

May 29, 2022

For Such A Time As This

Acts 18:18-28

Prel Rmks

Second Journey Ends → Third Journey Begins

LOGW ~ v. 23 ~ Read

(18) So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. **(19)** And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. **(20)** When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, **(21)** but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus. **(22)** And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. **(23)** After he had spent some time *there*, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

(24) Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. **(25)** This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. **(26)** So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. **(27)** And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; **(28)** for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

INTRODUCTION

We see → the people & timing of God

God's providence in carrying out His eternal purposes

- He uses people
- He places them / moves them where He wants them
- {Map Charlotte placed on front of the bulletin}
- He places them there at the precise time He wants them there
 - We are alive today ...
 - We live where we do ...

{Earlier this week . . .} – Esther 4:14

{Sometimes I hear people say, and I've said it myself: "I wish I could have lived back in the day, in some previous time." – NO!}

{JMac quote:

The Bible teaches that God is at work in everything that happens and nothing occurs outside His will. Everything we experience is within the context of God's plan to accomplish His own ends. We commonly use two words to describe God's work of bringing about His will: *providence* and *miracles*. A miracle is when He suspends natural law and intervenes supernaturally. Providence is when He takes natural events—millions and billions of apparently disconnected activities—and pulls them all together to create exactly what He wants, without violating natural laws or human actions.

In a sense, providence is a greater miracle than a *miracle*. For God to stop the natural flow and inject a supernatural outcome is a one-dimensional act on His part. For God to cause His own will to be accomplished through myriad independent exigencies is a miracle beyond comprehension. And that's exactly how He operates the entire universe in which we live.

We've all heard people say, "I'm not comfortable with a view of divine sovereignty that takes away human will." But God's sovereignty does not nullify or do violence to the will of any creature. Furthermore, rightly understood, the doctrine of divine sovereignty is the most comforting and liberating truth of all. I don't want to live in a world where God is not in charge. That would be a frightening, terrifying existence. The fact that every single event in the universe fits perfectly into the will and purposes of our eternally kind, gracious, and good God—that is a massive concept with massive benefits and implications.

[That's what we'll see in our text today:

Paul 18-23

Apollos 24-28

Aquila & Priscilla 18, 26

I. Paul 18-23

Paul was:

- A high caliber leader – great organizational and leadership skills
- An intellectual – great mind & highly educated
- Steeped in knowledge of the Bible – O.T.
- A man of great zeal and motivation

(18) So Paul still remained **a good while**.

- Corinth was a place of encouragement and reinvigoration for Paul
- A city that was morally & spiritually corrupt

Then he took leave of the brethren and **sailed for Syria**, and **Priscilla and Aquila** *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken **a vow**.

- Numbers 6
- Hair
- Fruit of the vine
- Could touch nothing dead, defiling → unclean
- Why would Paul do this?
 - Acts = transition
 - From the Jewish faith to Christianity
 - {ex: Peter & John – time of prayer}

(19) And he came to **Ephesus**,

- previously forbidden

and **left them there**;

A & P

but he himself **entered the synagogue** and reasoned with the Jews.

- (v.6)

(20) When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, **(21)** but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus.

(22) And when he had landed at **Caesarea**,

- w coast of Palestine

and **gone up and greeted the church**,

- Jerusalem

he went down to Antioch.

- Syria - home / sending church

(23) After he had **spent some time there**,

- reporting ~ resting ~ ministering

he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples.

- Beginning of 3rd Missionary Journey

[...]

II. Apollos 24-28

Introduced to a new personality – would become somewhat prominent: especially in Corinth

(24) Now a certain Jew named Apollos,

- named after the Greek god Apollo

born at Alexandria,

- a great center of learning

an eloquent man

- a “man of words” / great oratorical skills
- “wordsmith”

and mighty in the Scriptures,

came to Ephesus.

(25) This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord;

- large Jewish community in Alexandria – 1/3

and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord,

- He knew what the Messiah would be like

though he knew only the baptism of John.

(26) So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue.

When Aquila and Priscilla heard him,

they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

(27) And when he desired to cross to **Achaia**,

- Roman Province: Athens & Corinth

the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him;

and when he arrived, he greatly helped **those who had believed through grace**;

(28) for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

- William Perkins – English Puritan,

AT&T 8:34 AM 100%

“The sum and substance of the message of the Bible can be summarized in an argument (or syllogism) such as this:
Major Premise: The true Messiah shall be both God and man, from the seed of David. He shall be born of his heavenly Father’s bosom. He shall satisfy the law. He shall offer himself as a sacrifice for the sins of the faithful. He shall conquer death by dying and rising again. He shall ascend into heaven. In due time he shall return for judgment. *Minor Premise:* Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Mary, meets all of these requirements. *Conclusion:* Therefore Jesus is the true Messiah.”[5]

Perkins does not just see the Gospels or the New Testament developing this theme. Rather, he argues that the whole of the Bible is concerned with Christ. What he describes as the “major premise” of the
 reformation21.org — Private

[...]

III. Aquila and Priscilla 18, 26

(18) So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and **Priscilla and Aquila were with him**. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.

(26) So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When **Aquila and Priscilla heard him**,

- Ap

they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

v. 2

- Claudius, Emperor of Rome – 41-54
- Decree expelling all Jews from Rome 49
- Seutonius, Roman historian, biographies of 12 successive Roman emperors:
 - “Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he (Claudius) expelled them from Rome.”
- Here’s the picture:
 - A group of Christians are faithfully evangelizing in Rome
 - Claudius thinks this is just a sect of the Jews ...
 - He expels all Jews from Rome in 49
 - A & P have to move: land in Corinth
 - Paul comes to Corinth – A & P help him ...
 - They sail with Paul to Ephesus
 - Apollos comes to Ephesus
 - A & P helped Apollos understand the Scripture and the way of God more accurately

Conclusion

1. What a God we serve! – Providence is greater than a miracle!
2. We are here for such a time as this!