

Galatians 1:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

Analysis

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. "Then after three years" (epeita meta tria etē, ἐπειτα μετα τρια ἔτη)—Paul carefully documents timeline proving minimal contact with Jerusalem. Three years passed between conversion (Acts 9) and first Jerusalem visit (Acts 9:26-30), demonstrating his gospel wasn't learned from apostles but received independently. "I went up to Jerusalem" (anēlthon eis Hierosolyma) finally acknowledges what verse 17 denied—but only after three years of independent ministry.

"To see Peter" (historēsai Kēphan, ιστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν) uses significant verb. Historeo" (ιστορέω) means "visit to become acquainted with, inquire of"—where we get "history." Paul wanted to meet Peter personally, learn about Jesus's earthly ministry, compare experiences. But this was fraternal consultation between equals, not student receiving instruction from master. Paul uses Peter's Aramaic name Cephas, showing familiarity and perhaps emphasizing Jewish context.

"And abode with him fifteen days" (kai epemeina pros auton hēmeras dekapente)—brief visit, not extended training. Fifteen days allowed fellowship and mutual edification but insufficient for comprehensive theological instruction. Paul's gospel was already formed; he sought confirmation, not formation. The time limitation proves he wasn't Peter's disciple.

Historical Context

Acts 9:26-30 describes this visit: Barnabas introduced Paul to apostles (only Peter and James according to verse 19); believers feared him initially; he debated Hellenistic Jews who tried to kill him; brethren sent him to Tarsus for safety. The Jerusalem church's initial suspicion validates Paul's point—they didn't know him. If he'd learned gospel from them, there'd be no suspicion. His sudden appearance after three years, claiming conversion and apostleship to Gentiles, would have seemed presumptuous without divine credentials. Peter's acceptance after fifteen days' fellowship confirmed Paul's gospel aligned with Jerusalem's, though Paul emphasizes he brought his gospel to Jerusalem rather than receiving theirs.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What balance exists between proper respect for church leaders and confidence in your direct relationship with Christ through Scripture?
2. What role should comparing doctrinal understanding with mature believers play in confirming truth received from God's Word?
3. Can brief but meaningful fellowship with other believers strengthen faith without creating unhealthy dependence?

Interlinear Text

Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα

Then **after** **years** **three** **I went up** **to** **Jerusalem**

G1899 G3326 G2094 G5140 G424 G1519 G2414

ιστορῆσαι Πέτρον, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας

to see **Peter** **and** **abode** **with** **him** **days**

G2477 G4074 G2532 G1961 G4314 G846 G2250

δεκαπέντε

fifteen

G1178

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