

Psalm eleven says, "The Lord tests the righteous and the wicked." There are numerous situations of this kind throughout the Bible. Sometimes the goal and instruments God uses are explained in the text itself, facilitating the reader's comprehension.

Other times, however, the meaning is not that clear and depends upon revelation from the Holy Spirit. Below we will provide just one example from the New Testament Book of Acts, chapter twenty-one.

We read that while the Apostle Paul was at Tyre, believers there told him through the Spirit not to go on to Jerusalem. A little later, while he was in Caesarea, a Prophet by the name of Agabus came down from Judea and showed him that he would be arrested in Jerusalem and given over to the Gentiles. When the brothers heard this, they began to urge him not to go ahead with his plan.

One of the most erroneous ideas put forward to explain this incident is that Paul's last journey was made in opposition to definite warning from the Holy Spirit. Such an interpretation does not stand the test of the Apostle's character, let alone that of Scripture.

When the prophecy later came to pass and he was imprisoned, we are told, "the Lord stood near him," and told him that as he had testified in Jerusalem, he was now to testify in Rome!