

Acts 22:1-30

“Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defense *which I make* now unto you. 2 (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) 3 I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God as ye all are this day. 4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. 6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9 And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. 11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. 12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*, 13 came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. 17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; 18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not

receive thy testimony concerning me. 19 And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: 20 and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. 21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. 22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a *fellow* from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. 23 And as they cried out, and cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air, 24 the chief captain [the Tribune] commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. 25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? 26 When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the chief captain [the Tribune], saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. 27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. 28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was *free* born. 29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. 30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from *his* bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.”

Introduction

Audio version:

<https://resources.ccpilly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=44>

“If you remember, Paul in Jerusalem, encouraged by the church there to take a vow, knowing that there’s a big hubbub in Jerusalem [and within the Jerusalem church] that he was teaching the Gentiles to forsake the law of Moses, which he was not. But it had of course been blown out of proportion. Can you imagine that? And as certain

of Jews from the Gentile areas see Paul in Jerusalem [actually seeing him in the Temple itself] they start to scream and point **'This is the man who has been causing trouble! This is the one whose brought Gentiles into the Court!'** no doubt being the Court of Women. And it starts a riot, and as the riot begins, a Tribune has to rescue Paul and bring him inside the Fortress Antonio, to stop, to put things to rest there. And the Tribune asks Paul **'Aren't you this Egyptian, this troublemaker we've had in Jerusalem before?'** And Paul in **verse 39 of chapter 21**, he says, **'I'm a man, which am a Jew, from Tarsus, Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city, and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. And when he had given him license,'** Now he's heard Paul speak Greek now, he said **'You can speak Greek?'** he had asked him, **'and when he had given him license then,'** now Paul is on the steps of the Antonio Fortress, overseeing the Jewish Court of the Gentiles and the Jewish Temple area, there may be 100,000 people present, this is one of the Feasts. I have been in the Temple Courts on Ramadan, and there are 60,000 Muslims there, and there is still room. So you have to imagine, Paul is up on the steps of the Antonio Fortress, and all of Judaism, and all of these people spread in front of him, he's had a burden for his own people. As far as Paul is concerned, this may be one of the most remarkable anticipated experiences since he has been a believer, speaking out, knowing so well their traditions and ways and so forth. So he says to the Tribune, **'Give me license, allow me to do this,'** **"Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence,"** that has to be the Holy Ghost, with this crowd, **"he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue, saying, (verse 40 of chapter 21)** Now, there is a dispute whether this is Aramaic or Hebrew, for our purposes this evening it doesn't make a big difference. Ah, possibly in Hebrew, which would have certainly said to them immediately, this is not a Gentile, he knows Biblical Hebrew, which they were used to hearing. So either in the Hebrew or Aramaic, you can have your own opinion. This is the first of five public defenses Paul will make, we'll follow through the rest of the Book of Acts.

*Paul's 1st Public Defense Occurs In Jerusalem At
The End Of His 3rd Missionary Journey*

He begins by saying, **“Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.” (verse 1)** “my defence” *my apologia*, it’s where we get the word “apologetics” from, defending his faith. **“(And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.” (verses 2-3)** Now he makes an appeal both to the Hellenists and to the Judeans in one sentence, he uses a long Greek compound word “brought up in this city,” which tells us about the fact he came there probably at 12 or 14 years of age, brought there by his parents to the School of Gamaliel. **“as ye all are this day” ‘I can understand, I can relate, I know why you’re upset.’** “Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel” is an endorsement to any religious Jew. The Talmud says that Gamaliel is the grandson of Hillel, Hillel as the Jews claimed is the greatest rabbi in this entire era. The Mishna said that when Rabbon, not rabbi, Rabbon, a rabbi’s rabbi, *“When Rabbon Gamaliel died, the glory of the Torah died.”* It’s written in the Mishna, *“When Rabbon Gamaliel died, the glory of the Torah ceased, and that separateness and purity died.”* That’s the regards they held Gamaliel in. So he said **‘I was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, in the strictest manner after the law,’ “And I persecuted this way”** Christianity, notice he says **“unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.” (verse 4)** he was responsible for the death of many believers. And you think what that means to him. In his charge to the Ephesian elders in chapter 20 he said **‘Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to the church of God which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, feed the flock of God, which is among you, whom he has paid for in his own blood.’** Now he says here, **‘I persecuted this way unto death.’** Imagine what it is like for him to look back and realize what he had done, and now to be forgiven. **“I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.”** Look, I don’t know what your personal history is, but you didn’t do anything that should be hanging over your head this evening, Paul murdered the Church, he made Christians blaspheme the name of Jesus at the point of a sword, he destroyed Christian families, Christian homes. Luke tells us he ravaged the Church, like a wild beast, he was for all intense purposes the anti-christ in the area of Judea and Samaria, there was no more vile man or greater threat to

the Church in his day. And now Paul is standing before them in the grace of the Lord Jesus, realizing the one he had hated and persecuted was in fact the Messiah of Israel, it's burning in his heart. And at this moment his heart must be pounding in his chest, as they're all quietly listening, he wants to give this testimony of Jesus Christ. Thinking of the things he said, **"I persecuted this way unto the death, biding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem for to be punished."** (verses 4-5) He says *'Many here can bear witness of that.'* **"And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me."** (verse 6) Chapter 26, verse 13, when he's giving this testimony, he says it was brighter than the noonday sun. He says it was about noon. He said when the light appeared from heaven it so out-shown the noonday sun. Now any of you who have been in the Middle East, anybody whose been in this area in Israel, you know what it's like when the noonday sun is blistering, it's brilliant, it lights up the sky to a brilliant blue. Paul says the light that shone so darkened the noonday sun that everybody fell to the ground. He's talking about the glory of the Lord, Jesus. He says **"suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord?"** he knows it was as Divine experience **"And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest."** (verses 6c-8) Now King James says "Jesus of Nazareth," what it really says here that he answered and said **"I am Jesus the Nazarene,"** and it's the only time Jesus uses that term of himself in all of Paul's testimonies. He said the voice from heaven said **"I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom thou persecutest,"** **"And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."** (verse 9) It tells us in chapter 9, they heard the sound of the voice, they didn't hear an diction, they didn't hear any pronunciation, they heard something, remember like the disciples that were with the Lord, they heard the Father, they thought it was thunder, but they didn't hear any words pronounced. Here he says, it doesn't contradict chapter 9, he says *'they didn't hear the voice, they didn't understand what was said of him that spake with me.'* **"And I said, What**

shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.” (verse 10) Now he’s going to say ‘I have to be led by the hand, because of the glory of the light I couldn’t see.’

The Way The Lord Leads Us Is Through Progressive Revelation

Paul says **‘What do you want me to do, Lord?’** Here’s a situation where Jesus Christ actually appears to him, knocks him to the ground, speaks to him, and he says **‘What do you want me to do, Lord?’** And he says **‘Go into Damascus, and there you’ll be told,’** and he says, interesting, **‘all of the things which are appointed for thee to do’** the present tense, **‘the things that have been appointed, and stand appointed today, they’re already set aside,’** but the Lord gives him no details. Wouldn’t you like it if he gave you more details sometimes? [yup, I find myself constantly in this situation, and I don’t like it.] Paul wants the blueprint, he wants the five year plan. **‘What do I do now?’** And you think if the Lord came to your bedroom and he appeared there, and the light was so bright it knocked you out of bed and you’re laying on the floor saying *‘Lord, what do you want me to do?’* and he said *‘Get up in the morning and eat breakfast,’* you’d think *‘Awh come-on, give Lord, this is pretty dramatic, I need more than that.’* The Lord says to him **‘Get up, and go to Damascus, next step, and when you’re obedient that far and get there, then the next thing will be told you of all the things that are already prepared for you to do.’** You know, here’s the thing, I think because he loves us, he holds us accountable for the light that we have. So if he would come to us and give us the ten year plan, and we only want to know that so we can figure out whether we want to argue with him about it or not anyway. He said to the disciples **‘I have many things to say unto you, but you’re not ready to bear them yet.’** I think if the Lord said *‘I want you to do this today,’* and we’re obedient to the light we receive, we’re rewarded for that. If we are knuckleheads and we won’t yield to that, then we’re only given account for step B, not step C, D, F and G. I think because the Lord loves us, his calling, his directions for us are a progressive revelation. If you take the next step, he reveals the next thing. And I think he leads that way, and

gives light, because he loves us. Because we give account for the amount of light we have. So, the Lord appears, you would think he would get the whole spiel here. He says **'What do you want me to do, Lord?'** he said, **'Well get up,'** *I was going to do that, 'go into Damascus,' 'that's where I was headed,'* **"and there it shall be told thee of all the things which are appointed for thee to do."** (verse 10b) no more details than that, **'just get up and go, we'll talk later.'**

*God's Calling Is A Progressive Revelation, So That We
Might Go And Bear Much Fruit -- It Has Purpose*

"And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus." (verse 11) Isn't it interesting, here's the tyrant, Paul the apostle, member of the Sanhedrin, letter from the high priest, full of great authority, he's being led like a child, this is not the entrance he had planned on making into Damascus. He's talking to this crowd now, **"And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,"** (verse 12) he's softening them, this was a devout Jewish man who studied the law of Moses, **"having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him."** (verse 13) **'I was granted my sight, I was able to see.'** **"And he said, The God of our fathers,"** isn't it interesting here, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, **"hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth."** (verse 14) the Hebrew idiom, they would know right away he's speaking of the LORD. Now Paul knew, it says here, that he's chosen to know his will. Paul knew that he would bear the name of Christ before kings and rulers, to the Gentiles. He still needed daily guidance, just like you and I. You and I know some parts of the big picture in regards to our own lives. I mean, I know on Sunday I'm supposed to get up and do the three Sunday morning services. I know that much, and then I know on Sunday afternoon I'm supposed to go home and study and stay awake if I can, as best I can, and come back on Sunday evening, I know that. But I still have a great sense of God's calling that I don't understand. I still believe that there's more to do. [see

<https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.htm>

I for some ideas on what may be left for us to do.] I believe we live in urgent times, I believe God still has other things for me to do. I'm not quitting, that's not my point. I just know what I'm supposed to do, but I believe his calling is a progressive revelation, and I believe as I obey him and seek him, there's more that's revealed. And we find that here, he says **'He's chosen you,'** now he's chosen us, Paul would write that for us, Jesus says in **John 15:16, 'I have chosen you, you've not chosen me, I've chosen you, that you might go forth and bear much fruit.'** Paul when he writes to the Ephesians says to them **'that we have been chosen in him from the foundation of the world.'** That's you, and me, not just Paul, yes, Paul is a chosen vessel, so are you, so are you. **"The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth."** (verse 14) **'this is the will of God, that you would believe on the One he has sent,'** I'm glad we know that. **"and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth"** which we hear through the Scripture. **"For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard."** (verse 15) and how Christ had come to him so remarkably here on the Road to Damascus, and then the testimony of the risen Christ. Ananias continues speaking to Paul, **"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."** (verse 16) rise and be baptized, wash away thy sins, the idea is calling on the name of the Lord, that's where forgiveness is. Now no doubt Paul is already converted, if he's saying "Lord." If he had persecuted Christ, and when he appears to him and says **'I'm Jesus the Nazarene who you've been persecuting,'** and he says **'What do you want me to do, Lord?'** this is just what I believe, you can have your own opinion, I think if you're traveling somewhere and on a bright brilliant sunny day, and the Lord appears to you and his light is brighter than the sun and it knocks you to the ground, and you say to him **'Who are you?'** and he says **'I am Jesus,'** and then you say **'What do you want me to do, Lord?'** I tend to believe you're a believer at that point in time. But Ananias, again, imagine, talking about this before, the boundaries he has to step over. Because when the Lord tells Ananias to go talk to Paul, he said **'Lord, we heard much,'** you know, you would think if the Lord comes to you in a vision and talks to you, you'd just say 'ok.' Ananias he argues and said **'Lord, we heard much evil about him, this guy, all you hear, Lord this is a BAD man, you don't understand who he is.'**

He had murdered Christians, no doubt the church in Damascus had gotten themselves ready as they heard this man was coming. And Ananias has to step across some huge lines to go and say these things, exercise incredible faith to go and say these things to this murdering man. And part of what he says to him, ***'this time the Lord sent to me, he's called you, be baptized, wash away your sins, calling on his name,'*** making sure he's converted. ***"And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance;"*** (verse 17) Now he passes over some years here, he's boiling down his testimony for this Jewish crowd, and that's the present audience standing in front of him, he says ***"I was in a trance" 'extosis, I was in a state of ecstasy' "and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me."*** (verse 18) Now this is another appearance of the Lord, the Lord appears to him, and says ***"Make haste, get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: and when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him."*** (verses 18-20) Isn't it amazing, again, you'd think if you're in a state of ecstasy and the Lord appears to you and says *'I want you to get out of Jerusalem,'* for most of you, you'd say *'Yes, Lord.'* But I'm also greatly comforted that Paul is much like us, in that he argues with the Lord. How many times does the Holy Spirit say something specific to us, *'I want you to do this,'* how many times does he say *'I want you to keep your mouth closed,'* or *'I want you to open your mouth in this circumstance,'* or *'I want you go to love this person,'* or *'I don't want you to give them the answer you're thinking about giving them now, don't you dare say that.'* Here's the great apostle, he's in a state of ecstasy, the Lord appears to him and says ***'I want you to leave Jerusalem,'*** and he argues, ***'Lord, you're overlooking something here, they know who I am, they know my reputation, they know how I've beaten and drug men and women out of their houses, this is a great opportunity for me to witness.'*** Let me tell you something, if you're arguing with the Lord, I can assure you of two things, only two things, easy to remember. You can remember two things, right? If you're arguing with the Lord, these are the two things, Number One, you're wrong, you ain't God, just getting the picture here, clear in my mind, Number One, you're wrong, and

Number Two, you're gonna lose that argument. You may go fifteen rounds, he can go thirty if he has to, you're gonna collapse at some point. Wonderfully as we look at this, Paul says, **'But Lord, did you ever think of this? did you ever think of this?, they know who I am, and maybe if I can do this...'** look at **verse 21**, **"And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."** The Lord's not big on debating, he says to Paul **'You need to get out of Jerusalem,'** he listens to Paul giving him this whole spiel, **'But Lord, I did this, I did that,'** and he says **'Depart.'** I'm thanking he's that simple, because I get that way.

The Crowd Is Quietly Listening To Paul Right Up Until He Mentions The Word "Gentiles" -- Then The Riot Explodes Again

"for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles." (verse 21b) Now, the crowd's there listening. **"And they gave him audience unto this word,"** in fact it's very specific, **"And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." (verse 22)** Now look, the Old Testament gave testimony to the fact that God would reach the Gentiles. But Judaism by this point had become so prejudiced, you know, they considered Gentiles *Presto-logs*, they were fit for the fuels of hell, that they were dogs, that they were no good, that they weren't fit to live. And there's such great prejudice, when he gets to the word "Gentiles," and there had been accusation he had brought Gentiles into the Court of Women, all heaven breaks lose here, and everything starts to go again, and they start screaming **'Away with such a fellow!'** and Jesus had stood there and they had cried a similar thing. Now they just don't want him out of Jerusalem, they want him off the planet now. **"Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live."** Now look, here is Paul, he is now consecrated to Christ, all of his learning, all of his language skills, all of his scholarship, all of his ability, and so far all he's been able to do is start two riots with all of that [here in Jerusalem, not in Asia Minor, Macedonia or Greece, where he was able to do much, because it was God's will for him to do that]. And now it all flairs up again. **"And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust in the air, the chief captain"** again the Greek here, the

Tribune **“commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.”** (verses 23-24) literally it’s plural here “by scourges.” So, the Tribune was probably the head officer in Jerusalem for the Feast. He had a thousand men under him, he had 10 Centurions, and each Centurion had 100 soldiers, sometimes it varied, 100, 110, but basically that was the structure. A Tribune oversaw 1000 men, at least 10 Centurions, and he may be the head honcho of Tribunes there, he seems to be giving the orders. Claudius Lysias, we’re going to find out his name is in the next chapter [see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claudius_Lysias], and he doesn’t understand Hebrew, so he listened till this point, now the riot starts up again, this is the second time he’s had to deal with this. He knows that his head is on the block if something goes wrong, so he says **‘I need to find out what’s going on,’** and this was common amongst the Romans, they take him and they string him up with leather thongs, or they stretch him over a pillar, and then he commands for him to be scourged. And again, those whips had pieces of metal, you remember Jesus was scourged. It says here “examine him,” it was a means of examining. If the person you’re scourging would begin to tell the story, because the point of the scourge was, it wrapped around the one you laid it on, you jerked it off, and that’s when it took pieces of flesh out. Josephus talks about one man he had seen scourged, that died of the scourging. Sometimes bowels were exposed. You remember Jesus, that’s the interesting thing, they were scourging him, as part of examining him, Pilate had said, **‘Are you a king?’** they’d gone back and forth, he orders him to be examined, to be scourged, and it tells us in **Isaiah 53, ‘as a lamb before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.’** And those that scourged him were awestruck. Because what they would do, if you wouldn’t say anything, they laid it on heavier and heavier. By the time they brought him back to Pilate, they must have taken Pilate aside and said **‘We’ve never seen anything like this before, this man did not cry out.’** And Pilate then took Jesus and put him in front of everyone and said **‘Eche homo, Behold, the man, behold the man.’** And here Paul, you know he would write in Philippians, **‘That I might know him, the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his suffering,’** we’re going to find out here he’s not ready for the fellowship of his sufferings. They’re threatening to scourge him, to examine him, **“that he”** Claudius Lysias **“might know wherefore they cried so**

against him. And as they bound him with thongs,” they’re in the process, they bound him with thongs, leather straps, **“Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain,”** the Tribune **“saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.”** (verses 24b-26) Now he can’t overturn the Tribune’s order, so he goes and he warns him, because the Tribune was a superior officer. He says to him, **“Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.”** Now, right around 2BC and around 5BC two laws were passed, the Porcean Law and the Julian Law, they basically said that no Roman citizen could be scourged, crucified or beaten, and particularly by a Roman official. So if this Tribune, Claudius Lysias allowed Paul, and if he was a Roman citizen, in fact to be scourged, it would probably cost him not only his career but his own life. So the Centurion knows that, he comes and warns him. Now, I’m amazed at Paul, that he waits this long. I mean, if I was in Paul’s sandals and I hear them say *‘Hey scourge this guy,’ ‘I’m a Roman, I’m a Roman, I’m a Roman!’* I’m telling everybody I’m a Roman at that point in time. But Paul seems to wait until the process begins, I don’t know if he’s waiting then to put them more on the defensive or to make them more careful. And then, notice, Claudius Lysias, they’re in the Antonio Fortress, **“Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea.”** (verse 27) he said, Yea, he affirmed, I’m a Roman. Now look, he doesn’t quiz him about it. He’s going to say something to him, because if you claimed to be a Roman citizen and you were lying, you were put to death. So all of that is taken, and known well here. And then the chief captain answered, he said, **“And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born.”** (verse 28) Under Claudius Caesar at this particular time, first to be a Roman citizen you had to be a resident of the city of Rome. That began to spread, Rome then allowed the *Just Italicum*, certain places like Philippi and so forth to take Roman status, be governed strictly by Roman officials from the city of Rome that would take up residence there. By the time Claudius is in they’re selling citizenship. In fact, his wife was notorious for doing favours and so, because they were greasing their palms with the money. This man, no doubt, that’s why his name was Lysias, because he had purchased his citizenship under Claudius, his name was changed then to Claudius Lysias, you look over in verse 26 in the next chapter, you can see that, that’s his name. He says to Paul

‘With a great sum of money I obtained this freedom,’ he calls it, ***‘my citizenship. And Paul said to him, But I was freeborn,’*** which is superior, ***‘I was born a Roman citizen.’*** And look, Roman citizens were given a document, that document said *“Diploma Citisus Romania,”* and it was carried in a little two-leaf wooden folder, if he had it with him, but it was given to Roman citizens. The interesting thing is, if he’s freeborn, that meant Paul’s father or Paul’s grandfather, and it seems his grandfather also, somehow in there, either had done a favour for Rome or had purchased citizenship, or were part of a Roman colony that was granted citizenship, and Paul says ***‘I’m freeborn.’*** Paul, I wonder how he looks at that, because he will appeal to his citizenship several times. It will bring him all the way to Caesar in Rome. And sometimes you and I, when we get to heaven [into the Kingdom of God as immortal beings after the 1st resurrection to immortality] I wonder what it will be like to see what went on in the lives of our fathers, and the lives of our grandfathers, and realize God was setting us up all along. He says, he’s going to tell you of all of the things he’s already prepared, present tense, have already been prepared and remain prepared for you to do. That’s why no doubt Paul, with great sensitivity, will say this, ***‘Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God, the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, governments, of the government, resist the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive unto themselves judgment. Rulers are not a terror to those who do good, but those who do evil,’*** and so forth. You know, Paul says that we are supposed to pray for our President, our rulers, and Paul wrote that when ***Nero*** was Caesar. We got a way better circumstance than that. So we should be praying for our leaders. Here is Paul, no doubt, he must have reflected on that, ***‘I was freeborn, I’m a Roman citizen.’*** It became very much part of God’s sovereignty and wisdom in his life as he thought about those things. He says ***‘I was freeborn.’*** ***“Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him:”*** they left him alone, took the scourges, ***“and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.”*** (verse 29) Even just to bind him was against the law. ***“On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.”*** (verse 30) Now, because he was accused and he was a Roman

citizen, Claudius Lysias knows he needs to go to Felix, that was the next step. He's going to put him in front of the Sanhedrin, and the Romans had divided Judea into five districts, each with their own, it was a different Roman word, sounded like Sanhedrin, and now they had all be consolidated under one Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, and even their influence had expanded by Roman permission. He knows he needs to put him in front of the Jews, to make clear what the accusation is. He can't show up to Felix and not have things clear, and waste Felix's time. So he understands here, he needs to know for a certainty therefore why he's accused of the Jews. **“he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down and set him before them.”** Now, there was no chapter break when it was written. [The next expository study will go into this meeting between Paul, the Tribune Claudius Lysias and the Jewish Sanhedrin so Claudius Lysias will know how to present this case to Felix. We'll start up there in the next study] [transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 22:1-30, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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1

Who was the Tribune Claudius Lysias who apprehended the apostle Paul? see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claudius_Lysias