

Acts 21:18-26:32

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 11-1-17

Context

- V. On the Way to Rome (21:18-28:31)
 - A. Paul's arrest and self-defense (21:18-23:35)
 - B. Paul on trial (24:1-26:32)
 - C. Rome at last! (27:1-28:31)

Paul's Arrest and Self-Defense

- Outline of events
 - Paul meets James and accepts his proposal (21:18-26)
 - Paul is assaulted and arrested in the temple (21:27-36)
 - Paul's defense before the crowd (21:37-22:22)
 - Paul's protection under Roman law (22:23-29)
 - Paul stands before the Sanhedrin (22:30-23:11)
 - Paul is rescued from a Jewish plot (23:12-35)
 - Paul before Felix (24:1-27)
 - Paul before Festus (25:1-22)
 - Paul before Agrippa (25:23-26:32)
- Luke's portrayal of Paul:
 - Movement from _____ to _____
 - 3 missionary journeys → 5 trials: Jewish crowd at NE corner of temple area (22:1ff.); Sanhedrin (23:1ff.); Felix/Festus (24:1ff.; 25:1ff.); King Herod Agrippa II (26:1ff.)
- 6 chapters/nearly 200 verses?
 - Luke the _____, _____, and _____
 - History detailed/accurate, but incomplete. Greater purposes in mind.
 - Bases his theology on history, not theory.
 - Arguing for the political legitimacy of the faith and unity of Jew/Gentiles
- Final sections are strong apologetics for the legality of the faith
 - Acts 21-26 depicts the reaction to the gospel of the 2 communities

Jewish opposition

- Evident from the beginning: Sanhedrin imprisoning Peter and John (4:1-5:42); Stephen's martyrdom (7:54ff.); Jewish persecution in Jerusalem (8:1ff.); Saul of Tarsus (9:23ff.)
- Now a sustained determination to get rid of Paul once and for all: Attempt to lynch (21:27ff.); Hysterical demand for his death (22:22-23); Secret plot to murder (23:12ff.)
- **Key verse:** 21:30 - "The whole city was rocked by these accusations, and a great riot followed. Paul was grabbed and dragged out of the Temple, and immediately the gates were closed behind him."
 - Symbolizes the final Jewish _____ to the gospel
 - _____ Paul's policy of turning to the Gentiles
- Theologically: Luke is drawing _____ between the sufferings of Christ and Paul
 - Both in journey and treatment in Jerusalem
 - Rejected by their own people, arrested without cause, imprisoned
 - Unjustly accused and willfully misrepresented by false witnesses

- Slapped in the face in court
 - Hapless victims of secret Jewish plots
 - Heard the mobs cry, "Away with him"
 - Subjected to a series of 5 trials (Jesus: Annas, Sanhedrin, King Herod Antipas, and Pilate (2x); Paul: 5 mentioned above)
- Reinforces the theme of the book

Roman justice

- Luke portrays the Roman authorities as consistent friends of the gospel: Cornelius (ch. 10); Sergius Paulus (13:12); Philippi magistrate (16:35ff.); Gallio (18:12ff.); Ephesian town clerk (19:35ff.); now the military commander rescues Paul (21:33ff.; 22:24)
- Protection by Roman justice is even more clear in Paul's trials
 - Jews brought accusations, but the Romans could find no fault
 - Jesus (Luke 23:4, 14-15, 22)
 - Paul - (Acts:23:29; 25:25; 26:31-32)

The amount of space dedicated to Paul's trials indicates its _____ to Luke

- Demonstrates the _____ in the eyes of Roman law of both Jesus and Paul
- Demonstrates how the church in all ages how to _____ during persecution
 - Must show that accusations of crimes against state/humanity are groundless
 - Innocent of offences against the law
 - Members are conscientious citizens, submissive to the state insofar as one's conscience will permit
 - Our only offense must be the stumbling block of the cross (I Cor. 1:22-24)