



## Entering Thessalonica Acts 15:36-41; 16:6-11; 17:1-10

A church made up of Jews and Gentiles had formed in the city of Antioch. Prior to this church most believers were Jewish. The Jewish Christians continued to keep the Law of Moses, but what about the Gentiles? What were they to do since they were not Jewish? Did they need to keep the Law too? A group of legalistic men called judaizers, or as I call, law-lovers declared the Gentiles had to be circumcised and follow the Law of Moses, otherwise the Gentile believers would not really be saved (15:1). These law-lovers were sincere. They were coming from the perspective of the law of Moses which was works based. The dispensation of law was transitioning to grace, so there was uncertainty in the church.

Paul and Barnabas had a great argument with these law-lovers (Acts 15:2). Paul and Barnabas left Antioch and headed to Jerusalem to find answers from the apostles. The apostle Peter gave a speech and said, "We believe through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved" (Acts 15:11).

The determination was made that the Gentiles are not under the Law (Acts 15:19-20). The apostles wrote a letter to the church in Antioch which two prophets, Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32) left Jerusalem and delivered to Antioch. Paul and Barnabas went with them. And they remained in Antioch for some time (Acts 15:35).

Acts 15:36: **And some days after.** The text doesn't say how long, Paul and Barnabas left Antioch to **visit our brethren in every city where we have preached...** This is the second missionary journey of Paul.

They began in Syria and moved into Cilicia. Then Paul came to Derbe and Lystra. What is notable about this is that in Lystra Paul meets Timotheus for the first time. Timothy joined Paul on the journey. Timothy's mother was a Jew but believed in Jesus; his father was a Greek. Therefore, Timothy was not circumcised, but "because of the Jews" and he was traveling with Paul, Timothy was circumcised.

They continued their missionary journey, visiting churches they had planted until they received the "Macedonia Call" (Acts 16:9-11). **Therefore loosing from Troas.** They loosened the sails; set sail and headed for Macedonia where Thessalonica is located.

## Acts 17:1-10 Entering Thessalonica

### Verses 1-3–

**Synagogue.** A meeting place for the Jewish people on the Sabbath. They also met on Monday and Thursday. The Shema was read and recited, Deuteronomy 6:4-9. They prayed, and they read the Law of Moses (Acts 15:21). It was also the place of judicial administrative functions, and even punishment to lawbreakers. Paul received 40 lashes minus 1, in a synagogue (2 Corinthians 11:24; cf. Deuteronomy 25:3).

**Reasoned with them out of the Scriptures.** When Paul taught in the synagogue he always reasoned from the Scriptures and persuaded (cf. Acts 18:4). What did he teach? The gospel, **Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead.**

**This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.** The Messiah or anointed One.

What was the result?

### Verse 4 –

**Some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas.** They believed, meaning, they were convinced of everything Paul said. Consorted means “to cast one’s lot”. When you cast your lot with someone you are joining their fate, good or bad. **Devout Greeks.** The word in Greek is Hellen, and it probably means Greek speaking Jews. They read the LXX (Septuagint: the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures) rather than the Hebrew. There were a lot of them in this synagogue due to its location. **The chief women not a few.** The Greek word for chief is *protos* which means “first or foremost” so these were the prominent women in the synagogue.

Yet not all Jews in Thessalonica believed.

### Verse 5, 6 –

**Believed not.** Greek word is *apeitheo*. **Moved with envy.** This was a fierce envy or indignation. So much was their anger and hatred for this new teaching they **took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort.** Evil men who just wanted to stir up trouble. **Baser sort.** Paid troublemakers. The word baser is *agoraios* the agora was the marketplace, so these were men who loitered around the marketplace. The Jewish non-believers rounded up a lot of these guys and caused a riot, **set all the city on an uproar**, throwing the whole city into confusion.

**Assaulting the house of Jason.** They evidently thought Jason was hiding Paul in his house.

**These who have turned the world upside down and are come hither also.** Paul is being accused of spreading his message of Christ worldwide—evidently the news has spread!

### Verse 7 –

**There is another king.** The Greek word for another is actually “a different” king. He is being accused of delegitimizing the Roman emperor or king.

**Verse 8, 9–**

**They troubled the people.** They put doubt into their mind.

**Verses 10-14–**

**The brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night.** For their protection, those who believed and were part of the church helped sneak them out of town.

**Went into the synagogue** (in Berea) **of the Jews.** Nothing would stop these men from sharing the good news.

The **Jews** from Thessalonica heard that Paul and Silas were in Berea and the **came thither also, and stirred up the people.**

Paul seems to be the one they are after. **Immediately the brethren sent away Paul but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.**

**Opposition to the gospel does not stop. Christians who preach Jesus Christ and live godly lives will never be at rest completely.**