to see Paul's advice to other believers on this topic.
3. Skim Acts 21:37-22:21, how does Paul react to the riot, and to the mistaken identity?

## Activities

1. Find a map of Paul's journeys and follow along in your Bible and the map to figure out where Paul went during his final journey.
2. Drop something from a second story window, how long does it take to fall. Imagine something dropping from the third floor.

## Online

1. Paul heals the man who died- <http://www.jesus-without-language.net/eutyclus-acts-20-make/>