

## ACTS 22

### *Paul before the Jews in Jerusalem*

#### *Paul's Defense*

21:40 And when he [the tribune] had given him permission, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language saying:

1 Brothers and fathers, hear the defense (ἀπολογία) that I now make before you.

2 And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet. And he said:

3 I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day. 4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, 5 as the high priest (ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς) and the whole council of elders (πᾶν τὸ πρεσβυτέριον) testify (μαρτυρέω, pres.) about me. From them I received letters to the brothers, and I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.<sup>1</sup> 6 As I was on my way and drew near to Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone around me.<sup>2</sup> 7 And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me,

Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

8 And I answered,

Who are you, Lord?

And he said to me,

I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.

9 Now those who were with me saw the light but did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me. 10 And I said,

What shall I do, Lord?

And the Lord<sup>3</sup> said to me,

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<sup>1</sup> Our personal testimony is an apologetic.

<sup>2</sup> This reminds of the visions of Yahweh seen by Isaiah and Ezekiel.

<sup>3</sup> To this hostile Jewish audience, Paul repeats for emphasis that Jesus of Nazareth is the Lord.

Rise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do.

11 And because I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus. 12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, 13 came to me and standing by me said to me,

Brother Saul, receive your sight.

And at that very hour I received my sight and saw him. 14 And he said,

The God of our fathers appointed you to know his desire, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from his mouth. 15 For you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. 16 And now why do you wait? Rise, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.<sup>4</sup>

17 When I had returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple,<sup>5</sup> I fell into a trance 18 and saw him saying to me,

Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.

19 And I said,

Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20 And when the blood of Stephen your witness was being shed, I myself was standing by, approving, and watching over the garments of those who killed him.

21 And he said to me,

Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.<sup>6</sup>

### *The Jews Shout Against Paul*

22 Up to this word they listened to him. Then they raised their voices and said,

Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live.

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<sup>4</sup> This was Paul's moment of faith in Jesus. Paul wisely doesn't tell the Jewish mob what to do, he tells them what Ananias told him to do. The Jewish mob will get the message in an indirect way what they need to do.

<sup>5</sup> Upon becoming a believer, Paul was still loyal to the Jerusalem temple.

<sup>6</sup> It is about Paul's turning to the Gentiles that the Jews are especially angry.

23 And as they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and flinging dust into the air,  
24 the tribune ordered him to be brought into the barracks, saying that he should be examined by flogging, to find out why they were shouting against him like this.

*Paul Asserts His Roman Citizenship*

25 But when they had stretched him out for the whips, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by,

Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?

26 When the centurion heard this, he went to the tribune and said to him,

What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen.

27 So the tribune came and said to him,

Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?

And he said,

Yes.

28 The tribune answered,

I bought this citizenship for a large sum.

Paul said,

But I am a citizen by birth.<sup>7</sup>

29 So those who were about to examine him withdrew from him immediately. And the tribune also was afraid, for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had bound him.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> When one believes in Jesus, he obtains heavenly citizenship by spiritual birth that costs him nothing.

<sup>8</sup> Verse 30 goes with the next chapter.

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