

acts

OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 12
September 22
Acts 22-26

“Hear the Defense That I Now Make Before You”

We last left Paul in the city of Jerusalem, falsely accused of defiling the temple.

Then all the city was stirred up, and the people ran together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut. And as they were seeking to kill him, word came to the tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. He at once took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. Then the tribune came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. He inquired who he was and what he had done. Some in the crowd were shouting one thing, some another. And as he could not learn the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks. And when he came to the steps, he was actually carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, for the mob of the people followed, crying out, “Away with him!”

As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek? Are you not the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?” Paul replied, “I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I beg you, permit me to speak to the people.” And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language, saying:

“Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you.”

And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet. (21:30-22:2)

Paul told the story of Jesus changing his life, but many of the Jews had heard enough when he shared Jesus’ call to “Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles” (22:21). Some even said that Paul shouldn’t be allowed to live! Over the next few chapters, Paul had many opportunities to share the good news and good reasons for faith in Jesus Christ:

- ◆ 22:30-23:22: Paul before the chief priests and Jewish council; some made a plot and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul
 - ◆ 23:23-24:27: Paul before Felix the governor
 - ◆ 25:1-12: Paul before Festus the governor
 - ◆ 25:13-26:32: Paul before Agrippa the king
- Paul had been assured by the Lord that he would serve as a witness in Rome, and to Rome he would go.



For Class & Family Discussion:

- After he had been beaten by a crowd that was seeking to kill him, why would Paul even take the time or make the effort to tell his story to the people in [Acts 22:1-21](#)?
- In [22:3](#), Paul shares that he had been “educated at the feet of Gamaliel.” This isn’t the first time we’ve heard that name. Do you remember what had happened in [5:33-41](#)? What can we know about this man?
- In his own words, according to [22:4-5](#), what had Paul been prepared to do before he was convinced of the truth about Jesus? What changed? Why did he change so dramatically?
- The crowd stopped listening to Paul in [22:21-22](#). Why? What does this tell us about the crowd?
- In [22:23-29](#), what did Paul do when he was about to be flogged? Is there anything we can learn from this?
- In [23:1-10](#), as Paul stood before the chief priests and all the Jewish council, he perceived something. Is there anything we can learn from his approach in that situation?
- What impact do you think the event described in [23:11](#) would have had on Paul and his perspective?
- As Paul stands before authority after authority—governors and even a king!—what can we learn from the way he conducts himself? As disciples of Jesus in the 21st century, what should we take away from this section of Acts?