

PAULINE EPISTLES

- **Paul Begins His Testimony In Jerusalem**
- **The Jews Resumed Their Protest Against Paul's Statement**
- **The Chief Captain Directs Paul To Be Flogged**
- **Benefits Of Being A Roman Citizen In Paul's Days**
- **Paul Appears Before The Sanhedrin And Chief Priests**
- **The Composition Of The Sanhedrin Council**
- **The Lord Encouraged Paul In A Night Vision**

PAUL BEGINS HIS TESTIMONY IN JERUSALEM

- **Identity:** Paul identifies himself as a Jew of Tarsus.
- **Education:** Trained as Pharisee under the most honored rabbi Gamaliel. **Acts 22:3**
- **Persecutor:** He persecuted “the followers of this way” to their death with authorization of the high priest. **Acts 22: 4-5**
- Outside Damascus he was blinded by a light and hears a voice” Saul Saul! why persecutest thou me?..... I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting” Acts 22: 6-8

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PAUL BEGINS HIS TESTIMONY IN JERUSALEM

- **Ananias:** God instructed that he will be visited by Ananias, who heals his blindness
- **Prophecy:** Ananias gives him a message from God: “The God of our father hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will and see that just One and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard....” Acts 22:14-15
- **Warning:** Paul tells of a vision where God asked him to leave Jerusalem unto the Gentiles immediately, because the Jew will not accept his message Acts 22:17-21

THE JEWS RESUMMED THEIR PROTEST AGAINST PAUL'S STATEMENT

- Riot started again after Paul mentioned "Gentiles" in his above testimony. " Away with such a fellow from the earth". Meaning he is worthy of death. Acts 22:22
- Remember one of the accusation for his arrest was that;
---- **He brought Gentiles, this time Trophimus an Ephesian into the temple to pollute it.**
---- **Now, Paul in his testimony said the Lord sent him to the Gentiles which implies that the accusation of bringing Trophimus into the temple is true. " Away with such a fellow from the earth"**
- They removed their cloths in protest and threw dust into the air.
- Paul was forcefully taken into the castle because of this uproar

THE CHIEF CAPTAIN DIRECTS PAUL TO BE FLOGGED

- Before now he had accused Paul of being the fugitive Egyptian Acts 21:37-39
- Who is this Egyptian?

ACCORDING TO FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS

Josephus described the man cited above as an imposter and deceiver, he writes:

“Moreover, there came out of Egypt about this time to Jerusalem one that said he was a prophet, and advised the multitude of the common people to go along with him to the Mount of Olives, as it was called, which lay over against the city, and at the distance of five furlongs. He said further, that he would show them from hence how, at his command, the walls of Jerusalem would fall down;

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and he promised them that he would procure them an entrance into the city through those walls, when they were fallen down.

Now when Felix was informed of these things, he ordered his soldiers to take their weapons, and came against them with a great number of horsemen and footmen from Jerusalem, and attacked the Egyptian and the people that were with him.

He also slew four hundred of them, and took two hundred alive. But the Egyptian himself escaped out of the fight, but did not appear any more. And again the robbers stirred up the people to make war with the Romans, and said they ought not to obey them at all; and when any persons would not comply with them, they set fire to their villages, and plundered them.” (Josephus, The Antiquities of the Jews, Book 20, Chapter 8, Section 6)2

THE CHIEF CAPTAIN DIRECTS PAUL TO BE FLOGGED

- With this uproar by the Jews, he now sees Paul as a bad man since this mammoth crowd wants him dead.
- At this point, Paul smartly revealed his Roman citizenship seeing the game is adversely against him. Acts 22:23-25
“ is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?”
- The commander became afraid learning Paul is a Roman citizen Act 22:29
- He transferred Paul to the Jewish Sanhedrin council to understand the matter better. Acts 22:30

BENEFITS OF BEING A ROMAN CITIZEN IN PAUL'S DAYS

- No Roman Citizen could be tortured, flogged or receive death sentence without being found guilty.
- He has the right to a legal trial in which he can defend himself against his accusers in a proper court of law
- He has the right to Appeal to the judgment seat of Caesar which he later used.
- Remember Paul invoked that same benefit of being a Roman citizen when he was arrested in Philippi during his second missionary journey. **Acts 16:20-21**

PAUL APPEARS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN AND CHIEF PRIESTS (Acts 23:1-5)

- Paul wanted to share his testimony before the council like he did yesterday but was short down by the high priest Ananias
- Ananias commanded Paul to be slapped in his mouth assuming him to be guilty without a trial contrary to the Jewish law
- At this point, Paul knew he was in a big trouble and that his testimony won't be accepted Acts 23:1-5
- He realized that the leaders are not there to hear the truth, but to condemn him.

NOTE:

- Paul truly didn't recognize Ananias as the high priest, probably because his command broke the Law he pledge to present by commanding Paul to be slapped
- Paul's statement to Ananias is very serious " I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest"
- As Christians, that is why we need to be very careful in doing and taking actions as people will say " I didn't know you were a Christian". When such happens, we have failed to represent Christ as we should.
- As Christians, we are not merely Christ's followers, we are his representative to others, as the High Priest was the Law representative to the people.
- Paul immediately changed his tactics when he perceived that the Sanhedrin council consist of Pharisees and Sadducees.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE SANHEDRIN COUNCIL

- The council was a mixture of Sadducees and Pharisees
- The Sanhedrin Rabbinite consist of 23 or 71 rabbis
- There were two classes of Sanhedrin courts, the GREAT and the LESSER Sanhedrin

THE LESSER SANHEDRIN

- They consist of 23 judges
- Their jurisdiction and authority is within the cities

THE GREAT SANHEDRIN

- They have in their members the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
- They consist of 71 Rabbis
- They are the Supreme judicial court in Jerusalem
- They attend to Appeals from the LESSER Sanhedrin
- They supervised the LESSER court and was the court of last resort
- Peter and John appeared before them in Acts 5:34-39
- Rabbi Gamaliel intervened on behalf of the Apostles when they were brought to this same court

- Paul smartly with his word moved the debate away from himself and pushed it towards their raging controversy about resurrection.
 - Instead of him continue defending himself, he made this statement knowing fully well that it will disrupt the proceedings
- “Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question” Acts 23:6-10
- The statement of Paul brought serious fight among the members of the Sanhedrin.
 - As they were fighting the Roman troops went in and physically brought back Paul into the barracks
 - The court closed that day in favour of Paul.

THE LORD ENCOURAGED PAUL IN A NIGHT VISION

- The night following the Lord stood by him, and said, “ Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome”
- This shows in the face of trials and persecution, we are not allow
- The Lord is watching and dropping clues for our escape and defense just like he gave Paul the clue that the next direction is “ROME”
- Why? Because He sees what we don't see and knows what we don't know.
- Noting the fight that broke out between the two religious bodies, certainly they will make all efforts to finally kill Paul, hence the Lord telling him to look towards Rome.

THANKS AND GOD BLESS YOU

WE CONTINUE NEXT WEEK