

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

ADDRESSING THE JERUSALEM MOB!– VS. 1-21

Act 22:1 "Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now."

Act 22:2 And when they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent. Then he said:

Act 22:3 "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today."

Act 22:4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women,

Act 22:5 as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.

Act 22:6 "Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me."

Act 22:7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?'

Act 22:8 So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'

V. 1 PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE MOB- "Men?" Yes.

"Brethren?" Yes, they belong to the same race. Yet these brethren want to kill him. Is he being sarcastic? No, because then he shows respect for the elder men, "and fathers."

V. 2 The minute he begins to speak in Hebrew dialect, probably Aramaic, they become quiet, really like they were stunned! It is like a raging wind suddenly dying down, like calming the waves of the seas. They are listening to a man who is one of them. He begins with his personal history.

V. 3 *a Jew of Tarsus, brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 5:34)*; a fact of great importance in the apostle's history, standing in the same relation to his future career as Moses' education in the Egyptian court to the work for which he was destined. *taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law*, — the strictest form of traditional Judaism. *zealous* — "a zealot."; *toward God as you all are today* — his own former murderous zeal against the disciples of the Lord Jesus being merely reflected in their present treatment of himself.

V. 4 *I persecuted this Way* - With the same zeal that you do now. Binding both men and women - How much better was his condition, now he was bound himself.

V. 5 The high priest bears me witness - Is able to testify. The brethren - Jews: so this title was not peculiar to the Christians.

V. 6 About noon - All was done in the face of the sun. A great light shone - By whatever method God reveals himself to us, we shall have everlasting cause to recollect it with pleasure. If so, we should often dwell on the particular circumstances, and be ready, on every proper occasion, to recount those wonders of power and love, for the

V. 7 encouragement and instruction of others. Paul is telling them his experience, his personal testimony. Often our own testimony about Jesus Christ is most moving to the unbelievers.

V. 8 **And he said, who art thou, Lord?....** For he knew not whether it was God, or an angel, or who it was that spoke to him; he knew not Christ by his form or voice, as Stephen did, when he saw him standing at the right hand of God.**I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.**

THREE REASONS WHY PAUL HAS COME TO JERUSALEM:

First, to bring an offering from the Gentile churches to the church in Jerusalem, which had been experiencing tremendous financial problems.

Secondly, Paul, also desired to be there for the Feast of Pentecost. Those feast times were great times in Jerusalem. Hundreds of thousands of people would gather. According to Josephus, as many as two million people would gather in Jerusalem for these feast days. Great holidays. Great times of celebration. Great times of worshipping God. Paul wanted to be there. Now those were the two ostensible reasons.

Thirdly, I believe that Paul wanted to be there and that is to share the gospel with the Jews. Paul always desired to bring the gospel message to the Jews.

WAS PAUL IN THE WILL OF GOD IN RETURNING TO JERUSALEM?

Was Paul right or wrong in making that trip to Jerusalem. Whether he was right or wrong, we can certainly learn from his experience.

On the con side, these repeated messages do sound like warnings to Paul to stay out of Jerusalem. For that matter, **over twenty years before, the Lord had commanded Paul to get out of Jerusalem because the Jews would not receive his testimony (Act 22:18).** Paul had already written to the Romans about the dangers in Judea (Act 15:30-31), and he had shared these same feelings with the Ephesian elders (Act 20:22-23); so he was fully aware of the problems involved. Now we must pause **to consider whether Paul was right:**

On the pro side, the prophetic utterances can be taken as warnings ("Get ready!") rather than as prohibitions ("You must not go!"). The statement in Act 21:4 **does not use the Greek negative ou**, which means absolute prohibition, but *me*, used "where one *thinks* a thing is not"

ACTS CHAPTER 22

OBSERVATION

Act 22:9 *"And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me.*

Act 22:10 *So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.'*

Act 22:11 *And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.*

Act 22:12 *"Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there,*

Act 22:13 *came to me; and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him.*

Act 22:14 *Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth.*

Act 22:15 *For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.*

Act 22:16 *And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling (having called or at the moment of calling on His name) on the name of the Lord.'*

Act 22:17 *"Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance*

INTERPRETATION

V. 9 In Acts 9:7, it says, "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man" Here Paul says, " **but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me** This looks like it might be a contradiction. **Actually, there is no contradiction at all.** The men heard a voice—they heard the sound, but **they did not understand what the voice said nor did they know whose voice it was.** They **simply heard a voice.**

V. 10 Notice that Paul had been given a private interview with the Lord Jesus. I believe that the Lord talked with him and taught him when he spent time out on that Arabian desert

V. 11 The glory of that light - The splendor, the intense brilliancy of the light. Acts 9:8.

V. 12 A devout man according to the law - A truly religious person, and though a believer in Christ, yet a strict observer of the law of Moses.

V. 13 In Paul's speech, we see that both he and Ananias are both simply acting like good Jews - they are not resisting God nor denying their heritage

V. 14 Verse 14 is a wonderful capsule of the duty of every one before God: to know His will, to see the Just One(Jesus), and to hear the voice of His mouth (His word)

V. 15 *For you will be His witness ...* As an apostle - to testify to all people that the Messiah has come, that he has died, that he has risen, and that he is the Savior of the world. *Of what you have seen and heard* - Of the remarkable proof which has been furnished you of the divine mission and character of the Lord Jesus.

V. 16 Be baptized, and wash away thy sins - Baptism administered to real penitents, is both a means and seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive Church bestow this on any, unless through this means. To the Jews, water was the element of purification. That you have been cleansed from your sins. **V. 16 connects water baptism with cleansing of sin.**

V. 17 When I was returned to Jerusalem - From Damascus, and was praying in the temple - Whereby he shows that he still paid the temple its due honor, as the house of prayer. I was in a trance - Perhaps he might continue standing all the while, so that any who were near him would hardly discern it.

APPLICATION

. **Agabus did not forbid** Paul to go to Jerusalem; he only told him what to expect if he did go. As for the Lord's command in Act 22:18, it applied to that particular time and need not be interpreted as a prohibition governing the rest of Paul's life. While it is true that Paul avoided Jerusalem, it is also true that he returned there on other occasions: with famine relief (Act 11:27-30); to attend the Jerusalem Conference (Act 15:1); and after his second missionary journey (Act 18:22 — "going up to greet the church" refers to Jerusalem).

In view of Paul's statement in Act 23:1, and the Lord's encouraging words in Act 23:11, it is difficult to believe that the apostle deliberately disobeyed the revealed will of God. God's prophecy to Ananias (Act 9:15) certainly came true in the months that followed as Paul had opportunity to witness for Christ. **Instead of accusing Paul of compromise, we ought to applaud him for his courage. Why? Because in going to Jerusalem, he took his life in his hands in order to try to solve the most pressing problem in the church: the growing division between the "far right" legalistic Jews and the believing Gentiles.** Ever since the Jerusalem Conference (Act 15:1-41), trouble had been brewing; and the legalists had been following Paul and seeking to capture his converts. It was a serious situation, and Paul knew that he was a part of the answer as well as a part of the problem. **But he could not solve the problem by remote control through representatives; he had to go to Jerusalem personally.**

SUMMARY OF PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE JERUSALEM MOB.

To the crowd in Jerusalem, whose angry complaint was that he taught everybody everywhere against the people, the law and the temple (21:28) Paul stressed his personal loyalty to his Jewish origins and faith.

1. **He spoke of his Jewish birth and up-bringing and of his train the law of our fathers under Gamaliel.** His past helped Paul to identify with the crowd.
2. **He drew attention to his zeal for God, which was as great as theirs,** sin he had persecuted the followers of the Way, both men and women, even to prison and death. Paul's persecution was an indication of his loyal to the Jews.

ACTS CHAPTER 22

OBSERVATION

Act 22:18 and saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.'
Act 22:19 So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You.

Act 22:20 And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'

Act 22:21 Then He said to me, 'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.' "

PAUL'S ROMAN CITIZENSHIP – Acts 22:22-29

Act 22:22 And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!"

Act 22:23 Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air,

Act 22:24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging, so that he might know why they shouted so against him.

Act 22:25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?"

INTERPRETATION

V. 18 And I saw him - Jesus, saying to me, Depart quickly out of Jerusalem - Because of the snares laid for thee: and in order to preach where they will hear.

V. 19 And I said - It is not easy for a servant of Christ, who is himself deeply impressed with Divine truths, to imagine to what a degree men are capable of hardening their hearts against thee. He is often ready to think with Paul, It is impossible for any to resist such evidence. But experience makes him wiser and shows that wilful unbelief is proof against all truth and reason.

V. 20 When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by - A real convert still retains the remembrance of his former sins. He confesses thorn and is humbled for them, all the days of his life.

V. 21 Paul mentions the Gentiles because he has been out in the gentile world speaking to them about Jesus Christ. The Jews know that. The minute he mentions the Gentiles, it is just like lighting a fuse. They will hear him no longer. He pointed out **his plans were changed by Divine intervention!! Jesus had spoken directly to him. (Gal. 1:11-12)** The plan of God before he was born!

Vs. 22-23 The crowd's reaction: a riot erupts! It erupts over the utterance of *one word: Gentiles*; **the Jews were incensed that the gospel could be given freely to the Gentiles.** Curiously, Paul had his audience all up until this point. In their minds, they didn't mind all this talk about Jesus, but **they could not stand the idea that God might save Jews and Gentiles alike and in the same way.** Jews did not have a problem with Gentiles becoming Jews. But **they were incredibly offended at the thought of Gentiles becoming Christians just as Jews became Christians, because it implied that Jews and Gentiles were equal, having to come to God on the same terms.**

V. 24 When Paul spoke to the mob in Hebrew, the captain stood there not able to comprehend what he was saying. The captain simply could not grasp what was happening nor could he understand the problem. All he could do when the mob broke into this rage was to take Paul inside the castle. He thought that since Paul was a prisoner, he would find out the truth about the whole matter by whipping him.

V. 25 And as they - The soldiers ordered by the tribune, were binding him with thongs - A freeman of Rome might be bound with a chain and beaten with a staff: but he might not be bound with thongs, neither scourged, or beaten with rods: Paul said to the centurion - The captain, who stood by to see the orders of the tribune executed.

APPLICATION

- 3. Paul narrated the circumstances of his conversion, which was entirely due to a divine intervention, and not at all to any initiative of his own.** A light from heaven had blinded him and the person who spoke to him had identified himself as Jesus of Nazareth. He pointed out **his plans were changed by Divine intervention!! Jesus had spoken directly to him. (Gal. 1:11-12)**
- 4. Paul referred to the ministry of Ananias, whom he deliberately characterized as a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there in Damascus.**
- 5. When Paul came to his vision, which took place in the very temple he was supposed later to have defiled, and in which the Lord told him to leave Jerusalem immediately, in spite of his reluctance and objection.** Go, the Lord had said, "O will send you far away to the Gentiles. That is, *exapostelo se*, almost *I will make you an apostle, indeed the apostle to the Gentiles.*

v. 21 The Lord's command was, "**Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles!**" (Act. 22:21 4, nkjv) Paul was about to explain why he was involved with the Gentiles, but the Jews in the temple courts would not permit him to go on. No devout Jew would have anything to do with the Gentiles! Had Paul not uttered that one word, he might have later been released; *and perhaps he knew this.* However, he had to be faithful in his witness, no matter what it cost him. Paul would rather be a prisoner than give up his burden for lost souls and for missions! We could use more Christians like that today.

ACTS CHAPTER 22

OBSERVATION

Act 22:26 *When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman."*

Act 22:27 *Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes."*

Act 22:28 *The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen."*

Act 22:29 *Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.*

THE SANHEDRIN DIVIDED – Acts 22:30-23:1-10

Act 22:30 *The next day, because he wanted to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he released him from his bonds, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down and set him before them.*

INTERPRETATION

Vs. 26-28 This captain, you see, was an ex-slave. He had saved his money or somehow he got the money to buy his freedom. He has advanced in the Roman army so that now he is a captain. He is amazed that he has a prisoner who is a Roman citizen who was born free. Roman citizenship could not be bought for a fee; only for a bribe. Normally, it was only granted only by right or reward.

Vs. 29-30 The captain finds that he has a remarkable man on his hands. He is a learned man who speaks Greek. He is not a common crook by any means. He is a Jew, but he is also a Roman citizen. The captain says, "I am not going to treat Paul like a common criminal. We will have a hearing to find out what the charges are against him." So the captain arranged a hearing before the chief priests and all their council. Notice that Paul had many assets which made him suitable to be the missionary to the Roman Empire. He had a world view. Greek training had prepared him as the cosmic Christian. He was trained in the Mosaic system, which prepared him to interpret it in the light of the coming of Christ and His redemptive death and resurrection. Not the least of his assets was his Roman citizenship which finally opened the door for him to visit Rome. Note now, in God's grace, how Paul was brought right into the company of his old Sanhedrin friends!

"At Your Name (Yahweh, Yahweh)"-Phil Wickham

At Your name The mountains shake and crumble
At Your name The oceans roar and tumble
At Your name Angels will bow
The earth will rejoice/ Your people cry out

[Chorus:]

Lord of all the earth/ We shout Your name, shout Your name
Filling up the skies With endless praise, endless praise
Yahweh, Yahweh/ We love to shout Your name, oh Lord

At Your name The morning breaks in Glory
At Your name Creation sings Your story
At Your name Angels will bow
The earth will rejoice/ Your people cry out

[Chorus]

There is no one like our God/ We will praise You, praise You
There is no one like our God We will sing, we will sing [x3]
[Chorus x2]

APPLICATION

Questions:

1. Regarding Paul longing and desire to reach his former Sanhedrin brother with the gospel, this is his big moment! The day he has dreamed of! How effective was Paul in his attempt to reach his Sanhedrin brothers with the gospel?
2. Do you think **Paul could have given a more effective message?**
3. **How important is the evangelist's message** in seeing souls converted? (**1 Cor. 2:14**) *The natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.*
4. **Who alone** opens the eyes and the hearts of unbelievers?
5. Can you explain why in one case the narrative of Paul's conversion experience on the Damascus in Acts 9:7, says, "And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, **hearing a voice**, but seeing no man" Here Paul says, " **but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me** This looks like it might be a contradiction. Is it? Is Paul the only one that actually understood the voice of the Lord Jesus?"
6. **When do you think Paul was actually saved?** On the Damascus road – v. 10- did the Lord tell him then how to be saved? - or at Ananias' house – v. 16?
7. Did God's plan or call on your life begin at the time **you accepted Christ?** If not, when? (**Eph. 1:4; Gal. 1:15**)
8. What two important things are connected in v. 16?

SUMMARY:

Paul's entire time in Jerusalem was one filled with serious misunderstandings, **but he pressed on**. Perhaps at this point some of his friends were saying, "We told him so! We warned him!" For Paul and his associates, **it may have looked like the end of the road, but God had other plans for them**. Paul would witness again and again, and to people he could never have met had he not been a Roman prisoner. God's missionary did get to Rome — and the Romans paid the bill! That's what happens when God's people are willing to be daring!