

The Book of Acts

Unleashing of the Gospel (Chapters 21-24)

A. Paul in Caesarea (21:1-14)

- 1. Paul at Caesarea with Philip the Evangelist (21:1-14)*
- 2. A prophet speaks –*
- 3. Stop, do not go to Jerusalem*

B. Paul travels to Jerusalem (21:15-23:22)

- 1. Welcomed by Brethren in Jerusalem (21:15-26)*
- 2. Arrested by the Jews (21:27-40)*
- 3. Paul's Defense (22:1-21)*
- 4. The Response of the People (22:22-29)*
- 5. Paul Before the Sanhedrin (23:1-10)*
- 6. The Plot Against Paul (23:11-22)*

C. Paul in Caesarea (23:23-26:32)

- 1. Paul Escorted to Caesarea (23:23-35)*
- 2. Paul Before Felix (24:1-21)*
- 3. Paul left Imprisoned (24:22-27)*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Paul was right or wrong in going to Jerusalem the last time? Why?
2. What were Paul's enemies saying about him?
3. How did God use Paul's Roman citizenship status in his arrest?
4. Today, we have freedom in this country, but what about tomorrow?
5. What risks are you willing to take for the gospel? Will you take risks or play it safe?
6. What was Paul's attitude during his trial?
7. Why did he bring up the resurrection in his defense?
8. The Lord urged Paul to have courage (23:11). Why?
9. If procrastination most often has negative results, why do people still put off things?
10. Why do you think Felix and Drusilla ignored Paul's warning?

"Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13)

Paul's interaction with what he perceives as danger and possible death reminds me of how Jesus acted with His final trip to Jerusalem. Both He and His disciples knew what lay ahead for Him. His disciples pleaded with Him not to go, yet He was determined to go where His Father's will led Him (Matthew 16:21-23).

I often wonder how I would handle a similar situation after living in such freedom in the West. Both Jesus and Paul had more love for God's will being done than concern for their personal safety, comfort, or lives on this earth.

I sometimes hear 'watch, watch' when I find myself attached to my comfort, my things, and my life. Jesus and Paul seemed to have an eternal perspective that allowed them to look beyond their deaths to eternity. They both seemed to be detached from earthly pleasures. They both seemed to be detached from earthly possessions.

Jesus once said: It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. (Mark 10:25)

I often wonder what a great disadvantage it is for those born into the richest country. This can, at times, cause them to have distorted priorities.

'Lord, make us a people, a church that has your priorities, who understand your economy, and who are able to detach ourselves from the pleasures of this earth whenever they threaten to become more important than you, your will, and your Glory' Amen