



Acts Chapter 23 Who's On Trial?

As we move into Acts chapter 23 we find Paul on trial in front of the Sanhedrin, but before we move forward it's important to remember how we got here. If we remember correctly... this all stems from Acts chapter 21 when Paul came to Jerusalem and James was concerned about the Jews who had become believers. These believing Jews had heard that Paul was preaching against the law of Moses and against circumcision and so because they had heard these false rumors.. they thought Paul was some kind of false prophet.

The truth of the matter was that none of what they had heard was true. Paul never preached against the law of God nor did he ever preach against circumcision. Paul simply preached against the idea that keeping the law or circumcision saved someone. Paul knew that it was the grace of God alone that saved a person... however.. this does not negate the fact that if that person was truly given the Ruach Hakodesh, and if that person was truly saved... Paul knew that that person would be lead to keep the law because the law would be written on his heart and in his mind... just as it is written in Hebrews chapter 10 verse 16, and Deuteronomy chapter 30 verse 6.

And Paul never preached that anyone should not be circumcised... he only preached that circumcision by itself does not save anyone. A new Gentile convert did not need to go run and be circumcised right away, and the Pharisees and those who were part of the circumcision group could not force anyone to be circumcised, and then claim that they were saved because they were circumcised.

Before the flesh can be circumcised.. the heart must first be circumcised.. and the new Gentile convert must understand why he is being circumcised, and what it means to be circumcised. Once again it's the same as baptism. No one can be forced to be baptized. People who come to the faith do not always run to the water to get baptized. Some people are not baptized for days, weeks, or even months, or years after first believing.. but once they understand the importance of being baptized, and they understand that baptism has to do with the biblical love of God found in 1st John 5:3.. then and only then.. is their baptism of any effect. They need to be lead to the water by the Ruach Hakodesh of God by their own accord.. not because someone forced them to it.. and so it is with circumcision.

Paul was simply allowing these new Gentile converts the time to hear the law of Moses being

read in the synagogues just like James said in Acts chapter 15 verse 21. Paul nor James, nor any of the Apostles preached against the law of God or circumcision. But these Jews who had just come to the faith had heard that Paul was preaching against the law and circumcision and they wanted to stone Paul to death for being what they thought.. was a false prophet.

So even though Paul himself circumcised Timothy in Acts chapter 16 verse 3... and even though Paul was at the Temple purifying himself and four other men, and even though Paul was paying for their offerings just as the law commanded... this crowd of angry Jews who had just come to the faith had found Paul at the Temple in Acts chapter 21 verse 27, and they laid hands on him and drug him out of the Temple... and this is where Paul winds up on trial, and it's interesting to note.. that the Roman tribune who arrested Paul because of all of the commotion...still has no idea what Paul is guilty of. The Romans are still trying to figure out what Paul had done to make these Jews angry enough to want to kill him... and so the Roman Tribune calls upon their own Jewish Sanhedrin, to come and he puts Paul in front of them and begins to listen to what these angry Jews charge Paul with... and this is where we left off in Acts chapter 23.

Now I want to add something here that we we also need to be aware of before we move forward... and that is the fact that the Romans were not the only ones who were having a hard time trying to figure out what Paul was guilty of. Many of today's prestigious modern day commentators, and Seminary Professors, and denominational charters of men... still to this very day... do not understand what Paul was guilty of.

They have built whole denominational charters around their own false understandings, and interpretations of what they think Paul was guilty of. And they have built mega churches, and cathedrals not in the name of the one true God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob... but in the name of their own understandings and doctrines. They do not defend the Gospel as it was given nor do they contend for the faith... they defend their own man made, man created, man fabricated understandings, rituals, and traditions....and they contend for their own man made doctrines instead of the faith. Most of them have no idea what the word “Faith” even stands for. Most of them have never even heard of the “Obedience”... of “Faith”. And so just like in Paul's time... we true Christians today are still up against today's modern day Saducees and Pharisees who claim to be.. the “High Priests” of our time. I would simply ask that you keep that in mind... as we move forward here today in our study of the book of Acts.

Paul is now standing in front of the Sanhedrin, and he begins to speak... so lets listen in to what Paul says, and lets read through Acts chapter 23 so that we can get a clear picture of what's going to happen next.

ACTS CHAPTER 23:

Act 23:1 And looking intently at the council, Paul said, "Brothers, I have lived my life before

God in all good conscience up to this day."

Act 23:2 And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.

Act 23:3 Then Paul said to him, "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Are you sitting to judge me according to the law, and yet contrary to the law you order me to be struck?"

Act 23:4 Those who stood by said, "Would you revile God's high priest?"

Act 23:5 And Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

Act 23:6 Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducee's and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial."

Act 23:7 And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducee's, and the assembly was divided.

Act 23:8 For the Sadducee's say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

Act 23:9 Then a great clamor arose, and some of the scribes of the Pharisees' party stood up and contended sharply, "We find nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?"

Act 23:10 And when the dissension became violent, the tribune, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him away from among them by force and bring him into the barracks.

Act 23:11 The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."

Act 23:12 When it was day, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

Act 23:13 There were more than forty who made this conspiracy.

Act 23:14 They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul.

Act 23:15 Now therefore you, along with the council, give notice to the tribune to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case more exactly. And we are ready to kill him before he comes near."

Act 23:16 Now the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, so he went and entered the barracks and told Paul.

Act 23:17 Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him."

Act 23:18 So he took him and brought him to the tribune and said, "Paul the prisoner called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has something to say to you."

Act 23:19 The tribune took him by the hand, and going aside asked him privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?"

Act 23:20 And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more closely about him.

Act 23:21 But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him, who have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now they are ready, waiting for your consent."

Act 23:22 So the tribune dismissed the young man, charging him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of these things."

Act 23:23 Then he called two of the centurions and said, "Get ready two hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night."

Act 23:24 Also provide mounts for Paul to ride and bring him safely to Felix the governor."

Act 23:25 And he wrote a letter to this effect:

Act 23:26 "Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings.

Act 23:27 This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman citizen.

Act 23:28 And desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council.

Act 23:29 I found that he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment.

Act 23:30 And when it was disclosed to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him."

Act 23:31 So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris.

Act 23:32 And on the next day they returned to the barracks, letting the horsemen go on with him.

Act 23:33 When they had come to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him.

Act 23:34 On reading the letter, he asked what province he was from. And when he learned that he was from Cilicia,

Act 23:35 he said, "I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive." And he commanded him to be guarded in Herod's praetorium.

Now... I want us to understand that everything that Paul is going through has a purpose. It's important for us to understand that as we read through these scriptures and we are able to follow along with Paul through out his journey's... that we find that the hand of God is with him every step of the way. Notice in verse 11 where we're told that the Lord was with Paul and was encouraging him and letting him know that he had to testify about him in Rome.

Now.. at this point in time I'm sure that Paul thought that he was going to testify about his Messiah in the town square and in the synagogues of Rome just like he had done in the surrounding cities.. but once again.. it seems that our Father has bigger plans for Paul. Soon Paul will find himself in front of Governors, and Kings and even the Emperor himself. Often

times the road we see ourselves going down is not the road that has been chosen for us. Paul's story often reminds me of that old saying that says: "If you want to make God laugh... just tell him your plans".

Something else to think about is the future of Christianity and what happened in the future after all of this happens and Paul is finally martyred for his faith, and the Temple at Jerusalem is destroyed in 70ad, and the Jewish leadership of the new believers has all been taken out of the picture and the Gentiles begin to move in and take control of the Gospel message... we'll soon see that the headquarters of the Gentile Christian church will become situated in the capitol of the Gentiles... also known as... Rome. And unfortunately many people who hold to the Roman Catholic faith still believe that the headquarters of Christianity still does remain in Rome to this day.

For those of us who know the truth however.. we know that the true headquarters of Christianity still resides in Heaven with our Messiah... who will soon return to take back what the little "g" god of this world has tried to claim for himself. And for those who still believe that the headquarters of Christianity still resides in Rome... you need to read Revelation 18:4 and 5 before you wind up taking part in her sins, and sharing in her plagues.

As we move forward we find Paul in front of these same Saducees and Pharisees who had hung his Messiah on a tree.. and so it's important to understand that these are no longer believing Jews that Paul is in front of. Paul is now in front of the Sanhedrin who were not only zealous for the law of God... they were zealous for their own man made, man created, man fabricated laws, commandments, and traditions that they had heaped upon Gods laws. It's important to remember that these are the same Saducees and Pharisees that our Messiah called two fold children of hell in Matthew chapter 23. He also called them a "Brood of Vipers" and "White washed tombs full of dead mens bones", and he also told us that if our righteousness did not far exceed that of these Scribes and Pharisees... that we would in no way enter the kingdom of Heaven in Matthew chapter 5 verse 20.

So it's important to remember that this is the very same evil brood of "Vipers" that Paul is now standing in front of, and it's no surprise that they strike Paul in the mouth for simply saying that he had lived his life before God in all good conscience.

Although it seems as though Paul is on trial here in front of this evil brood of vipers known as the "Sanhedrin"... I would submit to you my friends... that it was not Paul who was on trial here at all... but rather the Sanhedrin themselves who are on trial in front of man and God.

Here they have Paul an Apostle and Prophet who was sent by their very own Messiah speaking the truth to them.. and they are condemning themselves by once again rejecting the message that Paul is trying to give them from God. So in reality... who is it that is on trial here? Is our Father and his Son not watching this all unfold... are they not watching this evil "Brood of

vipers” reject their Prophet, and are they not watching this evil “Brood of vipers” trying to convict and innocent man? I would submit to you my friends that even though it looks like Paul is the one who is on trial here... it is not Paul that is on trial at all... but rather this evil brood of vipers that is on trial before our Father... and who are condemning themselves. This false Jewish leadership that our Messiah already warned... that were going to hell in Matthew chapter 23 verse 33.

Mat 23:33 *You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell?*

And with that being said I think it's just as important to know and understand that today's modern day version of Christianity is no better than this “Brood of Vipers” back in Paul's time. Today's modern day version of Christianity is full of it's own Halakah, and it's own traditions, and rituals, and myths of men that have been created by their own denominational charters of men, and their so called “Early Church Fathers” and their prestigious biblical commentators, and Seminary Professors.

What we know today as both Jewish and Christian leadership is nothing more than the wisdom of men which is nothing more than foolishness according to God in 1st Corinthians 3:19 through 21:

1Co 3:19 For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness,"

1Co 3:20 and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile."

1Co 3:21 So let no one boast in men.

Paul himself warns us against the wisdom of men in 1st Corinthians 2:3 through 5:

1Co 2:3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling,

1Co 2:4 and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;

1Co 2:5 so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

The next time you think that your Pastor, Priest, Bishop, or Pope is closer to God than you are, you need to remember what Paul himself wrote in 1st Corinthians chapter 1 verses 25 through 29:

1Co 1:25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1Co 1:26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

1Co 1:27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is

weak in the world to shame the strong;

1Co 1:28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are,

1Co 1:29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

No my friends.. the wisdom of men is not where we want to put our faith... the wisdom of men is not our stronghold... the wisdom of men is not the foundation of our salvation nor is it the rock that we are to build our houses upon... the wisdom of men.. is foolishness... to God.

If what we believe does not come from the scriptures that have been breathed out by God that are profitable for teaching, and for reproof, and for correction, and for training in righteousness... then we are simply living a lie, and the god that we serve is not the one true God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob... but is rather the little “g” god of this world that has captivated us through the deceptions of his wolves in sheep's clothing.

Paul knew the evil of the men who he was standing in front of... but because he also knew that they were his brothers.. he tried desperately to reach them... he gave all that he had to try and get through to them... even his very own life would be given in the end just like his Messiah... to try and to reach the lost... the very same lost that were now striking him in the mouth and calling for him to be murdered. Even while they were sinners... Paul was ready to lay his life down to try and save them... just like his Messiah had done for the world.

And knowing this... the question then becomes... how far are we willing to take this faith that has been given to us? How far are we willing to go to save a sinner? How far are we willing to go to proclaim the Gospel message and to contend for the faith that has been given to us?... Just some Food for thought.

Now... I want us to pay close attention to verses 2 through 5 because this is extremely important to understand, and we must understand the Bible from the beginning of the book to understand what's going on here. Today's modern day Christians who have not read the beginning of the book... are not going to be able to see or understand what's going on in these verses.

First of all.. this man by the name of Ananias who claims to be “High Priest”... is not a “High Priest”. According to the Torah, the Pentateuch... the “Old Testament” and the law handed down by Moses... the only people that could become “High Priests” were those who were in the bloodline of Aaron. You had to be a Levite and in the direct bloodline of Aaron the brother of Moses in order to become a “High Priest” according to God.

The chain of the bloodline of Aaron was broken clear back in the days of the Maccabees, and we have both the historian Josephus and the book of Maccabees as well as other well known historical documents to verify this historical fact.

Flavius Josephus, was a first-century Romano-Jewish scholar and historian. And we're told through the historical documentation of Josephus that before Antiochus' campaign against Egypt, there had been turmoil in Jerusalem concerning the office of high priest. Josephus tells us that when Onias the High Priest died, his son was too young to succeed him.. so Jason, brother of Onias, was appointed to the post.. but the king, hated Jason and, appointed his younger brother, Menelaus.

Other historical sources tell us that Jason offered Antiochus an exorbitant bribe to appoint him as high priest. After having served as “High Priest” for some time, Menelaus promised the king an even greater sum, and was promptly given the post. Menelaus promised to help Antiochus Hellenize the country by forcing the Greek culture on it's people, and if you read the book of Maccabees it'll give you some historical significance into what took place after that.. much of which has to do with Hanukkah and the celebration of the defeat of Antiochus and the cleansing of the Temple.

We spoke a little bit about this earlier in our study into the book of Acts but just in case you weren't with us from the beginning it's important to know that these men that they called “High Priests” were not “High Priests” according to the law of Moses... they were only “High Priests” according the their own law. So when Paul called Anannias a “Whitewashed Wall” for having him struck in the mouth... he was exactly right. This man who was dressed as a “High Priest” was indeed.. nothing more than a fraud... a fake... a “Whitewashed Wall”. And when the people asked Paul if he would revile Gods “High Priest” in verse 4... Paul mocks him again by saying "I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

You see Paul was being firehouses, and mocking Anannias even more. Paul knew full well that Ananias was not in the blood line of Aaron, and was no “High Priest” according to the Word of God. Paul had broken no such law because according to scripture... Anannias was not qualified to be a ruler of his people because he was not in the bloodline of Aaron.. but Paul had bigger fish to fry at the moment. Being on trial himself.. he needed to make a plea for his own life so that he could get back to proclaiming the gospel message to the people.

As we read through this scripture and we see Paul being struck in the face it should remind us of his Messiah when almost the exact same thing happened to him in John chapter 18 verses 19 through 23:

Joh 18:19 The high priest then questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching.

Joh 18:20 Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret.

Joh 18:21 Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them;

they know what I said."

Joh 18:22 When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Is that how you answer the high priest?"

Joh 18:23 Jesus answered him, "If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?"

It's important to notice that what Paul said to this so called "High Priest", and what Yahshua Jesus said to his so called "High Priest". Neither of these men had made offensive statements to anyone. Paul simply stated that he lived before God in good conscience, and Yahshua had simply asked why they didn't ask the people what he said.. neither comment was offensive or condescending... but both men were struck in the face unjustly.

Yeshua was dealing with Caiaphas and Paul was dealing with Ananias, the 8th High Priest to follow Caiaphas. Both of these men were Saducees, and once again it's important to remember that the Saducees did not believe in.. or recognize the prophets, and they didn't believe in spirits or angels or in resurrections either... so it was really almost impossible for the Saducees to recognize Yahshua as Israel's resurrected Messiah.

The Pharisees on the other hand who ran the synagogues, did believe in these things and so once again when Paul tells them that he's a Pharisee and the resurrection is what he's on trial for... this creates a big fight right in the middle of the room, and the whole place explodes because of the infighting between the Saducees and the Pharisees.

So these Jewish Saducees had literally thrown away half of the Old Testament and what it teaches, and the Pharisees had heaped all kinds of laws and commandments on top of Gods laws.. and because they had done these things.. neither of them could see the truth that Paul was trying to share with them... but what's also important to take note of here is that Christianity has made Gods laws and biblical commandments null and void long ago much like the Saducees had done... and the only thing that today's modern day Christian churches have left to defend is it's own man made, man created, man fabricated doctrines, myths, rituals, and traditions, where all sin is welcomed, and no one is to judge, and God is full of mercy and grace and the wrath of God is nonexistent, and where we're all once saved always saved, and we're all going to Heaven because we said a 60 second heart felt prayer down at the front of the aisle, and the per-tribulation rescue is going to save us all before things really get bad.

Christians today often like to shake their heads in contempt for those nasty Jews who refuse to accept Yahshua Jesus as their Messiah... and yet these very same Christians have made void the Word of God in order to hold onto their own traditions. These very same Christians have no idea who Yahshua Jesus even is... most of them don't even realize that this Jesus that they speak of is a Jew who came from the house of David and the tribe of Judah just as God told David that he would come from in 2nd Samuel chapter 7 verses 12 through 17.

It's a shame what both the Jew and the Gentile have done in the name of our Messiah, who came to preach his Father's Word and to forgive the sins of the wicked... if they would only repent of their wickedness... but what do we do?... We simply continue on making void the Word of God in order to hold onto our own traditions. We worship him with our lips but our hearts are far from him teaching and preaching the doctrines of men.

Something else very important that I want us to see is found in Acts chapter 23 verse 6 where Paul says and I quote "I am a Pharisee".

*Act 23:6 Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducee's and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brothers, **I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees.** It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial."*

Obviously Paul finds nothing wrong with being a believer in Yahshua Jesus... and still being a law abiding Pharisee. Paul makes no distinction between being a Pharisee who keeps the law and being a believer in Yahshua Jesus. Paul simply knows better than to keep the man made traditions of the Pharisees.. and this is what he's trying to convey to them. And this is why we see many more Pharisees who ran the Synagogues coming to the faith.. and hardly any of the Saducees who ran the Temple coming to the faith.

At least the Pharisees believed in the prophets and the resurrection... where the Saducees did not, and so it made it easier for the Pharisees to accept the Messiah.. even though many Pharisees flat out refused to believe in him, and many of them still continue to believe in their own traditions, rituals, and myths instead of their Messiah.. even to this very day.

The next thing to take note of is this planned attack to murder Paul. It's important to pause here for just a moment and think about this for a moment. Here were 40 men who were willing to give up their very lives to try and attack the Roman soldiers who were escorting Paul, just so they could murder him. Knowing full well that if they attacked these Roman soldiers... there was a very good chance that other innocent Jews would also pay with their lives... knowing that the Romans did not play around with treason... it was punishable by death, and if the Jewish faith was found to be a threat to the Romans.. the Jews would have to be annihilated... and even still... it was worth it to them and to the Saducees to see Paul murdered. And it's important to remember that it was the Saducees that ran the Temple, and it was the Saducees that became the High Priests... and for this plan to take place.. the Saducees would have had to not only know about it... but they would have had to also be in on it.. in order for the plan to work.

Of course in verse 16 we see Paul's Nephew somehow overhears the plan to kill him and he goes to Paul and tells Paul, and Paul in turn tells a Roman Centurion, and the Centurion and the Nephew go to the Roman Tribune and the Roman Tribune then decides to trick the foolish Saducees by leaving in a different direction for Caesarea to see Felix the Governor, because the Roman Tribune who arrested Paul still has no idea what Paul did to deserve to be murdered by

these angry Jews. So the Roman Tribune sends Paul to see Felix the Governor in Ceasarea, and the 40 Jews who vowed not to eat or drink until Paul was killed... were simply out of luck. Which is another lesson learned. Never make take an oath under any circumstances unless you're willing to pay the piper. These angry Jews would have done well to take heed the words of the very Messiah that they claimed to believe in. There own Messiah warned them against taking any kind of oath in Matthew chapter 5 verse 33 through 37:

Mat 5:33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.'

Mat 5:34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

Mat 5:35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.

Mat 5:36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

Mat 5:37 Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

These 40 Jews who had taken an oath not to eat or drink until Paul was murdered now are guilty of sin, because unless they're willing to lay down and die... they're going to have to break the oath that they took.. and our Messiah tells us very clearly that “you shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn” in Matthew 5:33... and so why would they have taken such and oath?... once again our Messiah tells us why in verse 37:

Mat 5:37 Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

And let me say one last thing about taking oaths and making vows to our Father in Heaven. If you think this is a small matter, or you think that this is a trivial thing... I want you to go read Judges chapter 11 verses 30 through 40... that's Judges chapter 11... verses 30 through 40.. and then come back and tell me that taking oaths and making vows is a trivial thing in the eyes of God. Once again that's Judges chapter 11 verses 30 through 40.

There are so many lessons that we can learn from studying the scriptures if we would simply take the time to sit down and read them. Paul now off to Caesarea to stand before the Roman Governor Felix will once again have to make a plea for his freedom. And It's important to note that this all began clear back in chapter 21 when Paul was found in the Temple purifying himself and four other men and paying for their offerings at the Temple... once again... keeping the law of God just like James tells us that Paul always did in Acts chapter 21 verse 24.. and yet so many of today's modern day Christian leaders proudly proclaim that Paul preached against the law and against circumcision all because they should have spent more time on their knees reading their Bibles and asking for discernment... than standing behind their pulpits preaching and teaching things not found anywhere in the scriptures.