



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

ACTS 22:17-29

PAUL FACES HIS ACCUSERS— August 29, 2021

INTRODUCTION:

Paul had had a bad experience in Jerusalem in chapter 21 for the crowd was trying to kill him. They had accused him of leading the people wrong: 1.) Teaching against the people and Moses' Law. 2.) Bringing Gentiles into the Temple making it unclean.

Chapter 22:1-16 **1** Paul begins to speak to the crowd of Jews in Jerusalem calling them *"Men, brothers and fathers."* He wants them to listen to him as he offers his first defense of the change in him. **2** He even spoke their language (speaking in Hebrew), but they kept silent. He knew how to speak Greek to the Romans and how to speak Hebrews to the Jews. So, out of respect to the Jews **3** he tells them "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, but educated here in Jerusalem under Gamaliel, at whose feet I learned to follow our Jewish laws and customs very carefully. He was very anxious (zealous) to honor God in everything he did, just as they had been that day. **4** He confessed that he persecuted the Christians, hounded them to death, binding and delivering both men and women to prison. **5** The High Priest or any member of the Council can testify that this is so. He didn't hold back anything. He asked for letters to give to the Jewish leaders in Damascus, with instructions to let him bring any Christians he found in Jerusalem in chains to be punished.

6 "As he was on the road, nearing Damascus, suddenly about noon a very bright light from heaven showed around him. **7** And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" **8** He asked who are you Lord? And he replied, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, the One you are persecuting." **9** And the men with him saw the light but didn't understand what was said. **10** "And he said, "What shall I do, Lord?" And the Lord told him, "Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told what awaits you in the years ahead." **11** "I was blinded by the intense light and had to be led into Damascus by my companions. **12** There a man named Ananias, as godly a man as you could find for obeying the law and well thought of by all the Jews of Damascus, **13** came to me, and standing beside me said, "Brother Saul, receive your sight! And that very hour I could see him! **14** Ananias told me, "The God of our fathers has chosen you to know His Will and to see the Messiah and hear Him speak (that was on Damascus Road). **15** You are to take His message; be His witness everywhere, telling what you have seen and heard. **16** And now, why delay? Go and be baptized and be cleansed from your sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Some observations:

1. Saul needed the touch of a disciple's hand, meaning to experience the help and ministry of God's disciple. And to see faithfulness in action, meaning he needed—love, care, concern, interest, help reaching out to him in time of need.
2. Saul needed the recognition of being a "Brother" in the Lord. This one word probably caused Saul to break out in tears, for he was being reached out to by a dear believer of the Lord despite the terrible wrong he had done to the believers. This was confirmation to him that he had been truly forgiven and received by the Lord.
3. Saul needed the power of healing ministered to him. He was afflicted. He needed Ananias to help him in his affliction. He needed his eyes healed, symbolizing how the scales of spiritual darkness and sin and shame had been removed from his heart.
4. Saul needed the sharing of the Holy Spirit's infilling; the infilling power of the Spirit for service.



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God does not leave anyone in bondage. When He shows up, freedom shows up!

It's not about what people want; it's about what God wants!

No one wanted anything to do with Paul. They dragged him out. They had shut the Temple doors. He couldn't even enter back. There's something about a shut door especially when God does it. The people looked at him as an outsider, but God wants him to be an insider. The trial we go through gets us ready for the blessing. Paul was arrested and bound with two chains by the chief captain. And he did get a chance to speak on the stairs of the Roman armory. Paul made his defense on the same Roman stairway where Pilate had condemned Christ to death some twenty-six years earlier. The attitude of the Jewish mob also reflects a similar treatment of the Lord's servant. The crowd was listening until a certain point and they began to turn on him by saying, "*Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live*" (v22).

God's story is for all the world! When you follow Jesus, you can't help but give your testimony.

1. You tell about who you were. 2. You tell about what God has done. 3. You tell I'm sent to tell you about Him. Give your story away even when it's difficult!

LESSON: I. PAUL'S APPEAL TO HIS COUNTRYMEN ACTS 22:17-21

22:17 **And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;—** Paul is still telling his story. He had talked about his conversion to Christ, his calling to know, hear, and see by faith, and his commission for service. Now, he appeals to his countrymen bringing up a time when he had come to Jerusalem and being in the temple, he fell into a trance and had a vision while praying.

22:18 **And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.** Paul starts off with the fact that in this trance, he saw the Lord! That's very important. And the Lord instructed that he had to hurry up and get out of Jerusalem because the people would not receive his testimony concerning the Lord. They just didn't believe the Lord saved him.

God can be straight-forward while you're praying, or show you in a dream by the Spirit, or show you through His Word. I believe God will always show you first. The second party will only be confirmation of what He's already shown you.

22:19 **And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:—** Paul is conversing with the Lord in this trance. He's talking about his time before conversion, conveying that the Jews he wants to talk to already know that he went from synagogue after synagogue imprisoning and beating those that believed on Christ. He couldn't get around that fact.

22:20 **And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.** Paul was even there when the blood of (Christ's) martyr Stephen was shed, and he stood there giving his approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.

22:21 **And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.** In the trance the Lord told Paul that it was time to depart from the Jews, for He would send him far away to the Gentiles. This is his calling!

II. PAUL'S APPEAL TO THE AUTHORITIES ACTS 22:22-29



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22:22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, **Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.** The crowd didn't like anything Paul said but they listened. They certainly didn't like it when he said that he was going to the Gentiles. He was violently rejected by the crowd: *"Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live."* Their objection was that the Gentiles were being given the privilege of following God without becoming Jews first, without being circumcised and accepting the law.

22:23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air,— The crowd had become very angry and began to cry out, casting off their clothes, and throwing dust into the air which was a sign of fury and deep grief and a distaste where they were ready to stone Paul.

When you push your brother away, you're pushing Jesus away.

22:24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. At this point Paul is rescued by the soldiers, for the chief captain did not want a riot, so he commanded that Paul be brought into the castle (armory). However, this time the chief captain was fed up with the matter. He couldn't figure out why the crowd exploded so violently against Paul, so he planned to get the truth by scourging (whipping) him.

22:25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, **Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?—** They had bound Paul with cords and straps (22:24) *when the Roman centurion was about to scourge him, he spoke up and appealed to the authorities, by claiming his legal rights as a Roman citizen because they didn't know that they were about to beat a Roman citizen. The rights of Roman citizens were guarded as something sacred by Rome.* It was a serious crime to scourge a Roman citizen. And anyone who did so would be jeopardizing his own life. And Paul hadn't been found guilty.

22:26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, **Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.** So, when the centurion heard Paul's statement, he stopped and went to tell the chief captain, saying, *"Be careful! What you are about to do? This man is a Roman!"*

22:27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, **Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.** Now, Paul has to verify his citizenship before the chief captain. The chief captain simply asks: *"Tell me, are you a Roman?"* Paul says, *"Yes."* Evidently, the Roman captain didn't believe him at first and became afraid after hearing again that Paul was a Roman citizen.

22:28 And the chief captain answered, **With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.** The commander replied, *"I purchased this citizenship [of mine] for a large sum of money [so how did you acquire yours?]."* Paul said, *"But I was actually born a citizen."* (AMP). Paul's citizenship superseded the soldiers', for Paul was born a Roman citizen, whereas the soldier had bought his citizenship.

22:29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. The soldiers even quickly disappeared. Paul's rights were respected, because *"Immediately the soldiers who were about to interrogate him withdrew; left Paul, and the commander himself was so alarmed (afraid) when he*

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realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains" (NIV). The captain had been drawn into a serious crime by the whole affair— A Roman citizen being attacked by a Jewish mob.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON: VERSE 30

22:30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them. They were ordered to unbind his hands because that was even against the law for a Roman citizen. His hands were loosed, and the chief captain was determined to find out what caused the riot, so on the very next day, Paul was brought before the Chief Priests and all their Council—The Sanhedrin, to appear in an official meeting in the midst of them. Paul had been held as a prisoner and had been unchained all night. From this point on, Paul's long journey began, but it was not to be the journey Paul had planned. He would enter Rome as a prisoner, not as a free man to move about as he wished. His imprisonment would last about 5yrs. Although Paul's way was genuine, the Jewish brethren didn't receive him. But God has His way of doing things that cuts through all the red tape! This time Paul will appear before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish court and God will use Paul as His witness! You can say this was a set-up, planned by God. The Lord will move events to use us no matter how trying and overwhelming the events may be.

Do you think this is your only stop in life or do you continue?

SUMMARY:

Paul is in Jerusalem in the temple praying and was led into a trance. He saw the Lord saying, "*Hurry up and get out of Jerusalem because the people will not receive your testimony concerning the me (the Lord).*" And Paul says, "*Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat the Christians that believed on thee in every synagogue. I was even there when the blood was shed of Your martyr Stephen, and I stood there giving the approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing Stephen.*" God spoke, telling Paul that this was his time to depart from the Jews, for He (the Lord) would be sending him to the Gentiles (22:17-21).

The crowd didn't like anything Paul said but they listened. They certainly didn't like it when he said that he was going to the Gentiles. Paul was violently rejected by the crowd saying: "*Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.*" They began to cry out, casting off their clothes, and throwing dust into the air which was a sign of fury and deep grief. The commander ordered Paul to be brought into the castle (armory), directing that he be interrogated and whipped to discover the reason they were shouting against him like this. As they stretched him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, "*Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?*" Paul was speaking of his Roman citizenship. When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and said to him, "*Be careful! What you are about to do? This man is a Roman!*" The chief captain simply asks: "*Tell me, art thou a Roman?*" Paul says, "*Yes.*" The commander replied, "*I purchased this citizenship [of mine] for a large sum of money [so how did you acquire yours?].*" Paul said, "*But I was actually born a citizen.*" Paul's rights were respected because "*Immediately the soldiers who were about to interrogate him withdrew, and the commander himself was alarmed (afraid) when he realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains*" (22:22-29)