

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

February 7, 2024

Series - The Life and Writings of the Apostle Paul

Paul's Appearance Before Agrippa

Text – Acts 26

Introduction

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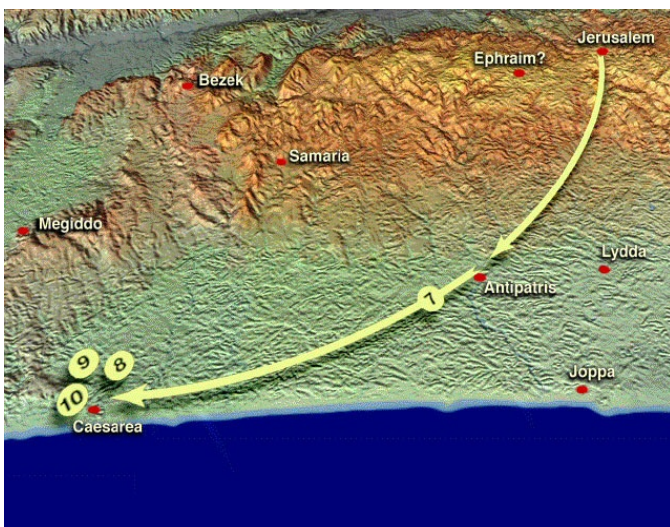
Review

In Acts 21 the Apostle Paul concludes his third missionary journey, and travels back to Jerusalem so that he could participate in the Feast of Pentecost; and so, he could deliver an offering that he had collected from the people in Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia Minor.

When he gets to Jerusalem he is asked to participate in a “vow” with four other men, which involved his staying in the Temple for seven days.

He is spotted in the temple by some Jews from Asia that had been acquainted with Paul’s ministry and is accused of bringing a Gentile (Trophimus) into the Temple, which he had not done.

A riot breaks out in the Temple, and Paul is thrust out, and would have been beaten to death had not the chief captain, Claudius Lysius, rescued him.



When we get to chapter 23, we learn that there was an assassination plot made by over 40 men who had vowed to neither eat nor drink until Paul was dead,

Claudius Lysius then sneaks Paul out of the city by night under the guard of 470 soldiers. He is brought first to Antipatris, and finally to Caesarea where he will appear before Governor Felix.

Felix calls for the religious leadership from Jerusalem to come and present their case before Paul, and where Paul could plead his defense, but the trial is delayed because the governor wants the chief captain to come and testify also. While Paul is there in Caesarea, he had the opportunity to witness to the governor, but although Felix is obviously under conviction, he does not trust Christ.

The trial never resumes seemingly because the governor is waiting for somebody to pay him off, so Paul remains incarcerated in Caesarea for two years.

At the very end of chapter 24, we learned that Felix has been removed from being governor and is replaced by a man named Porcius Festus.

In chapter 25, Festus makes a trip to Jerusalem to introduce himself to the religious leaders. They are still consumed with having Paul put to death, even after two years, and this seems to be a major priority on their agenda. They suggest to Festus that he order Paul to be brought to Jerusalem, however, their plan was to have Paul assassinated while he was in route.

Festus sees through their plan and demands that the religious leaders travel to Caesarea where he will hear the case. Once the leaders arrive, Festus asks Paul if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem, because he later confesses that he didn't know enough about the Jewish religious culture to decide. Paul refuses to do so, and chooses rather to appeal to Caesar, which meant that Festus would have to have Paul transported to Rome, but before he sends him, he invites King Agrippa who is an expert in these Jewish religious matters to come and hear what Paul has to say.

I Paul Rehearses His Salvation Account (vs. 1 – 23)

Note – Paul was constantly telling people the story of his salvation. He used his testimony in the temple when given permission to speak by Claudius Lysius. You may not know all the theological arguments that are used today to convince people to trust Christ, but you can tell people what happened to you.

A He Speaks About His Past (vs. 1 – 5)

B He Speaks About a Promise (vs. 6 – 8)

Turn to Acts 13:23 – 41 regarding the promise.

C He Speaks About His Persecution of Christians (vs. 9 – 11)

D He Speaks About His Pardon on the Road to Damascus (vs. 12 – 14)

E He Speaks About His New Purpose (vs. 15 – 23)

II The Governors React to Paul's Strong Argument (vs. 24 – 29)

A Festus Thought Paul to Be Absolutely Crazy – “Thou Art Mad” (v. 24)

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14)

B Agrippa Was Almost Convinced – “Almost Thou Persuadest Me to Be A Christian” (v. 28)

This could be the testimony of a lot of people who visit our churches and hear the gospel preached and are invited to receive Christ as their Saviour.

"2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" (2 Corinthians 6:2)

III Paul Finally Receives a Sympathetic Admission (vs. 29 – 32)

But it is too late. He was already forced to appeal to Caesar. Had they acknowledged Paul's innocence prior to trying to take him to Jerusalem, he would not have had to take such drastic measures, and he might have been freed.