

Title: "A Fortnight in Jerusalem"

Passage: Galatians 1:18-24

Theme: Part two of Paul's defense of his thesis (vv. 11-12)

Number: 0914Ga1.18-24(10)

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{{Read Passage}}

[i] How long is a coon's age?

In England: "Donkey's years"

How often does something happen if it's once in a blue moon?

Can a "jiffy" be measured? // "wink of an eye"?

What's "a fortnight?"

"Coon's age" refers to t/lifespan of a raccoon (in captivity: 15 yrs) so it's similar to saying "a dog's age."

"Donkey's years" = much the same.

"Once in a blue moon" = refers to t/rare occurrence of a single month in which there are 2 full moons. (full moons are about 29.5 days apart)
OR a season w/4 full moons rather than t/usual 3. (every 2-3 yrs).

"A fortnight" = 14 days (2 weeks).

As we see in v. 18 – Paul stayed w/Peter a fortnight plus 1 (15 days).

"A Fortnight in Jerusalem"

[ii] Last week we worked our way through vv. 13-17 ==>

"Jesus Not Jerusalem"

That was Paul's first defense of his thesis statement of vv. 11-12 {cite}

[iii] Context: 1:6-9 - Judaizers

V. 7, "there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel."

IOT do that, pervert t/gospel, they had to do what? They had to discredit t/Gospel Paul preached to these Gal. CH's.

Doesn't take a lettered Bible scholar to see that they were calling into ? Paul's apostleship.

False teachers were saying Paul was an imitation, or 2d rate apostle. Wasn't of same pedigree as those in Jerus. // 1 of t/orig. 12 Apostles.

They were saying that he was inferior & subject to those in Jerusalem (under their authority).

"Don't listen to Paul – He wasn't with Jesus in His ministry on earth. Who is Paul to be telling you this nonsense that t/law isn't required for salvation."

Verses 11-12 = Paul's thesis / truth proposition:

Paul's gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel!

[iv] Apostolic Credibility

Paul is est. that he was taught by t/same Jesus & had t/same Gospel.

Peter and other members of t/orig. 12 A's learned from Jesus directly – so did Paul – just a little differently. (Damascus / Arabia).

In building his case, he will point out that they did agree as to the Gospel (later in chapter 2).

Judaizers were misrepresenting Jerusalem as well as Paul.

[v] Paul's response ==>

"I didn't get t/gospel I preach from a man. I wasn't converted under t/authority of t/Jer. A's – and I wasn't taught by them after I came to faith, either." (they didn't convert me // disciple me).

"[My] gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel!"

Beg. w/v. 13 we have what's been cf. to a courtroom drama where Paul takes on t/role of defense attorney as he syst. unfolds a 4-part defense of his unique authority as an A.

Vv. 13-17 – First Defense of His Thesis

Vv. 18-24 – Second Defense (“then”).

2:1-10 (“then”) - marks Paul's 3d defense.

2:11 “but” - begins Paul's 4th defense.

Last week ==>

I. Paul's First Defense: Jesus Not Jerusalem (vv. 13-17)

Using t/1st person in our outline (3 pts.)

A. “Who I Was” (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14

B. “What I Am” (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a

C. “Where I Went” (Paul's Post-Conversion Trip to Arabia) – vv. 16b-17

A. “Who I Was” (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14

Who he was before he came to know JC.

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism . . .

1. ἐν Ἰουδαϊσμός = In the NT – a word only found here & v. 14

(1) Refers to a well-defined religious worldview

Paul was a Jew, but no longer part of that system which he puts in apposition to the CH of God.

2. He goes into details / specifics – does so negatively and positively

a. Negatively (v. 13)

. . . I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it;

b. Positively (v. 14)

And I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my people, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions.

For Paul ==> Suddenly, unexpectedly, the

A. “Who I Was” (Paul's Pre-Conversion Life as a Jew) – vv. 13-14

Gave way to the ==>

B. “What I Am” (Paul's Conversion to Christ) – vv. 15-16a

But when He who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me in order that I might preach the gospel among the Gentiles . . .

C. “Where I Went” (Paul's Post-Conversion Trip to Arabia) – vv. 16b-17

16 . . . I immediately did not consult with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me; but I went up to Arabia and again returned to Damascus.

Ends Paul's first Defense (vv. 13-17) – all about t/fact that his conversion was dramatic & could not be explained apart from God's sov. work in His life (Damascus).

God who marked him out // call him // commissioned him.

When he came to be a X-follower, he didn't go to Jerusalem but went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus.

But he did eventually make it to Jerusalem . . .

I. Paul's Second Defense: Only A Fortnight In Jerusalem (vv. 18-24)

Cover all 7 verses this morning. Outline - "P" (x6).

Purpose; Promise; Polemic; Privacy; Power; Praise.

Paul's first trip to Jerusalem following his conversion was to be introduced to Peter – not to the gospel!

I. Paul's Second Defense: Only A Fortnight In Jerusalem (vv. 18-24)

A. Purpose: "To Know Peter Not the Gospel" (18-19)

Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas and I remained with him fifteen days.

1. When did Paul go to Jerusalem? "after three years"

Greek phrase [^] could refer to a time period ranging from 2 to 3 yrs ("in the third year").

a. "In the third year" after what? His conversion

Word "then" (v18) picks up t/thought of t/word "immediately" (v16).
{cite t/2 vv. together}

Paul is converted in Damascus, he spends 2-3 yrs. there & in Arabia.
Then he goes to Jer.

Why?

A. Purpose: “To Know Peter Not the Gospel” (18-19)

IOW – this wasn't a visit to learn from Peter or to have Peter critique Paul's theology. Was more of a social visit.

Meaning of t/word used here (only found here in t/NT):

“To visit with the purpose of coming to know someone.”

2. No doubt they talked about more than the weather

Don't picture them sitting on t/porch w/a glass of wine munching on bagels talking about t/latest chariot races!

As St. Jerome put it: Paul did not go to Jerusalem “to look at Peter’s eyes, cheeks, and face, to see if he was fat or thin, whether his nose was hooked or straight, whether he had a fringe of hair across his brow or was bald.” [cited in George, 127]

a. Fellowship!

Think of all that Peter could share w/him about his 3 years with Jesus. This was b4 any of t/Gospel accounts had been written.

John 1:42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him, and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

Κηφᾶς – Paul's common title for Peter. Aramaic word meaning “rock” or “stone”. Only in Gal. 2:7-8 does Paul call him “Peter”

No insult, no mere formality. Perhaps Paul used Κηφᾶς as a way to emphasize Peter's character. He was brazen, tough – rock.

I was there when Jesus healed my mother in law.

Feeding of t/5000

Walking out onto t/Sea, with its “Lord, save me!”

*T/confession of his faith, "Thou art t/Christ, t/Son of the living God."
Miracle of t/Transfiguration*

Failures – “Surely that will never happen to you” & subsequent rebuke, “Get thee behind me, Satan!”

Peter's denial of X.

Victory of grace – Appearance of X after his resur. days spent w/him b4 t/ascension.

Day of Pentecost.

Unfettered progress of t/gospel thru all opposition - growth of t/CH.

Think about all Paul could tell Peter about his former life as a renegade Jew

& how he was so dramatically converted.

Those days in Damascus & later in Arabia preaching X and learning from Him.

To be a fly on the wall!

Paul would have learned much from Peter (and Peter from Paul).

They both sat at t/feet of X – under diff. circum.

They both were chosen, called, commission – in different ways.

But one thing that neither learned from the other was the gospel!

Only 15 days! – a fortnight in Jerusalem.

By the time we get to 2:1 we are 14 years after his conversion.
In total, Paul only spent 15 days in Jerusalem out of 14 years.

b. Why did Paul wait 3 years before going to Jerusalem?

Not aloofness // rivalry.

Rem.: Paul was a wanted man in Jer.

Rem. he was on his way to Damascus from Jer. with letters from the H.P. there to arrest Xns!

3. Point: Paul was not a disciple of Peter! – or of anyone else in Jerusalem – as he makes clear in v. 19 ==>

But I did not see any of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

a. This is the James of Acts 15 (early leader in the Jerusalem CH)

... James, the Lord's brother.

He is the first listed among the 4 brothers of Jesus - indicate he was t/oldest of Jesus' brothers – 2d to Jesus himself, of course.

This James was skeptical about Jesus' ID

He was converted when he became a witness of t/resurr. (1 Cor. 15:7)

By t/time you get to Acts 1:14 he's included w/the early followers of J.

After Peter left Jerusalem (Acts 12:17) James became the leader there.

James was martyred in AD 62 when the HP Annas, led a persecution of Xns in Jerusalem (cf. Josephus Ant. 20.200).

Sometimes referred to as “James the Just” (evidence of his integrity).

(1) Brother?

Was he Jesus' blood bro. (Mary have other children) // step // cousin?
Debate that goes back to t/3d or 4th c.
RC's – perpetual virginity of Mary.

ECF Tertullian (160 – 220c) appears to teach what was t/common view of t/day that Jesus had other biological brothers (1/2 brothers).

Later, that view was affirmed by Helvidius of Rome (aprox. 380).
This view (Mary had other children after J.) = Helvidian.

Going back to an ancient writing (*The Protevangelium of James*) that dates to 150 AD there was another view that emerged – the siblings of Jesus were children from a previous marriage of Joseph – this view was defended by Epiphanius (c. 315-403). Epiphanian view.

Jerome argued that Jesus' “brothers” were first cousins, the sons of Alphaeus and Mary of Clopas—he inferred from John 19:25 to be the Virgin Mary's sister (cf. Mark 15:40). Jerome was defending t/perpetual virginity of Mary in his opposition to Helvidius.
This view is called Hieronymian.

I agree w/NT scholar Richard Longenecker ==>

“The controversy obviously has been occasioned by doctrinal interests. [ie. the growing cult of Mariology] Apart from such polemical considerations, there appears to be no reason to regard James as anything other than Jesus' uterine brother.” [Longenecker, 39]

This isn't a make it or break it gospel issue. Some argue that Calvin held to Mary's PV. Luther apparently did.

While Mary's PV does support t/RC “cult of Mary” it doesn't necessitate it. Exegesis / αδελφος.

(2) Apostle?

Issue of translation: Is Paul referring to James as an “apostle?”

Is Paul saying ==>

“I saw none of t/other apostles, [I only saw] James the Lord's brother.”
or

“The only other apostles I saw was James the Lord's brother.”

The more natural reading would be the latter (cf. Moo, 110).

I. Paul's Second Defense: Only A Fortnight In Jerusalem (vv. 18-24)

A. Purpose: “To Know Peter Not the Gospel” (18-19)

2d point ==>

B. Promise: “The Truth, t/Whole Truth, & Nothing But t/Truth” (20)
(Now, I testify, before God, that I am not lying in what I write to you!)

1. Interesting – Why would Paul add this here?

Read between t/lines – appears that t/Judaizers were claiming that it was during Paul's 1st visit to Jerusalem that he learned t/gospel from the leaders there & they also gave him t/authority to be an apostle.

Paul seals his words w/an oath [^]

In Roman culture this was a way of saying ==>

“I am so sure of what I'm saying that I'm willing to stand trial for it.”

In Jewish culture, making a vow was serious business.

As children: “swear to God?” hopefully we took that seriously (many probl. didn't).

For a Jew – you didn't tread upon t/divine name in your lie. Invitation for God to pour out His wrath upon you!

C. Polemic: “Getting out of Dodge” (21) . . . Jerusalem
By “polemic” I mean “defense” - even “alibi”

Then

Ἐπειτα = another time marker (as in v. 18).

I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

1. Chronology

Paul's 1st post-conversion trip to Jer = 1:18-20.

His second post-conversion trip = 2:1-10.

Between those two trips is the εὐαγγελίζεται of v. 23 {cite}

Paul spent 15 days in Jerusalem and then went

. . . into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

To evangelize.

τῆς Συρίας = not t/entire nation, but t/district - area around Antioch.

καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας = district around his hometown of Tarsus.

According to BOA, Paul's first Jerusalem visit ended when his attempts to evangelize t/Jews stirred up persecution against him.

To save his life, the Jerusalem believers "took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus" (Acts 9:30). [^]

a. Acts 9

Acts 9 – 19 . . . for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus, 20 . . . and he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, “He is the Son of God.” 21 All those hearing him continued to be amazed, and were saying, “Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and who had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?” 22 But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding the Jews who lived at Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

Galatians 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.

23 When many days had elapsed, the Jews plotted together to do away with him, 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were also watching the gates day and night so that they might put him to death; 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a large basket.

Paul refers to his in 2 Corinthians 11:32–33 ==>

32 In Damascus the ethnarch under Aretas the king was guarding the city of the Damascenes in order to seize me, 33 and I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and so escaped his hands.

Paul was converted, baptized, began to preach in Damascus, went to Arabia for a time to preach there. He suffered some kind of opposition and returned to Damascus where a conspiracy was hatched to take his life. He was lowered in a large basket at night to escape. Then he went to Jerusalem.

26 And when he had come to Jerusalem,

18 Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas and I remained with him fifteen days.

he was trying to associate with the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple.

19 But I did not see any of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

27 But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how at Damascus he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus.

28 And he was with them moving about freely in Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death.

30 But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

31 So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and, going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.

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G. Privacy: "Incognito in Judea" (22)

But I was still unknown by face among the churches of Judea in Christ.

1. But he was in Jerusalem which is in Judea – how could he be unknown?

Beyond that he was notorious in Jerusalem as a Christian – persecuting Jew

He was notorious in Jerusalem ==>

Before Herod Agrippa in Acts 26:10 **“And this is just what I did in Jerusalem; not only did I lock up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, but also when they were being put to death I cast my vote against them.”**

When he says ==>

But I was still unknown by face among the churches of Judea in Christ.

He's not talking specifically about Jerusalem here, but about t/greater outlying areas of Judea.

“Evidently Paul appeared publicly in Jerusalem and was known to many believers there. He said that he saw none of the apostles except Peter and James (perhaps because the others were out of the city at the time), not that he saw no other believers except these two. However, the province of Judea was much larger than the city of Jerusalem; it is

thus perfectly reasonable to suppose that many of the country churches in this area, while having heard of Paul, could hardly have picked him out of a lineup.” [George, 132]

Paul was known by some members of the Jerusalem church both before and after his conversion. It was the household congregations in Jerusalem that he had ravaged when he was a persecutor. His was an urban strategy of persecution—first Jerusalem, then Damascus, just like his later urban strategy of evangelism. Paul had not dealt with the outlying congregations and of course he had not persecuted those who were only converted in Judea after Paul’s own conversion. Paul’s point in saying what he does is in part to make clear that he owed nothing of his Gospel or ministry to these other churches in Judea either. Finally, notice that Paul speaks here of these assemblies being ‘in Christ’, which seems to have a locative sense here. Just as Paul had previously been ‘in Judaism’ so now he and Christian congregations were ‘in Christ’ as a distinct and distinguishable bounded social entity. [Witherington, 124–125]

What's really important here isn't whether or not Paul could be recognized. That was t/furthest thing from his mind. His concern was t/glory of God, not men.

Next point ==>

H. Power: “From Persecutor to Preacher” (23)

But they were only hearing that, “he who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy.”

1. Continuous sense here:

The imperfect . . . emphasizes the continuance of the action, 'they kept on hearing'

H. Power: "From Persecutor to Preacher" (23)

... "he who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

2. τὴν πίστιν = the body of truth which is Christianity

It is "the faith" that we're to continue in, firmly established – "the faith" that is t/hope of t/Gospel. (Col. 1:23).

It is "the faith" that t/Spirit tells us some will fall away from, turning instead to doctrines of demons (1 Timothy 4:1)

It is "the faith" that some have wandered away from (1 Timothy 6:10)

It is "the faith" that we're to fight the good fight of, taking hold of the eternal life to which we were called (1 Timothy 6:12)

It is "the faith" that t/good servant of JC is to keep to t/very end:

2 Timothy 4:7 **I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;**

Titus 1:1 TAP speaks of ==>

"the faith" *of those chosen of God -and- *the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness,

... "he who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith he once tried to destroy."

1:13 ... **how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it;** (Same word: πόρθεω = to destroy, pillage)

I. Praise: "Soli Deo Gloria!" (24)

And they were glorifying God in me.

A. "In me" (some translations have "because of me")

Literally, "in me." We don't want to get the wrong idea that Paul had something to do with it.

God in me // X in me.

Back to what we saw in v. 16 ==>

... **[God] was pleased to reveal His Son in me** ...

Back to v. 12 ==>

... **I received [the gospel] through a revelation of Jesus Christ.**

Objective Genitive.

Christ is the Gospel!

"I received the Gospel when JC was revealed to me in all his Glory."

X is the object, the substance.

Union with Christ (we are in Christ and Christ is in us).

2:20 **"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.**

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H. Power: "From Persecutor to Preacher" (23)

I. Praise: "Soli Deo Gloria!" (24)

Sum up Paul's argument

II. Observations . . .

A. What Do We Make of Paul's "Revelation From Jesus" (v. 12)?

Review "Jesus not Jerusalem" (v. 15-17).

= dangerous? We have all kinds of nuts out there who claim Jesus spoke to them or appeared to them / heretical teaching.

This is descriptive, not normative.

Paul was an OT scholar – it wasn't like he didn't know t/written Word. Also an Apostle = OT prophet. Unique situation. B4 canon of t/NT.

Add: The revelation Paul received was consistent w/the rich teaching of t/OT as well as t/larger revelation of JC through t/rest of t/Apostles.

B. Be Content With Where God Has You

BTIM – don't try to be something you're not or think that you have to be great in order to greatly serve God. Rest in His Sov. appt.

How Paul lived:

Philippians 4:11 **Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.**

Paul was a rising star w/i Judaism. He was content to trade all of that to be "in Christ". X was enough! He didn't have to be t/star pupil.

He went from being loved, to being hated. From being out front to being t/scenes (Damascus – alone in Arabia – 3 years – unknown to most in Judea – at least by face). 14 years total o/s of Jerus.

Proverbs 27:2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

And they were glorifying God in me.

Soli Deo Gloria

C. What Do Others See In You (v. 24)?

Do they see t/transforming power of the Gospel (cf. Ryken, 31).

Philip Ryken ==>

The gospel will do the same thing in our lives that it did in Paul's life. Not exactly same thing, of course, because there was only one Paul. But it is the same gospel. Perhaps we have never persecuted anyone, or kidnapped people, or voted for their execution. But we are still sinners who need the gospel. We are evil by nature, and thus we need the gospel to take us from are to where we ought to be.

Paul went from persecutor to preacher.

Ryken speaks about a man who was went from t/mafia to ministry. "Tom". Tom's grandfather was a criminal who helped bring organized crime from Sicily to America. Tom was a hard man. When he was only ten years old, during one of the many beatings he received from his father, he vowed that he would never shed another tear as long as he lived. He became a thief, an extortionist, and a murderer. Eventually he became the number-two man in the New York mafia. His heart was so cold that when hardened criminals looked into his eyes, they saw nothing but death.

God began to call him, but he resisted that call. He thought that God could have no power over him, and that God would kill him for his sins anyway, So he decided to kill himself. As he put t/gun to his head, the phone rang. It was a man who had been inviting him to his church. Just to prove that God did not have any power over him, he decided to go to church after all. When the service was finish met the minister at the back door of the church. The minister said to "I have something I want to say to you, but I don't want to offend you. The eyes are the windows of the soul. When you first came in here, I looked into your eyes, and all I could see was a little boy crying, wanting to be loved."

By saying this, the pastor exposed Tom's most painful secret. But he did not want anyone to know that he had a weakness, so he went to the church later that night to murder the minister. When he got to the church, he found to his amazement that he couldn't go through with it. As the two men began to talk, the minister gave him the gospel. The man laughed and said, "f these people in this church found out who I was, they'd throw both of us out of here. I'm probably the biggest sinner you'll ever see if you live to be a million years old."

And he began to recount all his crimes. He wanted to convince the minister that he was so bad that God was about to kill him; he was just one step ahead of God. But what he was really doing was confessing his sins. Before he knew it, Tom the gangster found himself kneeling on the ground, with thirty years of tears freely flowing down his cheeks, confessing JC as his Lord and Savior. He went on to become a prison evangelist. [Ryken, 35-36]

Paul went from persecutor to preacher.

Tom went from the Mafia to ministry

You?

Maybe like me you went from religion to regeneration.

Love of self to love of Jesus.

Whatever God saved you out of, or whatever He may have spared you from, let's endeavor to live in such a way that others may see X in us.

Brothers and sisters, may you and I so live that Christian people may glorify God in us! May they often wonder at the mighty grace which has wrought such a change in us. And as they see us zealous and fervent, may they marvel at the amazing grace of God that has brought us to be so [near] to Christ!

[Charles Spurgeon]