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By Dan Maines

Acts 22

Acts 22:1-2

"Brothers and fathers, hear my defense which I now offer to you." And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect, they became even more quiet; and he said,

† Paul addressed them with respect, calling them brothers and fathers. Speaking Hebrew gained their attention and showed his identification with Israel.

Acts 22:3

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strictness of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today."

† Paul established his credentials as a faithful Jew. Gamaliel was a leading Pharisee teacher, respected even in rabbinic tradition.

† The Mishnah (Avot 1.16) highlights Gamaliel's prominence, confirming Paul's education under him.

Acts 22:4-5

"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brothers, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished."

† Paul confessed his past as a persecutor of the church, showing his zeal once blinded him. His testimony was verifiable through the council.

Acts 22:6-8

"But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus around noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me, and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' And I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'"

† Paul's conversion was centered on an encounter with the risen Christ. Persecuting the church was persecuting Christ Himself.

Acts 22:9-11

"And those who were with me saw the light, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me. And I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Get up and go on into Damascus, and there you will be told of everything that has been appointed for you to do.' But since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus."

† Paul's blindness symbolized his former spiritual blindness. His commissioning was divinely appointed.

Acts 22:12-13

"Now a certain Ananias, a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, and well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there, came to me, and standing nearby he said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I looked up at him."

† Ananias was respected among Jews, validating Paul's testimony. His healing of Paul showed God's grace.

Acts 22:14-16

"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 message from His mouth. For you will be a witness for Him to all people of what you have seen and heard. Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins by calling on His name.'"

† Paul's commission was to testify to all people. Baptism marked his cleansing and entry into Christ.

Acts 22:17-18

"It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance, and I saw Him saying to me, 'Hurry, and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not

accept your testimony about Me."

† Paul was warned early that his mission would face rejection in Jerusalem. This matched the prophets who were rejected in their own city.

Acts 22:19-20

"And I said, 'Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in You. And when the blood of Your witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing nearby and approving, and I was taking care of the cloaks of those who were killing him.'"

† Paul again confessed his past, connecting himself to Stephen's martyrdom. His conversion was a testimony of grace.

Acts 22:21

"And He said to me, 'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'"

† The mission to the Gentiles was God's command. This statement became the trigger for renewed Jewish outrage.

Acts 22:22-23

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 should not be allowed to live!" And as they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air,

† The mention of Gentiles enraged them, revealing their hardened exclusivism.

† Josephus (Wars 2.17.2) describes similar crowd outbursts in Jerusalem, confirming Luke's accuracy.

Acts 22:24-25

the commander ordered that he be brought into the barracks, saying that he was to be interrogated by flogging so that he

would find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way. But when they stretched him out with straps, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?"

† Paul wisely used his Roman citizenship to avoid illegal torture. Roman law protected its citizens.

† Cicero (Against Verres 2.5.66) affirms that it was unlawful to bind or flog an uncondemned Roman citizen.

Acts 22:26-29

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." The commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" And he said, "Yes." The commander answered, "I acquired this citizenship for a large sum of money." And Paul said, "But I was actually born a citizen." Therefore, those who were about to interrogate him immediately backed away from him; and the commander also was afraid when he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had put him in chains.

† Paul's citizenship again provided protection. His status gave him legal standing in Rome's world.

Acts 22:30

Now on the next day, wanting to know for certain why Paul had been accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Council to assemble, and he brought Paul down and placed him before them.

† Paul's case was now to be heard by the Sanhedrin. God's plan moved forward toward Rome.

How it applies to us today

† Testimony is powerful. Paul shared his story, showing how God's grace transforms the worst sinner.

† Believers must be ready to confess Christ, even when misunderstood or persecuted.

† God uses both spiritual authority and earthly citizenship to advance His purposes.

† The mission to the nations is central, and opposition to it reveals hardened hearts.

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

Source Index

† Mishnah, Avot 1.16 – Gamaliel's prominence as a teacher

† Josephus, Wars 2.17.2 – Crowd outbursts in Jerusalem

† Cicero, Against Verres 2.5.66 – Illegality of flogging a Roman citizen

† Early church writings – Dionysius and early leaders citing Paul's testimony

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