

This chapter shows three examples of two approaches to reaching people with the good news about Yeshua based on their knowledge of God. In Thessalonica and Berea, Paul could proclaim the message by showing evidence from the words of God. In the marketplace and on Mars Hill in Athens, Paul has to “start from the beginning” of knowledge about God, drawing from the faint glimpses of reality of the audience but building upon paraphrased references from the words of God. Modern culture largely is more like Athens than Berea and calls for a similar approach.

Acts 17:1–9 — in Thessalonica

17:2 — κατὰ δὲ τὸ εἰωθὸς τῷ Παύλῳ “as was the custom of Paul”

εἰωθὸς *eiothos* comes from ἔθω *etho*, from which comes ἔθος *ethos*. “Habit” and “convention” are other ways to translate this group of meaning (Strong's Greek; BDAG)

17:2–3 — “reasoned [διαλέγομαι] with them from the Scriptures, explaining [διανοίω] and giving evidence [παρατίθημι]” (NASB); “reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging” (KJV)

- 1256. διαλέγομαι *dialegomai*; from 1223 and 3004; to discuss, to address, to preach: —addressed(1), argued(1), carrying on a discussion(1), discussed(1), discussing(1), reasoned(2), reasoning(4), talking(2).
- 1272. διανοίω *dianoigo*, dee-an-oy'-go; from 1223 and 455; to open thoroughly, literally (as a first-born) or figuratively (to expound): — open.
- 3908. παρατίθημι *paratithemi*, par-at-ith'-ay-mee; from 3844 and 5087; to place alongside, i.e. present (food, truth); by implication, to deposit (as a trust or for protection): — allege, commend, commit (the keeping of), put forth, set before.
- Yeshua and the apostles have long been accused of twisting the Scriptures, taking them out of their original context to say something different from what was intended by the author.
 - In fact, one of the oft-cited sources for accusations of “proof-texting” is *Faith Strengthened* (חזק אמונה) by Isaac ben Abraham of Troki in Poland (1533-94), a Karaite apologist for Judaism.
 - Much of the two-volume, 99-chapter work involves accusations that references from the Tanakh in the Apostolic
 - Writings are out of context or sloppily cited. Included are rightful observations that Christian practice had deviated from the teaching of the apostles, particularly on the shift of Shabbat to Sunday.

17:5 — Iason = Iesous?

- 2394. ἰάσων *Iason*, ee-as'-oan; future active participle masculine of 2390; about to cure (Strong's Greek Lexicon)
- 2390. ἰάομαι *iaomai*, ee-ah'-om-ah-ee; middle voice of apparently a primary verb; to cure (literally or figuratively): — heal, make whole.
- ἰάσων, ονος, ὄ (freq. found, also in LXX [several references in the Maccabees books]; EpArist 49; Josephus wrote it was a favorite practice among Jews to substitute the purely Gk. name ἰάσων for the Hebrew-Gk. Ἰησοῦς; (BDAG)

17:7 — “they all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus”

- Paul and Silas faced similar accusations in Philippi, “These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans” (Acts 16:20–21).
- Like with the circumcision of Timothy before taking him around to synagogues, Paul and Silas keep insurrection off their list of offenses.
 - They are teaching about the True King of the world, but neither He (John 18:33–38, 19:12) nor they are aiming to unseat temporal authorities.
 - Does this apply to our involvement in political discussions today? Are we distracting people from the good news of God? What sword is worth falling upon, so to speak?

Acts 17:10–14 — in Berea

- Thessalonian Jews opposed to the good news traveled to Berea to oppose the teaching of it in that synagogue and stir up the populace.
- Berean Jews heard the references Paul was bringing from the TaNaKh and checked them out, leaving open the possibility that Paul could be correct.

Acts 17:15–34 — in Athens

- Paul started proclaiming the good news in the synagogue, as he always did.

Stoicism (ISBE; New Oxford)

- Zeno (circa 336–264 BC), a native of Citium, a Greek colony in Cyprus founded the philosophy in Athens around 294 B.C., teaching it at the Στοῖς Ποικίλη *Stoa Poikile*, the "painted porch" of the city (ISBE).
- Roman historian Cicero preserved the teachings of the Stoics, which were foundational to Roman law (ISBE).
- The fundamental ethical precept was "Follow Nature," from the Socratic school of Antisthenes, or the Cynics.
 - The Stoics took that to mean "Follow Reason," based on earlier philosopher Heraclitus' definition of the law of nature as reason, which he called λόγος *logos*.
 - Logos was taken to be "at once the principle of intelligence in man, and the divine reason immanent in the world" (T. Rees. ISBE).
- This ethic found its goal in the quest for the sage or the wise man who showed "a calm passionless mastery of all emotions and independence of all circumstances," living "a consistent, harmonious life, in conformity with the perfect order of the universe. He discovers this order by knowledge or wisdom."
 - Ideal Stoic duties were "purity in one's self, love toward all men and reverence toward God" (ISBE).
- Stoicism was both pantheistic — the divine is in everything — and monistic — there is only one divine being (ISBE).
 - Nature was organized and operated by uniform and essential laws acting on matter, which they conceived of as made of particles called "atoms" (ISBE).
 - *Atomos* in Greek means "indivisible" (New Oxford American Dictionary).
 - Democritus (460–370 B.C.) and his teacher Leukippos (early 5th century B.C.) developed the idea of atoms moving in a void, independent of divine will (New Oxford).
 - Nature was a living, rational being, subduing all its parts to work out a rational purpose inherent in the whole (ISBE).
 - Thus, evil was, ultimately, alternately good, fulfilling some greater, potentially unknown goal. We use of the term *stoic* to mean display of little emotion in response to pain or calamity.

Epicureanism (ISBE; New Oxford; Wikipedia)

- Epicurus (341–270 B.C.; a contemporary of Zeno) based his world view on the atomic materialism of Democritus.
- "The school rejected determinism and advocated hedonism (pleasure as the highest good), but of a restrained kind: mental pleasure was regarded more highly than physical, and the ultimate pleasure was held to be freedom from anxiety and mental pain, esp. that arising from needless fear of death and of the gods" (New Oxford).
 - The soul dematerialized at death, so life should be filled with the pursuit of simple pleasures (David H. Stern. "Acts 17:18." Jewish New Testament Commentary).
- Epicureanism was in direct conflict with Platonism and Stoicism (Wikipedia; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epicureanism>).
 - Epicurean materialism was an attack against superstition and divine intervention.

17:18 — “What would this idle babbler wish to say?”

σπερμολόγος *spermologos*, translated as “idle babbler” (NASB) or “babbling” (KJV), literally means “picking up seeds,” in reference to birds foraging for seeds on the ground. Greek writers used this term mockingly to refer to “persons whose communication lacks sophistication and seems to pick up scraps of information here and there” as someone who forages for castoff food in a market (BDAG).

Areopagus

- aka Mars Hill, based on a myth about the founding of Athens
- located on the western slope to the Acropolis
- Council members served for life.

17:23 — “For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.”

- In Greek, *to an Unknown God* is Ἄγνωστω θεῷ *Agnosto Theo*.
 - There are many in the world today who claim they are "agnostic," which they often define as not knowing who or what God is. Like Paul, we need to show Who this God is.
 - This altar is thought to have originated from the sixth century B.C., based on an account of philosopher Epimenides of Knossos on Crete reasoning that a plague ravaging Athens was the result of an unknown deity being offended.
- Paul’s message starts not with putting TaNaKh references to Messiah next to each other to show His coming, suffering, globally atoning death and His rise from the dead. Paul starts with establishing the reality of the Divine (Acts 17:24–31).
 - “God who made the world and all things in it”
 - “He is Lord of heaven and earth”
 - He “does not dwell in temples made with hands”
 - There is a house for Him in Yerushalayim, but He doesn’t need it and isn’t bound to its services.
 - “nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything ... He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things”
 - “He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth”
 - Life didn’t self-organize from atoms.
 - “having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us”
 - Epicureans taught that the divine didn’t interact with the material world.”
 - That “groping” was Greek philosophy, but the order that philosophy found wasn’t the real God.
 - There is purpose in life, and that purpose — history and destiny — is what God ordains.
 - “in Him we live and move and exist”
 - This seems to be countering the Greek philosophical concept of the “prime mover,” fleshed out in Aristotle’s foundational work *Metaphysics*.
 - Aristotle lived in the third century B.C.
 - *Metaphysics* was collected as a volume in the first century in Alexandria
 - τι ὃ οὐ κινούμενον κινεῖ "something which moves [other things] without [itself] being moved [by anything]"
 - “The object of desire and the object of thought **move without being moved**. The primary objects of desire and thought are the same. For it is the apparent good that is the object of appetite, and the real good that is the object of the rational will. Desire is the result of opinion rather than opinion that of desire; it is the act of thinking that is the starting-point.” (12.1072a; Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. Aristotle in 23 Volumes, Vols.17, 18, translated by Hugh Tredennick. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press; London, William Heinemann Ltd. 1933, 1989. <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Aristot.+Met.+12.1072a>)
 - “For the actuality of thought is life, and God is that actuality; and the essential actuality of God is life most good and eternal. We hold, then, that God is a living being, eternal, most good; and therefore life and a continuous eternal existence belong to God; for that is what God is.” (12.1072b)
 - “even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we also are His children’ ”
 - Stoic poet Aratus of Soli in Cilicia wrote, “For we are also his offspring.” (ISBE)
 - Paul reached his audience by understanding how they interpreted what they observed about the universe and showing them reality.
 - “Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature [θεῖον] is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man.”
 - Idolatry is irrational, even by Greek philosophy.
 - “Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.”
 - “Times of ignorance” seems to refer to the altar “to an unknown god” as well as the groping for understanding embodied in philosophy.

- The universe and the world isn't eternal. Just as God set times for empires and nations to rise and fall, He has set a time for judgment.
- The Spirit of God brought Paul's message in the hearts of the council differently.
 - Some "sneered," unwilling to move from their philosophy.
 - Some wanted to hear the message again, possibly to ponder a novel philosophy.
 - Some believed, including council member Dionysius, a woman named Damaris and "others with them."

Food for thought

- Do we move like the mob, driven by the spirit of the day?
- Do we disregard the word of God because of our intellectualism and learning?

Acts 18 notes

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All passages from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.

Summary: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Acts 18:1–17 — in Corinth

- What's kind of a place was Corinth in the first century?
 - The Greek name (Κόρινθος G2882) means “ornament.”
 - Located at the isthmus between the north peninsula of Greece and Peloponnesus, the southern peninsula.
 - Three harbors: Lechaëum, on the Corinthian, and Cenchræa (Κεγχραῖ *Kegchraei*) and Schoenus on the Saronic Gulf. Small ships were hauled across the isthmus by rail, but goods from larger ships were unloaded on one side and reloaded into another ship on the other.
- Aquilla and Priscilla
 - Aquila Ἀκύλας *Akulas*, or “an eagle”¹ (G0207).
 - Pontus was a region of Asia Minor (modern Turkey) on the south coast of the Black Sea. It was one of the Jewish colonies mentioned in Acts 2:9 and 1st Pet. 1:1.
 - Priscilla Πρίσκιλλα *Priskilla* (G4251), feminine form of *Priska*, which comes from Latin for “ancient”².
 - Roman emperor Claudius gave the edict for all Jews and Christians to leave Rome, and major Roman colonies around A.D. 50 (49? or 52?).
 - They were “tent-makers,” like Paul was. There are various interpretations on which occupation that was.
 - Some have asserted the this term means that these three Jews were making *tallitot*, or prayer shawls.
 - The Tabernacle is called a σκηνή *skene* (Ex. 27:21; 29:4; Lev. 1:1; Num. 1:1; Acts 7:44; Rev. 15:5).
 - The tradition of wearing a tallit during prayer is based on the Torah passage about the people standing at the entrances of their tents when Moshe would enter the Tent to talk to God (Exod. 33:8–10).
 - How would those reading or hearing this letter (Acts) have understood the word?
 - Was there a livelihood in manufacturing tallitot in cities with small Jewish populations, such as Corinth?
 - The BDAG lexicon gives two main meanings for σκηνοποιός³ *skenoipoios*:
 - “Stagehand” or “scene maker,” i.e. set producer for theater, making backdrops and props.
 - σκηνογράφος *skenographos* was what we now call a set or stage designer.
 - The historian Pollux uses it as a synonym for μηχανοποιός *mechanopoios*.⁴
 - However, Jewish writings of the time convey disdain for the theater. For example, Josephus recounts how theaters were part of the Hellenistic introductions brought into the Land (*War* 1:414–416).⁵
 - “Tent maker,” from σκηνή *skēnē* (G4633), or “tent,” and ποῖος *poios* (G4169), or “of what sort or nature.”⁶
 - “The term σκηνοποιός is not used outside the Bible (and its influence), except for Pollux and Hermetic Writings. There it appears as an adjective and in a figurative sense concerning production of a dwelling appropriate for the soul.”⁷
 - “σκηνή appears freq. as the obj. of ποιέω in the sense ‘pitch’ or ‘erect a tent’”⁸
 - σκηνοποιός is traditionally seen as another way to express σκηνοπηγίας.
 - πηγίαις comes from πήγνυμι *pēgnymi* (G4078), or “to make fast, to fix; to fasten together,

1 *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. “Aquila.” Accordance electronic ed., version 1.2. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1915.

2 Thayer, Joseph H., ed. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Accordance electronic ed., version 1.3. Altamonte Springs: OakTree Software, 2004.

3 Danker, Frederick, ed. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature (BDAG)*. 3d, Accordance electronic ed., version 1.5. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

4 *Ibid.*, citing Pollux 7.189.

5 Josephus, Flavius. *The Works of Flavius Josephus, Complete and Unabridged*. New Updated Edition, trans. by William Whiston. Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., Peabody, Mass.: 1987.

6 Thayer.

7 BDAG.

8 *Ibid.*

- to build by fastening together.”⁹
- The Festival of Making/Pitching Tents, or Sukkot, in the Greek version of the Scriptures (LXX) is, “ἑορτῆ σκηνοπηγίας” (Deut. 16:16; 31:10; Zech. 14:16, 18, 19; 1st Esdr. 5:50; 2nd Macc. 1:9).
 - The BDAG concludes that the listeners and readers of Luke’s and Paul’s letters would understand σκηνοποιός in the sense most used in urban area, i.e. relating to theatrical productions. “In the absence of any use of the term σκηνοποιός, beyond the pass. in Pollux and the Hermetical Writings, and the lack of specific qualifiers in the text of Acts 18:3, one is left with the strong probability that Luke’s publics in urban areas, where theatrical productions were in abundance, would think of σκηνοποιός in reference to matters theatrical. In addition, Acts 20:34; 1st Cor. 4:12; 1st Thess. 2:9; 2nd Thess. 3:8 indicate that Paul’s work was of a technical nature and was carried out in metropolitan areas, where there would be large demand for such kind of work. What publics in other areas might understand is subject to greater question, for the evidence is primarily anecdotal.”
 - If true, that means Paulos, Preskilla and Akulas were reaching Greeks at the heart of their indoctrination centers, the theater.
 - However, would that suggest they were profiting off of the vain and pagan speech of Greek and Roman plays?
 - The Peshitta translation in Aramaic has ܠܘܠܝܘܐ *lowlore*, or “worker of rough cloth.”¹⁰
 - Messianic scholar J.K. McKee discounts the “tallit-maker” interpretation. “We object to the assumption that a ‘tentmaker’ must be a tallit maker because, (1) the tallit in its present form is a relatively new application of the command to wear tzit-tzits or fringes, coming in the last millennia of Jewish history¹¹; and (2) no current scholarship in the New Testament confirms that skēnopoios (σκηνοποιός) means ‘tallit maker.’ There is some disagreement as to whether ‘tentmaker’ is the best translation, though. TDNT notes, ‘If the trade is that of making tents of goat’s hair, Paul is perhaps weaving fabric. But rabbinic scholars do not favor weaving, and it is thus more likely that Paul is a “leather worker,” and that as such he is a “tent maker” (W. Michaelis, ‘pitching tents, Tabernacles,’ in TDNT, 1044).”¹²
 - “reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath and trying to persuade Jews and Greeks” (Acts 18:4)
 - Many think this statement by Paul meant that God rejected the Yehudim: “Your blood be on your own heads! I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” (Acts 18:6)
 - This sounds like the infamous basis for Christian anti-Judaism: “When Pilate saw that he was accomplishing nothing, but rather that a riot was starting, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, ‘I am innocent of this Man’s blood; see to that yourselves.’ And all the people said, ‘His blood shall be on us and on our children!’ ” (Matt. 27:24–25)
 - David Stern notes several reasons why this interpretation is devilishly wrong¹³:
 1. Effects of sin may follow to future generations (Ex. 20:4–6), but each generation is responsible for its own decisions (Ezekiel 18).
 2. Yeshua forgave them: ‘Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing’ (Luke 23:34).”
 3. All have sinned against God, and Yeshua died to reconcile all who believe (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 3:23, 5:7-8; 1st Jn. 2:1).
 - Paul reached out those attending the synagogue by continuing to teach next door (Acts 18:7) and through the synagogue leader, Crispus (v. 8).
 - He did probably for most of the year and a half he was in Corinth.
 - Paul also continued reasoning in synagogues on his third journey — when he is thought to have written 1st and 2nd Corinthians, Galatians and Romans — moving to a local yeshiva in Ephesus when his three months of reasoning in the assembly got too heated (Acts 19:8–9).
 - “Then he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next to the synagogue.” (Acts 18:7)
 - How obvious are we being in our “solemn testimony” to the House of Yehudah, God’s people in general and the nations?
 - Paul said he was “clean” in his unsuccessful reasoning from the Scriptures. Is our testimony “clean” (Ezek. 18:16–19), i.e., without distraction and earnest?
 - Are we truly being all things to all people (1st Cor. 9:19–23)?

9 Thayer.

10 George A. Kiraz. *Syriac New Testament Peshitta*. (in modern Hebrew letters).

11 The *Jewish Encyclopedia* traces the use of the tallit in worship mainly to the Talmudic and Gaonic (Babylonian) periods (see “Tallit” <www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=29&letter=T>).

12 McKee, J.K. “Paul, Tentmaker.” *Frequently Asked Questions: P*. TNN Online. <www.tnnonline.net/faq/p.html>

13 Stern, David H. “Matt. 27:25.” *Jewish New Testament Commentary: a Companion Volume to the Jewish New Testament*. Accordance electronic ed. Clarksville, Md: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992.

- Paul and Sosthenes were dragged before Achaean proconsul Gallio by another Yehudim mob (Acts 18:12–17).

- The good news of Yeshua as Messiah was gaining major attention in the Roman empire.
- Achaia proper was a confederation of communities on the southern shore of the Corinthian Gulf stretching from the isthmus of Corinth east along the north side of the Peloponnesus peninsula in what today is southern Greece. However, from the time of the poet Homer the name Achaia was applied to all of modern-day Greece until Rome divided Greece into the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia.¹⁴



- U.S. founding fathers

James Madison and Alexander Hamilton adapted elements of the constitution of the Achaean League developed between 251 B.C. and the Rome’s destruction of Corinth in 146 B.C.¹⁵

- The historian, philosopher, cryptographer and general Polybius (203–120 B.C.) of Arcadia, southwest of Corinth, developed the concept of checks and balances in branches of government seen in the U.S. Constitution.¹⁶
- Gallio was born Marcus Annaeus Novatus in Cordova in southern Spain, moved to Rome during the reign of emperor Tiberius (A.D. 14–37) and was adopted by the debater Lucius Junius Gallio.
 - His brother Seneca the Younger, a Stoic philosopher, senator and tutor to Nero, as well as poet Statius referred to the proconsul Gallio as friendly and good-natured.¹⁷
 - Claudius gave Achaia to the Senate to govern in A.D. 44, and Gallio became proconsul in A.D. 52–53¹⁸ but left the position a few years later for health reasons¹⁹
- Gallio shows disinterest in the religious reasons for the public commotion, not letting Paul provide a defense against the recurring charge of antinomianism, or convincing them to revere God in a manner contrary to the Torah.
 - Gallio saw the argument as mere “questions about words and names and your own law” (Acts 18:15).
 - He seemed to have taken his command “see to it yourselves” to extend to the beating of the synagogue leader Sosthenes (v. 17).
 - Some versions have “all the Gentiles” (KJV) and some “they all” (NASB), seemingly including the Yehudim who had banded together to start the uprising.
 - The Aramaic Peshitta translation has כְּלֵהוֹן חֲנַפְיָא *khulhown khanfey*, or “all godless ones.”²⁰
 - There was no investigation of the dispute, per the model of Moshe (Ex. 18:16).
 - Sosthenes is described as “the synagogue leader,” the same description for Crispus (Acts 18:8).
 - Sosthenes could have replaced Crispus after the latter started following the Way.
 - However, Paul specifically mentions Sosthenes as “our brother” in the opening of his first letter to the Corinthian assembly (1st Cor. 1:1), so he became a believer in Yeshua too.
 - There seem to have been more than one “leader” of each assembly (Acts 13:15), and sometimes one of several such leaders was called “the synagogue leader,” as with Yairos (Mark 5:22, 35).

Acts 18:18–23 — Paul leaves Corinth for Syria via Cenchrea and Ephesus, then he returns to Galatia

- The KJV has “I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem” (Acts 18:21).

¹⁴ ISBE. “Achaia.”

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Wikipedia. “Polybius.” <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polybius>

¹⁷ ISBE. “Gallio.”

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Wikipedia. “Junius Annaeus Gallio” and “Achaean League.” <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gallio> and <en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Achaean_League>

²⁰ Peshitta.

- It's not in the oldest manuscripts. However, that expression is in early manuscripts for Acts 20:16, referring to Paul's desire to make it to Yerushalayim for Shav'utot.²¹
- Why didn't Paul wait until reaching Yerushalayim before having his head shaved in what sounds like the Nazarite vow (Acts 18:18; cf. Num. 6:1–21)?
 - man or woman
 - “makes a special vow” (NASB) or “separate *themselves* to a vow” (KJV) — אָפְלִי *yafli'*
 - H6381 אָפְלִי *fl'* Verb hifil imperfect third masculine singular apocopated “to be wonderful”
 - HALOT: “to be different, conspicuous, curious”²²
 - BDB: “be surpassing, extraordinary”²³
 - The verb is translated as “makes a difficult vow” (NASB) and “make a singular vow” (KJV) in Lev. 27:2, a chapter talking about the redemption of people, offerings and land dedicated to the LORD.
 - “Nazirite” — נָזִיר *nazir*
 - H5139 נָזִיר from 5144a; “one consecrated, devoted”
 - H5144 נָזַר *vb.* “dedicate, consecrate, separate, in religious and ceremonial sense”²⁴
 - In Ya'akov's blessing of his sons, he gave his surpassing blessings to be on the head of Yosef and יִזְרָחֵל, or “for the scalp of the consecrated one [נָזִיר] of his brothers” (Gen. 49:26).
 - This phrase — “to the head of Yosef and to the head of the consecrated one of his brothers” — Moshe repeated for the tribes of Yosef — Ephraim and Manasseh — in Deut. 33:16 as the 12 tribes prepared to enter the Land.
 - The vow was extraordinary — “holy is he [the person] to the LORD” (v. 8).
 - Breaches of this vow, even unintentional, were remedied with sin and guilt offerings at God's House (vv. 10, 13, etc.).
 - Nazirite was forbidden during the period of the vow from:
 - Eating and drinking certain things.
 - חֲמֵץ יַיִן וְחֲמֵץ שֶׁכֶר — The decay/sourness/corruption of wine and hard beverages (Num. 6:3).
 - Grape matter of any kind — skins, seeds, dried or fresh grapes, juice, wine (vv. 3–4).
 - Cutting the hair (v. 5).
 - Touching a corpse, even that of family (vv. 6–7) and even if it was by accident (v. 9).
 - If the completion of the Nazir vow was to be undertaken at the House of God, what does this suggest about the worship of God outside of Israel?

“Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.’ ” (Jn. 4:21–24)

 - There are, however, rabbinical discussions in the Mishnah about Nazir vows outside the Land:

“He who [while overseas] took a vow to be a Nazir for a long spell and completed his spell as a Nazir, and afterward came to the Land [of Israel] — the House of Shammai say, ‘He is a Nazir for thirty days.’ And the House of Hillel say, ‘He is a Nazir as from the very beginning.’ ” (Nazir 3:6)
 - Considering that Yeshua's corrections tended to get at the intent of the Torah that the School of Hillel largely subscribed to, this consideration of a Nazir vow undertaken abroad not being completed until done so at the Temple may explain the Yerushalayim leadership's directive to Paul to participate in the “closing ceremonies” with four Nazirs (Acts 21:17–24).
- What can it say about our worship of God through His appointed times today?

Acts 18:24–28 — Apollos

- That Apollos was able to teach “the way of the LORD” accurately with just the TaNaKh and the washing of Yokhanan's message of repentance suggests that the instructions for walking that way are in the TaNaKh.
- All that is needed is to layer the accurate knowledge of God represented through Messiah Yeshua to be a complete message.

²¹ Stern. “Acts 18:21.”

²² *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

²³ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.

²⁴ *Ibid.*