

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 16 w/Answers

Acts 21-23

Last week we concluded our study of Paul's second and third missionary journeys, and now we turn to the final phase of Paul's ministry: his return to Jerusalem, imprisonment, and last trip to Rome.



We cannot leave the study of his missionary journeys without being impressed by his strong desire to carry the gospel to the Gentile world in spite of very difficult circumstances. Setting his sights on Jerusalem and Rome, that desire will be even stronger, as he follows Christ's call to take the gospel to the heart of the Roman Empire and Rome itself.

Let's read Chapters 21 through 23 and then answer the following questions:

1. Departing the Ephesians and heading back to Jerusalem, Paul and his company arrive at Tyre in Syria. How long do they stay in Tyre while the ship unloads its cargo? (Acts 21:1-4)
 - a. ANSWER: Seven days (i.e., one week)
2. What happens to Paul during the week while they are in Tyre? (Acts 21:4)
 - a. ANSWER: His friends try to tell him not to go back to Jerusalem.
3. When they arrive at Caesarea, whose home do they stay at? Where have we heard of this person before? What is meant by Luke when he writes "He was one of the seven."? (Acts 21:8)
 - a. ANSWER: They stay at the home of Philip, who was one of the original seven deacons, and was the evangelist who witnessed to the Ethiopian Eunuch.
4. Who visits Philip and his guests while Paul is staying there, and what does he tell them? (Acts 21:9-12)
 - a. ANSWER: The visitor's name is Agabus, a prophet who has come down from Jerusalem to warn Paul that he will surely be imprisoned if he goes back to Jerusalem.
5. Why would the Jews want to bind Paul and turn him over to the Roman Gentiles? (Acts 21:21 & 28; Acts 22:21-22, and Acts 23:6)
 - a. ANSWER 1: Because Paul taught that being saved by Christ did not require you to be a Jew; in particular, that you did not need to be circumcised to be saved.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Additionally, he gave the Gospel Message and the chance for salvation to the Gentiles, teaching that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah for both Jew and Gentile.
 - c. ANSWER 3: Finally, because he taught the resurrection of the dead through Christ.
6. What was Paul's approach for answering the prophet and all those in Caesarea who did not want him to go to Jerusalem because he would be thrown in prison? (Acts 21:13-14)
 - a. ANSWER: Paul claimed that his only interest was in doing God's will, even to the point of death if necessary.
7. In verse Acts 21:27, we find Paul in the Temple area and the Jews begin to stir up the crowd against him. Who are these Jews that do this, and where are they from? (Note that they are not from Jerusalem.)
 - a. ANSWER: These are the so-called "Asian Jews". They have come from the towns and cities that Paul was preaching in. These are the same folks who, just a few chapters ago, were trying to drive Paul and the Gospel out of their area. Now they are attempting to do the same thing in Jerusalem, and the local Jews join in.

8. Who stepped in and stopped the angry mob that was beating Paul? (Acts 21:31-35)
- a. ANSWER: The Roman Commander in charge of the City's Roman Army intervened. It is interesting that he did not have a point-of-view per se in the argument. He had been charged with keeping the peace, and this was his sole objective. His impartial and fair behavior throughout the ordeal speaks of his commitment to his role in restoring and maintaining the peace, just as some in our military are charged with doing so in the foreign countries that they are assigned to.
9. Paul is permitted by the Roman Guard to speak to the mob, and he gives a defense of his position in Acts 22:1-21. Here, he recounts his Damascus Road experience and Christ's commissioning of his ministry. What part of this defense got the crowd upset with him all over again?
- a. ANSWER: They become upset again when Paul tells them that he was commissioned by God to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. (Acts 22:21)
10. Paul is about to be scourged by the Roman Guard when he tells them he is a Roman citizen. In response to this, the Commander takes off the chains and prevents the scourging, but still wishes to know what the fuss is all about, i.e., what is causing so much turmoil in Jerusalem. What does he do to find out why the Jews are accusing Paul? (Acts 22:30)
- a. ANSWER: He orders the Jewish rulers to gather; this would mean both the Sanhedrin and the Pharisees - rulers of the Synagogues and Rabbi's and the rulers of the Temple.
11. What relationship would Paul have had with the "Council" and "the Chief Priests"? Would he have known any of them? (Acts 23:6)
- a. ANSWER: Paul was a member of the Pharisees, and at one time was considered to be their key scholar of the Law. He was also raised by his father, who was also a Pharisee, and Paul stood at the trial of Stephen and at his stoning. Paul would have known all of these people quite well, even though much of this would have happened 15 to 20 years earlier.
12. What does Paul say causes the dissension among them? Who defends him? (Acts 23:6-9)
- a. ANSWER 1: The dissension is with the Sadducees when he speaks of the hope and resurrection of the dead.
- b. ANSWER 2: The Pharisees, of whom Paul was a member, defend him, saying that they find no fault in what he says. Since the Sadducees of course are on the complete opposite side, a great argument breaks out.
13. The Commander again takes Paul away from the crowd for his own protection and puts him back in jail. That night, Paul also learns he is headed to Rome to be a witness for Jesus there. How does he learn this? (Acts 23:11)
- a. ANSWER: Christ comes and stands at his side that night and tells him to take courage, because the Lord wants him be His witness in Rome.
14. The Commander decides that he needs to move Paul to Caesarea to be heard by the Governor, Felix. A plot develops to assassinate Paul before the trip can begin. Who is involved in the plot, and how does the Commander come to be aware of it? (acts 23:12-35)
- a. ANSWER 1: 40 Jews, along with the Chief Priest and the Elders, plot to ambush Paul and kill him.
- b. ANSWER 2: The son of Paul's sister hears of the ambush and warns Paul, who instructs him to warn the Commander.

In our next lesson, Felix hears the case against Paul.

Have a great week everyone.

Yours in Christ,

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