

The end of Paul's second missionary journey.

v.18 **So Paul still remained a good while:** Unlike previous cities, Paul wasn't forced out of Corinth. He stayed there **a good while**, fulfilling the promise Jesus made to him in [Acts 18:9-10](#).

He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow:

The **vow** was almost certainly the vow of a Nazirite (Numbers 6). Usually this vow was taken for a certain period of time and when completed, the hair (which had been allowed to freely grow) was cut off and offered to the Lord at a special ceremony at the temple in Jerusalem.

The purpose of the vow of a Nazirite was to express a unique consecration to God, promising to abstain from all products from the grapevine, to not cut one's hair, and to never come near a dead body.

Paul's performance of this vow shows that Jewish opposition to his preaching had not made him anti-Jewish. He never forgot that he was Jewish, His Messiah was Jewish, that Christianity is Jewish, and that Old Testament forms and rituals might still be used to good purpose. Apparently, though Paul was adamant that Jewish ceremonies and rituals must not be required of Gentiles, he saw nothing wrong with Jewish believers who wished to observe such ceremonies, presumably if their fulfillment in Jesus was also recognized.

By tradition, a Nazirite vow could only be fulfilled in Judea. Paul began this vow **at Cenchrea**, not in Judea. Paul's adoption of the vow out of the bounds dictated by Jewish tradition could indicate a desire to practice a more purely Biblical observance of Jewish rituals.

v (19-21) Paul in the city of Ephesus.

And he came to Ephesus: Paul wanted to preach in Ephesus some two years earlier, but was prevented by the Holy Spirit ([Acts 16:6](#)). Now, the Holy Spirit gave him the liberty to preach in this important city, and great results were seen.

God has a special timing for everything in our lives. If Paul could have discerned it, the Holy Spirit was really saying, "wait" when he wanted to go to Ephesus, instead of "no." Sometimes God says, "wait" and He always knows what He's doing when He says it.

They asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in

Jerusalem”: Paul could not stay long in Ephesus, wanting to present the offering of his Nazirite vow in Jerusalem at an upcoming feast.

v (22) **Gone up and greeted the church: When it says that Paul had gone *up* and greeted the church, it means he went up to Jerusalem and fulfilled his Nazirite vow in the temple.**

He went down to Antioch: Leaving Jerusalem, Paul returned to his home church in Syrian Antioch. They must have been pleased to have Paul return and tell of all his work over the previous three years or so.

Paul’s third missionary journey begins in the regions of Galatia, Phrygia, and the city of Ephesus.

v (23) **After he had spent some time there: We don’t know exactly how much**

Went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order: Since Paul’s first focus on this trip was **strengthening all the disciples**, he went back to the churches already founded on previous missionary works. This would include congregations in Tarsus, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch.

Strengthening all the disciples: Paul’s passion for building disciples, not merely making converts, was again evident. This work was important to Paul.

If Paul were to visit one of our modern congregations, he would want to know: “How strong of a disciple are you? What can I do to strengthen your walk with Jesus Christ?” He would remind us all that it isn’t enough to make a strong beginning with Jesus, but we must be always be growing in strength.

v. 24 Apollos, Hellenistic Jew from Alexandria- large educational center, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint came out of the library of this city

- Apollos was **an eloquent man**.
- Apollos was **mighty in the Scriptures**.
- Apollos had been **instructed in the way of the Lord**.
- Apollos was **fervent in spirit**. Literally this means, “to boil in the spirit” with the idea of “bubbling over with enthusiasm.” (Williams)
- Apollos **spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord**.

. **Though he knew only the baptism of John:** We see again that the reputation and work of John the Baptist was widely known throughout the Jews of the Roman Empire, reaching here as far as Alexandria.

i. Because Apollos knew of the work of John the Baptist, it is likely that he preached that the Messiah had come and we must repent and respond to Jesus, but he probably had little knowledge of the *full* person and work of Jesus Christ.

ii. “Apollos was a well-educated and also a well-traveled man. We can imagine that in his youth he had gone to Jerusalem, especially if he had an interest in the Old Testament, and while there had come under the influence of the preaching of John the Baptist.” (Boice)

Baptism of John

Turn to Matthew 3:.2 Repent- turn around and go the other way, change your mind

v.3 Quote from *Isaiah 40:1* "

v.7 Pharisees- very legalistic, not really to the law but their interpretation of the law. This is what they based their righteousness on.

Sadducees- only accepted first five books of the Bible or the Pentateuch as from God, and they rationalized away anything supernatural in those books. They could be compared to the social gospel church of today. They did not believe in afterlife at all.

-They came to see his baptism, not experience it.

-Brood of vipers- sons of serpents, sons of the devil

- wrath to come- God's wrath will be poured out one day

v.8 Bear fruit (do the works) worthy of repentance- We do not do good works to be saved but James says that their will be works as a result of our repentance and relationship with God.

c. **So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue:** Apollos didn't know much about Jesus, but what he did know was **taught accurately** – and with bold passion. He didn't know much about Jesus, but what he did know genuinely excited him.

i. “What is mentioned here is ‘fervor,’ and this means not merely skill on his part but conviction based on something deeply embedded in his heart.” (Boice)

v (26b-28) Aquila and Priscilla help Apollos.

They took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately:

Aquila and Priscilla did something valuable for God's kingdom. They helped someone who had a passion for God and at least some power in serving Him; yet he had limited knowledge and therefore limited resources for truly effective ministry.

He also **vigorously refuted the Jews**, and was able to demonstrate **from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ**. Because of these things, some scholars consider him the type of person who could have wrote the letter to the Hebrews