

Acts Chapter 26: Paul's Defense Before Agrippa

- Paul considered Agrippa an expert in all the Jewish customs
- His defense was more than a defense of himself but a defense of the resurrected Lord. (See 2 Cor.4.5).
- Paul lived as a Pharisee in his early life (Pharisees believed in the resurrection).
- He emphasized that he would not mistreat Jews, disparage the Law, or defile the temple.
- He believed what most Jews believed that the Messiah was coming and that gave them great hope.
 - The Jews came to believe however that the Messiah would restore the glory of Israel. (See Luke 1.67-79; Acts 1.6; 3.20, 21).
 - They also hoped in the resurrection of the dead (Luke 7. 18-23; Daniel 12.2; Job 19.25-27; Psa. 16.10; Isa. 26.19; Hosea 6.2)
- V.8: “Why is it considered incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?”
 - If God could make the world and all its contents, why does it seem so hard for Him to raise the dead????
- V.9: “I thought that I must do many things contrary (hostile) to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.”
 - Imprisoned the saints; I cast my vote for their death; pursued them even to foreign cities.
- V.12: Recounts his journey to Damascus and his “meeting” with the Lord.
 - “It is hard for you to kick against the goads.”
 - “Kick against the goad”: an agricultural term...6 to 8 foot long stick sharpened on one end. The farmer plowed with a one handle plow and carried the goad in his other hand. If an unruly ox would kick back then the farmer would prod it into the ox to “get his attention.”
 - Agrippa’s own father had learned (too late) that he could not kick against the goads either. (See Acts 12).
- Question: How did this former persecutor come to undergo so great a change? Paul explained the 3rd account of his conversion.

- Jesus appeared to Paul to qualify him to be an apostle. See Acts 22.14,15; Acts 1.21,22;
- The Gospel would empower both Jew and Gentiles (us) to turn from darkness to light. See Rom.13.12; 2 Cor.4.6; Eph. 5.8; 1 Thess. 5.5.
- “I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision.”
 - How could he do otherwise???
- “So having obtained help from God, I stand to this day.”
- V.24-27: “Paul you are beside yourself (out of your mind).” Greek word for maniac in English.
 - “The king knows about these matters; none of these things have escaped his notice. “These things were not done in a corner.”
 - Christianity was no secret order. Agrippa was born during Christ’s personal ministry.
 - “King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do.”
 - “In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian.”
 - 2nd time the word Christian is used in the book of Acts
 - Was he sincere? It is hard to say for sure. Not totally convinced, or he was sympathetic to Paul’s cause, or he was not totally convinced, or he was being sarcastic.
 - Paul appeared to take his words at face value.
 - “I would wish to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am.”
- V.30-32: Next stop Rome!
 - Agrippa: This man is not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment and I would have set him free had he not appealed to Caesar.