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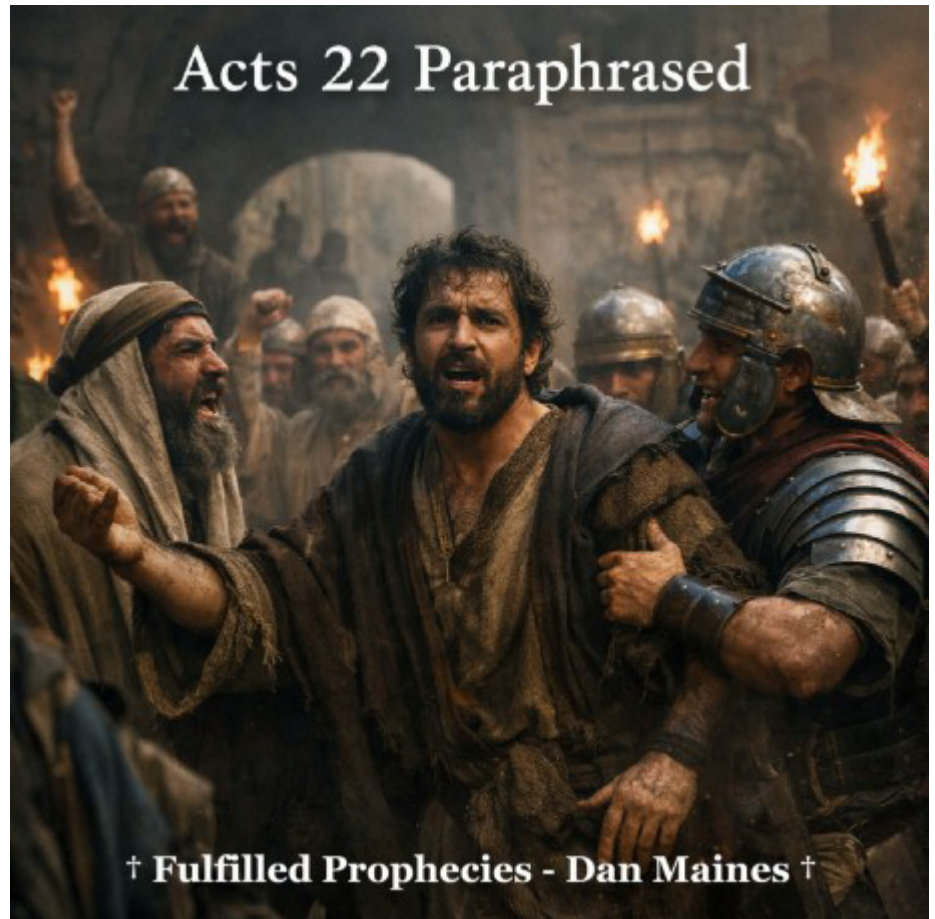
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Acts 22 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Acts 22 Paraphrased

Introduction

† This chapter records Paul's defense before the Jewish crowd, showing how his calling came directly from Christ

† It reveals the transition from the old covenant zeal to the fulfilled reality in Christ

† It confirms that the message to the Gentiles was always part of God's plan (Isaiah 49:6)

Acts 22:1

Men, brothers and fathers, listen to my defense that I'm now making to you

† Paul addresses them with respect, showing he isn't rejecting Israel but speaking to them

† This reflects how the gospel came to the Jew first before going to the nations (Romans 1:16)

† His defense isn't rebellion, it's fulfillment of what they were taught

Acts 22:2

When they heard he was speaking to them in the Hebrew language, they became more quiet, and he said

† Speaking Hebrew connects him to their heritage, showing he's not a foreign enemy

† This silence shows their respect for their own language and traditions

† God meets people where they are to reveal truth

Acts 22:3

I'm a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but raised in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just like all of you are today

† Paul establishes his credibility as fully trained in the law

† His past zeal mirrors theirs, showing he understands their mindset

† This exposes that zeal without knowledge leads to error (Romans 10:2)

Acts 22:4

I persecuted this Way to the point of death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons

† Paul admits his former opposition, showing honesty and transformation

† The Way refers to the early believers in Christ

† His past proves that even the most zealous opponent can be

changed

Acts 22:5

As also the high priest and all the council of elders can testify, from them I received letters to the brothers, and started off for Damascus to bring those there also bound to Jerusalem to be punished

† His authority came from the Jewish leadership

† This shows persecution was officially sanctioned

† The system itself opposed Christ, proving the old order was passing away

Acts 22:6

But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noon, suddenly a very bright light flashed around me from heaven

† The light represents divine intervention

† Christ interrupts Paul's mission directly

† This shows salvation is initiated by God, not man

Acts 22:7

I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me

† Persecuting believers is persecuting Christ Himself

† This reveals the unity between Christ and His people

† It confirms the living presence of Christ after His resurrection

Acts 22:8

And I answered, Who are You, Lord And He said to me, I'm Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting

† Jesus identifies Himself as the one Paul opposed

† This confirms Jesus is alive and reigning

† The name Nazarene ties Him to His earthly identity and fulfillment

Acts 22:9

Those who were with me saw the light, but didn't understand

the voice of the One who was speaking to me

† Not everyone receives the same revelation

† Spiritual understanding is given, not assumed

† This shows God's selective calling

Acts 22:10

I said, What shall I do, Lord And the Lord said to me, Get up and go into Damascus, and there you'll be told of all that has been appointed for you to do

† Paul submits immediately to Christ

† His mission was already appointed

† God's purpose is established before our actions (Ephesians 2:10)

Acts 22:11

But since I couldn't see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus

† Physical blindness reflects spiritual transformation

† He who thought he saw clearly is now dependent

† God humbles before He commissions

Acts 22:12

A certain Ananias, a devout man according to the Law, and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there

† Ananias is respected within Jewish circles

† This shows continuity between law-observant Jews and believers

† Not all Jews rejected Christ

Acts 22:13

Came to me, and standing near said to me, Brother Saul, receive your sight And at that very moment I looked up at him

† Healing confirms divine authority

† Calling him brother shows immediate acceptance

† Restoration follows obedience

Acts 22:14

And he said, The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from His mouth

† Paul is chosen by the same God of Israel

† The Righteous One refers to Christ

† This connects the gospel directly to Israel's promises

Acts 22:15

For you'll be a witness for Him to all men of what you've seen and heard

† Paul's mission extends to all men, not just Jews

† Witnessing is based on real encounter

† This fulfills the expansion to the nations

Acts 22:16

Now why do you delay Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name

† Baptism symbolizes cleansing and identification with Christ

† Calling on His name shows faith and submission

† This marks entry into the new covenant life

Acts 22:17

It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance

† God continues to reveal Himself in Jerusalem

† The temple is still standing but about to pass

† This moment bridges old and new covenant realities

Acts 22:18

And I saw Him saying to me, Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they won't accept your testimony about Me

† Jerusalem rejects the message

† This fulfills the pattern of prophetic rejection

† Judgment is tied to this refusal

Acts 22:19

And I said, Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in You

† Paul appeals to his past as credibility

† He expects his transformation to persuade them

† But rejection isn't based on evidence, it's hardness of heart

Acts 22:20

And when the blood of Your witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving and watching out for the coats of those who were killing him

† Paul confesses involvement in Stephen's death

† This shows deep repentance

† Stephen's martyrdom was a turning point (Acts 7:59-60)

Acts 22:21

And He said to me, Go, because I'll send you far away to the Gentiles

† This is the turning point of the chapter

† The Gentile mission was commanded by Christ

† This fulfills God's promise to include the nations

Acts 22:22

They listened to him up to this statement, and then they raised their voices and said, Away with such a man from the earth, for he shouldn't be allowed to live

† Their anger is triggered by Gentile inclusion

† This reveals their rejection of God's plan

† The same pattern led to Jerusalem's judgment

Acts 22:23

And as they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air

† This shows intense rage and rejection

† Their reaction mirrors past rebellion

† Emotional response replaces truth

Acts 22:24

The commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, stating that he should be examined by scourging so that he might find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way

† Roman authority steps in

† This shows the tension between Jewish hostility and Roman control

† God uses even authorities to protect His servant

Acts 22:25

But when they stretched him out with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who's a Roman and uncondemned

† Paul uses his legal rights

† Wisdom doesn't reject lawful protection

† God provides means of deliverance

Acts 22:26

When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and told him, saying, What are you about to do For this man is a Roman

† Roman citizenship changes the situation

† Fear shifts from Paul to the authorities

† Authority structures are used by God

Acts 22:27

The commander came and said to him, Tell me, are you a Roman And he said, Yes

† Paul's identity brings protection

† Truth changes outcomes

† God positions His people strategically

Acts 22:28

The commander answered, I acquired this citizenship with a

large sum of money And Paul said, But I was actually born a citizen

† Paul's status is higher than the commander's

† This shows providence in Paul's life

† God's preparation started long before this moment

Acts 22:29

Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him, and the commander also was afraid when he found out that he was a Roman, because he had put him in chains

† Fear replaces aggression

† Justice restrains injustice

† God reverses situations quickly

Acts 22:30

But on the next day, wishing to know for certain why he had been accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the council to assemble, and brought Paul down and set him before them

† Paul is brought before the Jewish leadership again

† This continues the confrontation between old covenant leaders and fulfilled truth

† The stage is set for further testimony

Historical References

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews, describes the same hostility of Jerusalem toward perceived threats

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, records early Christian persecution by Jewish authorities

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata, confirms the spread of the gospel to the Gentiles as fulfillment

How it applies to us today

† We're reminded that zeal without truth leads to opposition against God

† We're called to stand firm even when truth is rejected

† We see that God's plan always included all nations, and it's already fulfilled in Christ

† We trust that God uses every circumstance, even opposition, to accomplish His purpose

Q & A Appendix

Q Why did Paul speak in Hebrew

A To connect with his audience and show he wasn't abandoning Israel (Acts 21:40)

Q What does the light from heaven represent

A Divine revelation and the authority of Christ (Acts 9:3)

Q Why did they react violently to the Gentiles being mentioned

A Because they rejected the idea of equal inclusion (Acts 13:46)

Q Was Paul's mission planned ahead of time

A Yes, God appointed his work before he carried it out (Galatians 1:15-16)

Q What does this chapter prove about fulfillment

A That the gospel had already moved beyond Israel exactly as prophesied (Isaiah 49:6)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Acts 22

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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