

**Acts 21:1–16 — From Asia to Yerushalayim, Paul receives warnings from God about his fate**

- From the beginning of Paul’s service, he knew:
  1. He would be protected as long as he was needed to spread the good news of God’s reconciliation of the world to Himself through Yeshua the Anointed One.

“Paul purposed in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, ‘After I have been there, I must also see Rome.’ ” (Acts 19:21)

    - As a witness to the power that was going with him and his faith in that promise, on his fourth mission as a prisoner of Rome he instructed his Roman guards to throw away the lifeboat amid a terrible storm to save all on board (Acts 27:33–36) and after being shipwrecked on Malta nonchalantly shook off a biting viper with no ill effects (Acts 28:3–6).
  2. He would suffer in the process.

Yeshua said to Ananais about Sh’aul of Tarsus: “ ‘he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.’ ” (Acts 9:15–16)

“ ‘And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me.’ ” (Acts 20:22–23)

“they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to set foot in Jerusalem” (Acts 21:4)

“[prophet Agabus of Yudea] took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, ‘This is what the Holy Spirit says: “In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.” ’ ” (Acts 21:11)
- Yeshua repeatedly said He would suffer because of Who He is and those who trust Him as God’s Anointed One would suffer because of that trust.

“ ‘Remember the word that I said to you, “A slave is not greater than his master.” If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well. But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, “THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.” [Psa. 35:19; 69:4].’ ” (John 15:20–25)
- This rejection of Messiah started long before He arrived on Earth.

“The LORD said to Samuel, ‘Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them. Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day — in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods — so they are doing to you also.’ ” (1<sup>st</sup> Sam. 8:7–8)

“And Simeon blessed them and said to Miriam His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed — and a sword will pierce even your own soul — to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.’ ” (Luke 2:34–35)
- God has promised to be with us during these trials.

“ ‘But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for My name’s sake. It will lead to an opportunity for your testimony. So make up your minds not to prepare beforehand to defend yourselves; for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute. But you will be betrayed even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death, and you will be hated by all because of My name. Yet not a hair of your head will perish. By your endurance you will gain your lives.’ ” (Luke 21:12–19; cf. Matt. 10:17–20)

“ ‘For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.’ ” (Matt 10:20)

“ ‘When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.’ ” (Luke 12:11–12)

“Then Moses said to the LORD, ‘Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.’ The LORD said to him, ‘Who has made

man's mouth? Or who makes him mute or deaf, or seeing or blind? Is it not I, the LORD? "Now then go, and I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say." (Exod. 4:10–12)

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, And before honor comes humility. The plans of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the LORD. All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the LORD weighs the motives. Commit your works to the LORD And your plans will be established." (Prov. 15:33–16:3)

"But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you." (Isa. 43:1–2)

- Does this mean that we do not have to study God's words, because He'll just put them in our mouths when we need them?

"Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless *and leads* to the ruin of the hearers. Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling [ὀρθοτομέω] the word of truth. But avoid worldly [βέβηλος] *and* empty chatter [κενοφωνία], for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some. Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness." (2<sup>nd</sup> Tim. 2:14–19)

- 3718. ὀρθοτομέω *orthotomeo*; from 3717 and τέμνω (to cut); to cut straight: —handling accurately(1).
- 952. βέβηλος *bebelos*; from βηλός (a threshold); permitted to be trodden, by impl. unhallowed: — godless person(1), profane(1), worldly(3).
- 2757. κενοφωνία *kenophonia*; from 2756 and 5455; empty talk: —empty chatter(2).

"Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR INTIMIDATION, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame. For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing what is right rather than for doing what is wrong." (1<sup>st</sup> Pet. 3:13–17)

"For thus the LORD spoke to me with mighty power and instructed me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, 'You are not to say, "It is a conspiracy!" In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it. It is the LORD of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread. Then He shall become a sanctuary; But to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, And a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Yerushalayim. Many will stumble over them, Then they will fall and be broken; They will even be snared and caught. Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. And I will wait for the LORD who is hiding His face from the house of Ya'acov; I will even look eagerly for Him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, who dwells on Mount Zion.'" (Isa. 8:11–18)

"Thus says the Lord, 'With a strong hand do they reject the course of the way of this people, saying: Never say "Hard," for whatever this people says is hard, but do not fear what it fears, neither be troubled. Sanctify the Lord himself, and he himself will be your fear. If you trust in him, he will become your holy precinct, and you will not encounter him as a stumbling caused by a stone nor as a fall caused by a rock, but the house of Iakob is in a trap, and those who sit in Ierousalem are in a pit. Therefore, many among them shall become powerless, and they shall fall and be crushed, and people who are in safety shall draw near and be taken. Then shall become manifest those who seal up the law so that they might not learn. And one shall say, "I will wait for God, who has turned away his face from the house of Iakob, and I will trust in him. Here am I and the children whom God has given me, and they shall become signs and portents in Israel from the Lord Sabaoth, who dwells on Mount Sion." ' (Isa. 8:11–18 *New English Translation of the Septuagint*)