

## **Paul in Trouble and on Trial (Acts 21:1-40, 22:1-30, 25:1-37)**

### I. Introduction

#### A. *This Week in Clear Living*

1. Paul was warned to avoid Jerusalem (21:1-26)
2. The rioters tried to kill Paul (21:27-36)
3. Paul made a request of the Commander (21:37-40)
4. Paul told his conversion story (22:1-21)
5. Paul announced his Roman citizenship (22:22-30)
6. Paul appeared before Festus (25:1-8)
7. Paul appealed to Caesar (25:9-22)
8. Paul appeared before Agrippa (25:23-27)

**Question:** Why was Paul willing to go to Jerusalem even though the trip might put him in grave danger? Why were the Jews so upset with him?

#### B. Paul was willing to risk his life to spread the gospel.

1. In Acts 21:1-3, the ship landed and unloaded its cargo.
2. In verse 4, some brethren warned him about returning to Jerusalem.
3. In verses 5-9, Paul traveled by ship to Ptolemais and Caesarea.
  - a. At Caesarea, he met up with Philip, one of the original seven deacons.
  - b. Philip had four daughters that were prophets.
    - 1) Phoebe was a deaconess in Romans 16:1.
    - 2) Philip's daughters were prophets (*propheteuo* - to prophesy, to be a prophet, speak forth by divine inspirations, to predict).
  - c. The Lord only seems to limit a woman's role so far as being a pastor.
- d. **Can a woman be a pastor and Scripturally correct?**
  - 1) Elder - a man of spiritual maturity
  - 2) Bishop - overseer
  - 3) Shepherd - having the gift of pastoring
  - 4) Preacher - being a public proclaimer
  - 5) Teacher - explainer of Scripture
  - 6) Servant - a minister to all
  - 7) Messenger - bearer of God's revelation
4. In verses 10-12, another prophet, Agabus, warned Paul not to go to Jerusalem.

#### C. In verses 13-17, Paul expressed a desire to be obedient to the Lord's will.

1. **Acts 21:13 says**, "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, ***but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.***"
2. Paul was ready to die.
3. He was willing to die if that was the Lord's will.
4. Most people ignore the temporary aspects of this life and place greater significance to daily activities.

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- a. If we truly focus on eternal matters, then we will strive to order our lives after the Holy Spirit's leading.
  - b. Similarly, we will focus our speech after God's will, too.
  - c. **In this life, the only truly important thing is to do the Lord's will with our life and in our life.**
- D. In verses 27-40, some Jews saw that Paul was in Jerusalem and stirred up a mob against him.
1. In verse 28, they accused him of polluting the temple by bringing in Greeks.
  2. In verse 30-33, they started beating Paul but stopped when they saw the authorities approaching.
  3. They were ready to kill him.
  4. **His crime was telling people about Jesus.**
  5. In verses 37-40, Paul asked if he could address the crowd.

**Question:** Why was the guard willing to let Paul speak to the crowd from the stairs leading to the jail? Why did Paul tell the guards that he was a Roman citizen?

- II. The Guard let Paul speak from the stairs of the castle.
- A. Paul was allowed to speak because he was a Roman citizen.
  - B. In Acts 22:1-21, he did what every Christian can do. **He shared his testimony.**
    1. In verse 3, he told them that he was Jewish and that he had been trained by Gamaliel.
    2. In verses 4-6, he told them that he had once persecuted Christians.
    3. In verses 7-13, he shared his conversion experience.
    4. In verse 20, he told them that he had consented to Stephen's death.
    5. *Most people need to know how the Lord can help them rather than all of the theological issues of our Faith.*
  - C. In verses 22-30, the crowd turned against him again.
    1. In verse 24, the chief captain planned to interrogate Paul by scourging.
    2. Scourging was extremely cruel.
      - a. A person was beaten with forty minus one times using a cat-of-nine-tails whip.
      - b. A cat-of-nine-tails was a whip inner woven with pieces of glass, sharp metal objects, and stones. It would literally tear a victim's skin from his body.
      - c. Jesus was scourged before being crucified.
      - d. **Isaiah 53:3-6 says, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of**

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**our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."**

- D. Jesus bore everything for us. Paul used a convenient escape to avoid being scourged.
1. In verse 25, he told the guard that he was a Roman that had not been condemned or convicted of any crime.
  2. In verses 26-29, Paul was treated with a newly found respect.
  3. In verse 30, the chief captain told the Jews that they would have take Paul before the courts if they wanted to do away with him.

**Question:** How did Paul force a trip to Rome?

### III. The Jews took Paul to court to shut him up.

- A. In Acts 23:1-Acts 24:27, he pleaded his case before Governor Felix.
1. Paul began his defense in Acts 24:10.
  2. In verses 11-24, Paul shared the reason of the hope within him (see I Peter 3:15).
  3. Paul's message made Felix nervous.
  4. **Acts 24:25 says**, "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, **Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.**"
  5. Felix made a terrible decision. He probably died lost.
- B. In Acts 24:26-27, Felix' true colors were seen.
1. In verse 26, he had hoped that someone would pay him to set Paul free, but no one did.
  2. In verse 27, he held Paul in custody for two years until Festus came to Jerusalem.
- C. In Acts 25:1-27, Paul stood before Festus and Herod Agrippa I (grandson of Herod the Great).
1. In verses 10-12, Paul appealed his case to Caesar Augustus, and Festus is pleased to send him to Rome.
  2. In verses 24-27, Herod Agrippa agreed to send him to Rome.
  3. **In Acts 26:1-27, Paul once again shared his testimony.**
  4. **Acts 26:28 says**, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."
  5. In Acts 26:32, Herod told Festus that he would have released Paul if he had not appealed to Caesar.
- D. Did Paul make a mistake by stating his appeal to Caesar?
1. Paul did not make a mistake.
  2. **Matthew 10:19-20 says**, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye

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shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

**Question:** What happened to Paul once he got to Rome? Why was he released? Where did he go after he was released?

### IV. The aftermath of his life

- A. In Acts 27, they sailed to Rome.
  - 1. Paul had warned the captain to not make the journey.
  - 2. The captain ignored Paul, and they ran into a very bad storm.
  - 3. The ship was lost, but all of the men survived.
- B. In Acts 28, Paul arrived in Rome.
  - 1. He was in a house-arrest environment.
  - 2. He was able to receive visitors.
  - 3. **Acts 28:30-31 says,** "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."
- C. Because Luke did not write about the trial's outcome, common belief is that the charges were dropped.
  - 1. In order for the trial to go forth, the Jews from Jerusalem would have had to go to Rome to testify against Paul.
  - 2. In all likelihood, Paul was released because they did not show up.
  - 3. While there, he wrote his prison epistles (Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians – 58 AD).
  - 4. When he wrote Philemon, he was anticipating his imminent release (see Philemon 1:22).
- D. In 61-64 AD, he wrote Titus and I and II Timothy.
  - 1. A short time later, he was beheaded for his stand for Christ.
  - 2. During the same persecution, Peter was scourged and crucified upside down.

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Next week's lesson: "Abraham's Bosom" (Luke 16:19-31, Mark 9:41-50, Matthew 25:31-46, and Luke 23:26-43)

### Five Day Recommended Reading:

Monday:	Luke 16:19-31 and Philippians 1:21-26
Tuesday:	Mark 9:41-50
Wednesday:	Psalm 49:6-20
Thursday:	Matthew 25:31-46
Friday:	Luke 23:26-43

### Study questions:

1. Where do unsaved people go when they die?
2. What is the biblical definition of death?
3. How do theologians know that sheol had separate compartments?
4. Many people do not believe in the existence of hell or that a loving God would send people there. How can we be sure that they are wrong?
5. Did the rich man die lost because he was rich?
6. Does Mark 9:41-50 teach that a person can be lost by bad works? How do you know?
7. Does Psalm 49:6-20 teach that a person can be lost by being rich? How do you know?
8. In Matthew 25:31-46, what actually happens when Jesus gathers the nations of the world? When does this judgment occur in future time?
9. How did Jesus' death on the cross affect Abraham's bosom?