

***Study of Acts 17:1-31***  
***by Marc Gravelle***  
[marc@bondsevantsofYeshua.ca](mailto:marc@bondsevantsofYeshua.ca)

*Acts 17* opens with Paul arriving at Thessalonica. It says that once there, he went into the synagogue **As was his custom** and for **three Sabbaths** in a row Paul taught them about Messiah *out of the Scriptures*.

What Scriptures do you think Paul taught them out of? Please remember that there was no Apostolic Scriptures (New Testament) available at that time. Therefore Paul was telling them about Yeshua from the Hebrews Scriptures only. How many of you here today or you that are reading this teaching could teach the birth, the life, the crucifixion and resurrection and ascension into heaven of our Messiah from the Hebrew Scriptures? If you cannot do that, **THEN** it is time to realize that maybe we don't know our Scriptures as well as we ought to. Paul preached and proved out of the Hebrew Scripture that Yeshua **WAS** and **IS** the Messiah, and it says *And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks A GREAT MULTITUDE, and of the chief women NOT A FEW*. What Paul is saying is that some of the Jews believed but that a whole multitude of the Greek men and women who were in the synagogue on the Sabbath believed.

To begin with we have to understand that all these people Jews and Greeks alike are in a synagogue of the Jews, where the ways of the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Torah of Moses is taught every Sabbath, therefore **IT IS** safe to say that they were devoted to the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob even before Paul came with his Messianic Gospel message, **the TRUTH**, *Ephesians 1:13; Psalm 119:142*.

In *verse 4* it says that some Jews believed and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks, **a great multitude** along with **a great number of** the chief women believed Paul's message, **the Gospel, the Truth**, YHVH's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions. Why does it say that *some* of the Jews believed? I believe **IT IS** because many of the Jews that did **NOT** believe had their heads filled with the doctrine of the Pharisees and that made it harder for them to believe the pure teaching of Messiah, the Torah of Moses given to Moses at Mount Sinai, which is contrary to a lot **IF NOT** most of what the Pharisees believed and taught. That **IS** why Yeshua called them white washed sepulchres. In other words they had a lot of baggage to get rid of before they could believe the **TRUTH**, the message that Yeshua taught and that Paul was now repeating.

I am very sad to say that nothing has changed and that the Pharisees, the religious leaders of the houses of YHVH, Christianity and Judaism are teaching that same false message today. Therefore many people are wrongfully influenced by the doctrine of men, and because of those **FALSE DOCTRINES** they are blinded to the real **TRUTH of the Gospel** and the TRUTH of the Gospel message **IS, OBEY** My inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, My Torah and live; surrender your heart to our heavenly Father and walk in His ways, rather than the ways of man and you will have eternal life.

In *verse 5* we have a scenario that **IS** quite relevant today. We have a man of Elohim coming into a town preaching the **TRUE** Word of Elohim and many of the towns people and some of the parishioners are believing the words of this preacher, and the local church leaders speak out against this man of Elohim and call him a charlatan and want him tossed out of town. These religious leaders

**ARE JEALOUS** because so many of their followers are now drawn to the beautiful message of YHVH's **TRUTH**, while precious few are drawn to their false man made doctrinal teachings and that enrages them.

How do I know that these religious leaders were teaching the doctrines of men and not the ways of YHVH. *Verse 5* says that the Jews that did **NOT** believe, that would be the religious leaders and their followers, **WERE MOVED WITH ENVY**, and they took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. Envy **IS NOT** a fruit of the Holy Spirit of Elohim

As you can see they wanted to have Paul arrested so they went to Jason's house, where Paul was abiding, but did **NOT** find Paul there, so instead they brought Jason and certain brethren to the rulers of the city, crying that Paul, Silas, Jason and these people that they had arrested and brought before the rulers were teaching against the decrees of Caesar. So they are accusing Paul of teaching **AGAINST** the ways of Caesar **NOT** the ways of Elohim. Now we have to understand that since these religious leaders were saying that Paul and Silas who were teaching the Gospel, YHVH's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, were teaching **AGAINST** the ways and the laws of Caesar, it means that they, the religious leader had somehow embraced the laws and teachings of Caesar and incorporated them into their own teachings in their synagogues. Please understand the implications of the statement from their own mouths, and try and relate it to the teachings of the houses of the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob of today. The pastors, rabbis, preachers, shepherds of the houses of Elohim **HAVE** indeed brought in a lot of the man made teachings of the world into their houses of worship, in the very same manner that the Pharisees of Paul's days had done, they have brought the ways of the world into the houses of YHVH and are now worshipping YHVH with the man made doctrines and teaching, the same teachings that YHVH has said are filthy rags to Him..

Next we see that Jason was let go by these false accusers and right away he went and warned Paul and Silas and they left and went to Berea and it says in *verse 10* that *they went to Berea and when they arrived they went into the synagogue*. What **IS TAUGHT** in the synagogue and **ON WHAT DAY IS IT TAUGHT?** The answer **IS OF COURSE** that the Torah of Moses **IS** taught every Sabbath.

It says that the Bereans were quite willing to listen and they received Paul's words with all readiness of mind and then searched the Scriptures daily, which was their custom to see IF what Paul was saying about Elohim and about Messiah was indeed true.

Now we have to understand that it is not enough to say that the Bereans searched the Scriptures daily and leave **IT AT THAT. NO!** What does it mean when it says that they searched the Scriptures **DAILY**. It means that they had this incredible passion for the Word of Elohim and wanted **ALL** of Elohim's **TRUTH** to reign in their lives. Now knowing the passion that the Bereans had for the Word of Elohim, we have to understand that they **DID NOT** just let anyone speak in their synagogues. Whoever was going to speak in their synagogue had to be Torah obedient, there had to be outward signs of their obedience to the Torah, or reports from people they trusted that the speaker that they were about to listen to was Torah obedient. They wanted the speakers to expand on the Word of Elohim, His Torah of Life, and as far as the Bereans were concerned, a person **CANNOT** preach or speak on what they do **NOT** practice, believe and act out or do, therefore **IT IS** quite clear that at

least the Bereans were convinced that Paul walked a Torah obedient life, and therefore they were quite willing to listen to his message.

*Verse 12* is very important, now we must keep in mind that this verse **IS** speaking of the Bereans who **STUDY AND SEARCH** the Word of Elohim Daily. These are people that love and cherish and have a great burning passion for the Word of Elohim. We also must understand that the only Scriptures they had was the Torah and the Prophets. It says in *verse 12* that many of these Bereans **BELIEVED** Paul's message that Yeshua was the foretold Messiah, the Prophesied One that would bring salvation.

They believed **BECAUSE THEY COULD SEE THAT TRUTH SPELLED OUT IN THE TORAH and IN THE PROPHETS, that Paul was teaching from.** Can **YOU** make the same claim? Can you read the Torah and from the Torah alone, be convinced of the coming Messiah who will bring salvation to all that surrender to Elohim? Well **IF** you can't, then maybe you should become a Berean and search the Scriptures daily until you can find Messiah, the Prophesied Messiah in the Hebrew Scriptures.

As usual however, the dissenters were not far behind. The religious leaders of Thessalonica heard that Paul was teaching in Berea and sent their representative to speak against Paul and his message. I can assure you that for the most part that is exactly what **ALL OF US WILL FACE WHEN WE TEACH THE TRUTH**, the **TRUTH THAT** the Torah **IS** Elohim's Word and that **IT IS STILL IN FULL FORCE and VERY RELEVANT TODAY.** The Nay Sayers will speak out against you and try to turn the multitude against you and in many cases **they will be successful** and unlike the Bereans, the multitude seldom or ever **search** the Scriptures, they rely on their church leaders to do that for them, and that is a recipe for disaster, and has lead to the houses of Elohim, believing the lies of their forefathers.

*Acts 17* continues on and says that Paul went to Athens and when he was there, where do you suppose he would go to do his teaching? It is very obvious that Paul went into the local synagogue. There we are told that he disputed with Jews and with the devout persons. If I have two glasses of water, one with salt in it and the other with dirt in it, and I put them together will the salty water stay separated from the dirty water? Of course not, they will both mix and the dirty water will become salty and salty water will become dirty. That **IS** what had happened to the Jews in Athens, they had allowed Hellenistic doctrines to influence their understanding of the Word of Elohim and they were quite willing to listen to all sorts of philosophical man made doctrines that polluted their way of thinking and polluted the way that they lived.

They had heard that Paul taught and preached Yeshua and the Resurrection. The Athenians, the men of Athens wanted to learn more about Paul's doctrine so Paul stood in the midst of them and told them of the Messiah, of His crucifixion, His resurrection and His ascension into heaven to be at the Right Hand of our heavenly Father. Paul used a tactic that he thought would work well with these Athenians. Paul believed and said that in all things you Athenians are very superstitious. Paul said that he walked by an altar that was dedicated to the unknown god and used this unknown god to declare to the Athenians that it represented the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who created all things. Now at this point we have to put our thinking caps on and see what has just happened. In *Exodus 20:2-5* *I am YHVH your Elohim who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 You shalt have no other gods before Me. You shall NOT make unto yourself any*

*graven image, or any likeness of ANY THING that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: you shall NOT bow down yourself to them, nor serve them.* Yet here Paul is using an image, or a statue of an **UNKNOWN god** and claiming it to represent the Elohim of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. Although Paul has the right intentions, his tactics contravene the very Torah that he is about to teach these Athenians. How do you think that this tactic will work out for him?

We have to understand that the Word of Elohim **DOES NOT** need any gimmicks to convince people for YHVH Himself has said that His Word **DOES NOT** come back to Him void **BUT** that **IT DOES ACCOMPLISH EVERYTHING HE SENT IT OUT TO DO**. Paul brought mixture into his teaching of the Word of Elohim and because of that he was not successful in adding any believers to his ranks. Instead of preaching the Word of Elohim directly from the Scriptures, Paul tried to bring something in that he thought would help them understand and maybe convince them to accept Yeshua as their Lord and Saviour, **BUT IT DID NOT WORK**. Every other time that Paul preached from the Scriptures it says that *many* or sometimes *some* believed. But here in Athens when he used the statue of *an unknown god* to describe the Elohim of creation, the best interest he could muster up is the people saying, we will hear you again in this matter and others simply mocked his message. It says that Paul then departed from among them.

*Acts 17* concludes with saying, *albeit certain men believed*. A man called Dionysius and a woman named Damaris and others with them. Paul's heart was right but his method was flawed and as we read on in the Book of Acts and other epistles we see that he never again uses this kind of tactic; from that point on, Paul only preaches the Word of Elohim as found in the Scriptures.

One other thing I would like to mention and it is found in this verse. Next time that you look at a Black man or a Native man or a Brown man or an Asian man please remember this verse, *and YHVH has made of ONE BLOOD ALL NATIONS OF MEN to dwell on the face of the earth*.

That statement alone from the Creator of the universe does away with the teaching of the evolutionists, which states that we come from a rock or a primordial soup or from apes. By making all nations of **ONE BLOOD** YHVH has made us all equal as brothers and sisters.

I hope that that makes it easier for you now to pray for **ALL** the peoples of the world for indeed you are praying for your brother and or your sister. *Amein*

*Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.*

*Have a great Elohim blessed week and may Yahweh bless your every thought, and your every deed. Until we meet again, שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם, Shalom Aleykem. Amein*