

Bible Study April 20, 2022

Acts 21: 40-22:21 Paul Addresses the Jewish Crowd

Paul speaks to establish the reason he had come to the Temple – his faithfulness to his Jewish heritage. He told of his former zeal for Judaism, persecution of Christians, his encounter with the risen Christ, his commission and his vision in the temple. He spoke to them in Aramaic, the most common language spoken by ordinary Jews in Jerusalem. (He had spoken Greek to the Roman tribune) He tells them he came to Jerusalem as a young man, and trained under Gamaliel. Paul stressed the piety of Ananias, one who kept the law and was respected by all Jews. He was baptized in the name of Jesus, washed free from sin by the blood of Jesus. He fell into a trance in the temple, and was told by the Lord to leave Jerusalem and to go to the Gentiles.

Acts 22: 22-29 Paul Reveals His Roman Citizenship

The crowd cried out, “away with him” and the tribune took Paul into the barracks. He was about to be tortured when Paul revealed he was a Roman citizen. The tribune was afraid when he realized he had Paul arrested, bound, and was to be flogged without a trial. Paul was born a Roman citizen which was prestigious, the tribune had purchased his citizenship from the emperor Claudius.

New Material - Acts 22: 30 – Acts 23:11 Paul Appears before the Sanhedrin

The tribune now turned to the Jewish court for help in determining why the crowd had sought to kill Paul. Ananias the high priest ordered Paul be struck and Paul called him a whitewashed wall. Paul was charged with speaking evil of a ruler of the people. Paul either did not know Ananias was the high priest, or due to poor vision could not see who he was. Paul then realized the group was made up of Sadducees and Pharisees, he appealed to the beliefs of the Pharisees – “I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees.” Paul’s words divided the group as the Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, angels, nor the Spirit of God. The two groups began to fight among themselves, and Paul was taken back to the barracks. The Lord came again to Paul and said, “Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you testify also in Rome.”

Acts 23: 12-22

Zealous Jews Plot against Paul

40 pious Jews made an oath not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul. They approached the chief priest and the elders (the majority who were Sadducees). Paul's nephew heard of the forthcoming attack on his uncle, entered the barracks and told Paul. Paul then told his nephew and one of the centurions to give this message to the tribune. The tribune listened, and told the young man to not tell anyone of their discussion.

Acts 23: 23-35

Paul is Delivered to the Governor Felix

The tribune ordered 200 hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and 200 spearmen to escort Paul to Caesarea at 3 a.m. Lysias the Tribune ordered half of the force under his command to protect Paul. He also writes to Governor Felix (governor of Judea A. D. 52-59) informing him of Paul's Roman citizenship, the attack and death threat on Paul by the Jews due to accusations of Paul violating Jewish law, not Roman law. On arrival to Caesarea, Felix asked where Paul was from – Cilicia – and he was granted a hearing once his accusers arrived. He was guarded in Herod's praetorium, one of Herod's palaces and also quarters of the Roman governor.

Acts 24: 1-27

Paul Appears before Felix

The high priest Ananias and Tertullus (most likely a Gentile lawyer) brought charges against Paul of stirring up riots among the Jews, being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, and profaning the temple. Paul then addresses Felix in his defense, denying any riots, of only being in Jerusalem for 12 days, of being a faithful Jew, accepting the Law and the Prophets, and of hope in the resurrection, a resurrection of both the just and the unjust, a final judgment. The key issue when Paul was at the temple and now standing before Felix, is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Felix puts off ruling on Paul's case, stating he will wait for Lysias the tribune to come to Caesarea. Paul is still under house arrest, but with many freedoms.

Paul then met with Felix, and Drusilla (youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa I and sister of Agrippa II), his wife (who Felix caused to divorce from her first husband), and shared his faith in Jesus Christ. He reasoned with them concerning

righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment. Felix sent Paul away, and kept him in prison hoping Paul would give him a bribe. Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, with Paul still in prison. Felix was removed from office in A.D. 60 for failing to deal properly with a dispute between the Jews and Gentiles in Caesarea.