

Comments About Acts 22

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By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss chapters in the book of Acts. This week, we will talk about chapter 22.

May this project encourage you to review the valuable history found in the book of Acts.

Overview of Paul's travels

As we entered into Acts 13, we began reading about Paul's missionary journeys. According to some Bible commentaries, the trips can be categorized in the following manner.

- First missionary journey—Acts 13:1 until Acts 14:28
- Second missionary journey—Acts 15:36 until Acts 18:22
- Third missionary journey—Acts 18:23 until Acts 21:16
- Trip to Rome—Acts 21:17 until Acts 28:31

Paul's defense

Here is a reminder of the conclusion of Acts 21—a mob seized Paul (verses 30-36), a commander accused Paul of leading an insurrection of 4,000 assassins into the wilderness (verse 38), and Paul was ready to give his defense of himself (verses 39-40).

- He began his defense (Acts 22:1) in the Hebrew language (verse 2).
- Verse 3 mentioned a number of facts—Paul was a Jew who was born in Tarsus, he learned at the feet of Gamaliel, and he was raised with a keen involvement of the law.

Notice a few scriptures that show Paul's history with the law.

Acts 26:5—"They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee."

Philippians 3:3-6—"For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the

law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

- He told how he had previously persecuted the Way by delivering people to Jerusalem to be punished (verses 4-5).
- He told about his Road-to-Damascus experience (verses 6-21).
- He told about his participation in the death of Stephen (verse 20).

Roman citizenship

- After listening to Paul, their voices said: “Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live” (verses 22-23).
- The commander ordered that Paul should be examined by scourging (verse 24).
- Paul responded: “Is it lawful for you to scourge a Roman citizen, who is innocent?” (verse 25).
- A centurion told the commander: “Be careful what you do with this man, because he is a Roman” (verse 26).
- The commander asked: “Are you a Roman?” (verse 27).
- The commander mentioned how he obtained his Roman citizenship with a large sum of money, and Paul mentioned that he was born a Roman citizen (verse 28).
- The commander and the soldiers backed away (verse 29).
- On the next day, Paul was set before the chief priests and the council (verse 30).

Interesting fact

It is interesting to note that Paul used his Roman citizenship on three occasions—twice to escape a bad situation (Acts 16:37 and Acts 22:25-30) and once to preach the gospel (Acts 25:10-11).