

Acts 21:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

Analysis

Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple—Paul's voluntary participation in Jewish purification rites (καθαρισμός, *katharismos*) demonstrates his missionary flexibility: 'to the Jews I became as a Jew' (1 Corinthians 9:20). The seven-day Nazirite vow completion involved ritual purification and temple offerings (Numbers 6:13-20). This was not compromise but contextualization—Paul observed ceremonial law to maintain witness among Jewish believers, though he knew such rituals held no saving power.

To signify the accomplishment of the days of purification—The Greek *diaggello* (announce, declare) indicates Paul formally notified temple authorities of the vow's completion date, when prescribed offerings would be made. This public act showed Paul's respect for Jewish sensibilities despite his doctrine of freedom from the law for salvation.

Historical Context

This occurred around AD 57-58 during Paul's final visit to Jerusalem. James and the elders suggested this action to counter rumors that Paul taught Jews in the

Diaspora to abandon Moses (Acts 21:21). The purification costs for four men demonstrated Paul's financial support and solidarity with the Jerusalem church.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you balance theological conviction with cultural sensitivity in your witness to different groups?
2. What does Paul's participation in Jewish ritual teach about Christian liberty and the limits of contextualization?

Interlinear Text

τότε	ὁ	Παῦλος	παραλαβὼν	τοὺς	ἄνδρας	τῇ	ἐχομένῃ
Then G5119	G3588	Paul G3972	took G3880	G3588	the men G435	G3588	and the next G2192
ἡμερῶν	σὺν	αὐτῶν	ἀγνισθεὶς	εἰσῆει	εἰς	τὸ	ἱερόν
day G2250	with G4862	of them G846	purifying himself G48	entered G1524	into G1519	G3588	the temple G2411
διαγγέλλων	τὴν	ἐκπλήρωσιν	τῶν	ἡμερῶν	τοῦ		
to signify G1229	G3588	the accomplishment G1604	G3588	day G2250	G3588		
ἀγνισμοῦ	ἕως	οὗ	προσηνέχθη	ὑπὲρ	ένος	ἐκάστου	
of purification G49	until G2193	that G3739	should be offered G4374	for G5228	one G1520	every G1538	
αὐτῶν	ἡ	προσφορά					
of them G846	G3588	an offering G4376					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 24:18 (Temple): Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

Acts 21:24 (Parallel theme): Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

1 Corinthians 9:20 (Parallel theme): And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;