

## THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

### SESSION 70 ACTS 22:25-23:5

#### ACTS 22:22-30 | PAUL EXERTS HIS RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP

- Note – verses 22-24 were included on session 69 but not taught.
- Verse 22 –
  - The idea of sharing the Kingdom message with the Gentiles because the people of Jerusalem would not receive the message was more than the people could bare.
  - They would not even entertain the idea that they could have crucified the *wrong man*. In 1 Corinthians 1:23 Paul says that **Christ crucified is unto the Jews a stumblingblock**.
- Verses 23-24 --
  - The Jewish means of expressing anger was to **cast off...clothes** (using the Greek word ριπτω [ripto], from which we get *rip* and *ript*) and to throw **dust into the air**.
  - The Roman in charge did not understand the angst of the Jewish crowd, and so Paul was **examined by scourging** in order to get some information.
  - Likely the **chief captain** suspected there was more to the story and so was using extreme interrogation tactics in order to get the information.
- Verse 25 –
  - Knowing your rights is a basic requirement of good citizenship. Those who do not know their rights will not exercise them, nor defend them.
  - Paul not only knew his rights but was willing to use them for his benefit.
  - Those who use Romans 13:1-2 to say that Government is always to be obeyed simply haven't read Paul's works in full.
- Verses 26-29 –
  - There was, in the Roman world, a respect for citizenship and the rule of law across the board.
  - The **chief captain** obtained his citizenship by paying **a great sum**, while Paul was **born** into citizenship.
- Verse 30 –
  - The Roman captain's desire to know with **certainty** the accusation from the Jews turns in our favor, because now we will get to hear Paul's defense.

#### ACTS 23:1-10 | PAUL SPEAKS TO THE JEWISH LEADERS

- Verse 1 –
  - Paul stands before the Sanhedrin (based on the Greek word translated **council**).
  - The only testimony Paul is able to get out is that he has **lived in all good conscience before God**. The word **lived** is from the Greek πολιτεύομαι [politeuomai], and is only used here and Philippians 1:27. The word is a *political* word and has to do with the manner in which one lives in the political environment around them.
- Verse 2 –
  - Ananias has an interesting future.
    - In the Jewish revolt, certain agitators burned his house, and then burned the archives that contained financial records, and “thereby dissolve their obligations for paying their debts.”

- The agitators did this “in order to gain the multitude of those who had been debtors, and that they might persuade the poorer sort to join in their insurrection with safety against the more wealthy.”
    - They further “burnt down the nerves of the city.”
    - Ananias and other leaders fled to hiding places. Ananias was found hiding in an aqueduct, and he and his brother were slain by Manahem, the leader of the *people’s* rebellion.
    - As history has taught so many times, this didn’t turn out well. “Now the overthrow of the places of strength, and the death of the high priest Ananias, so puffed up Manahem, that he became barbarously cruel; and, as he thought he had no antagonists to dispute the management of affairs with him, he was no better than an insupportable tyrant.” (Quotations from: Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Book 2, Chapter 17).
  - Because we know that Ananias would not even allow Paul to speak, it is perhaps beyond reasonable constraint, after reading verse 2, to say, “It couldn’t have happened to a better man.”
- Verse 3 –
  - Paul prophetically said, **God shall smite thee**. Indeed, as we now know, God did exactly that.
  - Paul minced no words. He will soon apologize for his words, but only for one specific reason, and not because the words are not true.
  - Paul pointed out the duplicity of the situation, in which Paul was being judged for not obeying the law, and yet the judge was treating him **contrary to the law**. The law in reference (if specific), could be Deuteronomy 25:1-2, which requires that the guilty only be beaten after proven guilty.
- Verses 4-5 –
  - Paul was chastised by the people for speaking in such a way to the **high priest**. His response was seemingly quick and simple: **I wist not...that he was the high priest**. Paul recognizes that the Law taught that it was inappropriate to **speak evil of the ruler of thy people**, paraphrased from Exodus 22:28.
  - How can Paul claim to be intimately familiar with Judaism and not know that Ananias is the high priest?
    - Likely we are misunderstanding what Paul says because we do not look to the Greek.
    - Luke uses the word οἶδα [oida]. The word is translated as **perceive** in Acts 28:26.
    - It is *not* a “knowledge based on facts” word, but rather a *mind’s eye* word. It very well could be that Paul quickly gives a semi-apology because he says, “I did not give Ananias the *perception* that the position of high priest deserves.” Recognizing he should have done so, he seems to humbly retreat, though not retracting his words.
- *To be continued.*