
Paul Vindicates Himself

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Acts 21:22–26 WEB

What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come.

Immediately in the preceding verse, the elders had just finished relating the accusations that had been made against Paul. Now the concern is that there will be a meeting of the whole assembly or church in order to investigate the charges.

Therefore do what we tell you. We have four men who have taken a vow.

We see that there is no question but that the charges were false. It is implicitly understood that there is no truth to the charges made against Paul, and now the elders and Paul were going to demonstrate this to the whole assembly in the strongest way possible.

Take them, and purify yourself with them, and **pay their expenses** for them, that they may **shave their heads**. Then all will know that there is no truth in the things that they have been informed about you, but that you yourself also walk keeping **the Law**.

Take them Paul will be their sponsor.

and purify yourself Because Paul himself had taken a vow, 18:18.

pay their expenses Shows great zeal for the Law.

shave their heads According to the Torah's Nazirite vow, Numbers 6.

the Law “τον νομον”, (“ton nomon”), the Torah Law, also called the Law of Moses, and possibly including the associated oral traditions, since “νομος” has a broader meaning than the English word, “law”.

Because Paul agreed to this, the only possible conclusion is that Paul did, indeed, keep the whole Torah in every respect, including the recourse to animal sacrificial offerings mandated by Scripture.

The only alternative is that Paul (not to mention also the Elders) was a liar and a deceiver; but we know that he was not, and neither were the elders who recommended the course of action.

But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written our decision **{{altered text}}** that they should keep themselves from food offered to idols, from blood, from strangled things, and from sexual immorality.“

But Better is: Now.

{{altered text}} The Greek text appears to have been deliberately altered here, with the added words: “that they should observe no such thing, except”. For this reason, the critical text UBS 4/NA 27 omits these words.

This verse is a reference to an earlier chapter in Acts, in which the elders wrote to the Gentile churches with instructions. It is implicitly understood that the Gentiles would be taught Torah, but new converts from heathen nations needed special warnings against the practices that were most common among them.

Then **Paul took the men**, and the next day, **purified himself** and went with them into the **Temple**, **declaring the fulfillment of the days of purification**, until the **offering** was offered for every one of them.

Paul took the men Thus declaring that he keeps the whole Torah Law.

purified himself Observing the Torah ritual cleanliness laws.

Temple The Jewish Temple! Paul was a Jew.

declaring the fulfillment of the days of purification Declaring to the priests when the period of separation would end

offering Animal sacrifice. Numbers 6.

for every one of them Including Paul.

There was no stronger way that Paul could demonstrate that he kept the whole Torah Law, including animal sacrifices, than to publicly proceed with his own and four others' Nazirite vows, which are solemn vows before God involving animal sacrifice!

It goes without saying, then, that what he did he also taught others to do! This is the whole point of the exercise: to show the whole assembly of the church that Paul was not teaching the foreign Jews to disregard the Torah Law. He was not teaching the Gentiles to do this either.