

Acts 22:11-21

Paul's Continued Life Story

Paul stresses his identity with the audience....

- ***That he had the help from a lover of the law (devotee), Ananias...and in whom the Jews respected.***
- ***That he had not come to destroy the ancestral faith but to fulfill it.***

Paul makes the point of stating that he did not want to leave the Jewish people (his own) but that God told him to go to the Gentiles...Paul states that he argued with God...but God insisted that Paul must take the gospel (the message) to the Gentiles.

Verse 14...Is the summary of the life of Paul..and also is the summary of the Christian life.

Three (3) things:

1. ***To Know the Will of God....it is the first aim of the Christian to know God's will and to obey it.***
2. ***To See the Just One....it is the aim of the Christian to walk daily in the presence of the Risen Lord.***
3. ***To Hear God's Voice....it is the aim of the Christian to be listening to the voice of God above the voices of the world to tell him where to go and what to do.***

Acts 22:22-30

The Opposition...Embittered Thinking

The mention of the Gentiles turned the crowd against Paul...

Why?

- *It was not that the Jews objected to the preaching to the Gentiles*
- *They objected to the Gentiles being offered privileges before they first accepted circumcision and the Law.*
- *The Jews would have accepted Paul if he preached the yoke of Judaism to the Gentiles*
- *Paul's preaching the grace of Christianity to the Gentiles turned the Jews to rage.*

Disapproval by the Jews was shown the common way:

- *Shouted*
- *Waved Their Garments*
- *Threw Dust in the Air*

The Commander had to deal with this uprising right away...because he could not afford a riot to take place.

- *He decided to scourge Paul*
(Not punishment??...It was supposed to be a way of extracting the truth or confession)
The scourge was a leather whip studded at intervals with sharp pieces of bone and lead. Few survived it in their right senses and many died under it.
- *He decides that Paul could have his job...or his life when Paul declares his citizenship.*
Why?
⇒ *Because a Roman citizen could not be scourged...*
⇒ *A free man could not be under condemnation by a soldier or commander without trial.*

Acts 23:1-10

The Strategy of Paul

Lots of drama in these verses:

- *Paul placed himself on equal level with the Sanhedrin court by calling them "Brethren"...the normal beginning when addressing the court was "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel"*

- *The high priest ordered Paul to be struck (the high priest was going against the law.... "He who strikes the cheek of an Israelite, strikes, as it were, the glory of God. "*
- *Paul calls the high priest a "white-washed wall"....Paul was calling the high priest a cover up of the rotten wood behind the paint....a white-washed tomb (A Jew who touches a dead body was to place his body in defilement...tombs were whitewashed so the dead body area could be identified.)....*
- *When Paul said that he did not know that Ananias was a high priest...etc. etc.....Paul stated it not to condemn himself but to question this evil high priest as being one who should have that office.*
- *Paul states that he is a Pharisee.....and is in on trial for the hope of the resurrection of the dead*
The Sanhedrin court has Pharisees and Sadducees. Pharisees believe in the resurrection of the dead..
- *Paul knew what he was doing...knew where he could touch their conscience and knew how to stir the crowd..*
- *The commander knew he must remove Paul from their midst...and brought him back into the barracks.*

Acts 23:11-24 *The Plot Unmasked*

We see two points of interest in this passage:

1. *We see the lengths to which the Jews would go to eliminate Paul.*
 - *Under certain circumstance the Jews regarded murder as justifiable. Paul, in their eyes, was a public danger to morals and the Law.*
 - *40 men made a vow...called a "cherem." In effect they were saying "May God curse me if I fail to do this."*
2. *We see the lengths to which the Roman Government would go in order to administer impartial justice.*
 - *Paul was a prisoner*
 - *Paul was a Roman citizen...in effect he had the right to be protected for fair trial*

Acts 23:25-35 *The Captain's Letter... and the Governor's First Look at* *The Charges Against Paul*

Felix was the governor to hear the case. The captain made a clear and precise statement (in his letter to the Governor) that he did not hear anything made by his accusers that would deserve death or bonds for this Roman citizen.

Felix wants to wait for Paul's accusers to be present before he hears the case.

What was Paul trying to do by pushing this case to the highest court? Was he doing this to prove that he was innocent of the charges?.....Give me your thoughts!