

Paul—Acts 26

Before King Agrippa

I. Additional Scriptures/Notes...

- 01. 26:1... Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself**—“It cannot be supposed that Paul expected that his defense would be attended with a release from confinement, for he had himself appealed to the Roman emperor, [Act 25:11](#). His design in speaking before Agrippa was, doubtless: (1) To vindicate his character, and obtain Agrippa’s attestation to his innocence, that thus he might allay the anger of the Jews; (2) To obtain a correct representation of the case to the emperor, as Festus had desired this in order that Agrippa might enable him to make a fair statement of the case [Act 25:26-27](#); and, (3) To defend his own conversion, and the truth of Christianity, and to preach the gospel in the hearing of Agrippa and his attendants, with a hope that their minds might be impressed by the truth, and that they might be converted to God” [Barnes’ Notes].
- 02. 26:8... Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you**—“INCREDIBLE is from *apistos*, unfaithful, unbelievable, beyond believing. ... The Pharisees, as well as the majority of the Jews of that day, believed in a resurrection. They believed in angels and spirits as well. Paul had seen Jesus after he was raised, as had the other apostles, some women, and more than 500 brethren at once (1 Corinthians 15:1-8)” [Harold Littrell, *A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, p. 336].
- 03. 26:11... being exceedingly mad against them**—“*emmainomai*--to act as a maniac. To be mad or furious with or against any person or thing” [*The Complete Word Study Dictionary*].
- 04. 26:22... saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come**—“Delivering no new doctrine, but maintaining only that the prophecies had been fulfilled. As he had done this only, there was no reason for the opposition and persecution of the Jews” [*Barnes’ Notes*].
- 05. 26:28-29... Almost thou persuadest me... I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds**—“IN A LITTLE (ALMOST in KJV, DRL) is from *en holigo*, in little. YOU ARE PERSUADING ME is from *me peitheis*—present active indicative, ‘You are persuading me.’ ... Agrippa was saying, ‘In a little you are persuading me to be (or become) a Christian.’ The KJV renders *en holigo* (as used here) as, ‘Almost.’ That is very close to the true meaning in this construction. Paul’s response to the king’s statement indicates that he understood King Agrippa to say it with that meaning” [Littrell, p. 346].

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

III. Summary.

There is no reluctance on the part of Paul to “stand and deliver” his message. His confident posture is based upon the revelation he has received directly from the Lord Jesus. Keep in mind also the additional promise recorded earlier that he would bear witness at Rome (23:11). The more opportunities he has on his way to Rome to tell about his relationship with Jesus

Christ the better as far as he is concerned. With great courage and persuasiveness, he continues to defend himself, knowing in the defense he will likewise preach the gospel. Even King Agrippa is moved by the message Paul presents. We are told that he is ALMOST PERSUADED (v. 28). I do not take that to be a sneeringly sarcastic remark from the king, as some do, but rather a genuine sentiment. The sad thing about being ALMOST persuaded is that it does not suffice; with the interchange of two letters, the word becomes two: AM LOST! Obviously the case against Paul remains unproved with Agrippa, Bernice, and Festus acknowledging as much.

IV. Outline.

1. Paul defends himself before Agrippa (Acts 26:1-29).
 - 01) Paul gratefully acknowledges the opportunity of appearing before Agrippa (26:1-3).
 - 02) Paul tells of his early background (4-8).
 - 03) Paul tells that he was once a persecutor (9-10).
 - 04) Paul tells of his conversion (11-19).
 - 05) Paul's evangelistic activity (20-23).
 - 06) Festus interrupts Paul's testimony (24).
 - 07) Paul responds to Festus (25-26).
 - 08) Paul appeals to Agrippa (27).
 - 09) Agrippa ALMOST persuaded (28).
 - 10) Paul's wish (29).
2. Both Festus and Agrippa privately agree that Paul is innocent (30-32).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Agrippa publicly announced that Paul was innocent of the charges brought against him.
02. _____ Paul's youthful days were spent in Jerusalem.
03. _____ In this chapter Paul is accused of being MAD by the Jews.
04. _____ It was about noon when the Lord appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus.
05. _____ Paul began his preaching in Jerusalem.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ The sect of the Pharisees is described in this chapter as: (a) hypocritical; (b) murderous; (c) the straitest.
07. _____ Whom did Paul shut up in prison: (a) some of the apostles; (b) saints; (c) lawyers.
08. _____ From whom did Paul tell Agrippa that he received help at Jerusalem: (a) Lysias; (b) Rome; (c) God.
09. _____ What language did the Lord speak to Saul on that road to Damascus: (a) Greek; (b) Latin; (c) Hebrew.
10. _____ Jesus had appeared to Saul in order to make him a witness and: (a) a minister; (b) a martyr; (c) a master.

Fill in the Blanks

11. _____ was the manner in which Paul requested that Agrippa should listen to him.
12. **This man doeth nothing worthy of _____ or of _____ ... This man might have been set at _____, if he had not _____ to Caesar.**

13. A _____ is what Agrippa should NOT have considered the resurrection.
14. _____ is what Paul did to the small and the great [he HAD seen Jesus after His resurrection].
15. **Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was _____ unto the _____ vision.**

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Acts 25 Questions... [(1) False, Acts 25:25; (2) False, Acts 25:3; (3) False, Acts 25:20-21; (4) True, Acts 25:12; (5) False, Acts 25:14; (6) b, Acts 25:26; (7) c, Acts 25:3; (8) a, Acts 25:19; (9) d, Acts 25:7; (10) c, Acts 24:27; (11) no, certain, thing, Acts 25:26; (12) Jerusalem, Acts 25:1; (13) Agrippa, Acts 25:22; (14) law, Jews, temple, Caesar, Acts 25:8; (15) salute, Festus, Acts 25:13.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. **I THINK MYSELF HAPPY, KING AGRIPPA, BECAUSE I SHALL ANSWER FOR MYSELF THIS DAY...** (Acts 26:2). *Paul was ready always to give an answer, as we are supposed to be even today.* Paul was not here just defending himself in a court of law, but was presenting a defense of his position as a Christian. At the 18th Annual Mid-West Lectures in Independence, MO, Jack H. Williams asks and answers an important question... "Why do so many fail to be 'be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear?' It is not because God has not commanded such; it is not because God has not given examples we can mark and follow; it is not because God has not given us an understandable Word; it is not because God has not given us the needed and attainable personal characteristics. What is it then? **Perhaps the answer is found in one word in the text of our lesson — 'hope.'** It has always amazed me how many people DO NOT have hope. Hope is not a wish or whim, but is a confident expectation. One who has hope will proclaim as did the apostle Paul, 'I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day' (2 Timothy 2:12). If we are in Christ and 'walk in the light, as he is in the light' (1 John 1:7) we will have a confident expectation (hope) that will manifest itself in our daily lives. Others will see this hope and ask the reason of it. We will be ready, even zealous, in giving an answer to any man who asks. Are you ready?"
2. **WHY SHOULD IT BE THOUGHT A THING INCREDIBLE...?** (Acts 26:8). *Paul understood the power of God; the importance of the resurrection; and the necessity of preaching on the resurrection!* When the resurrection is attacked in our day, such as attempts to say that the physical remains of Jesus have been found in some tomb today, we must have the same courage of Paul to stand up and defend it. Without the resurrection of Christ, our faith and preaching is VAIN--**And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain** (1 Cor 15:14).
3. **...COMPELLED THEM TO BLASPHEME; AND BEING EXCEEDINGLY MAD AGAINST THEM, I PERSECUTED THEM EVEN UNTO STRANGE CITIES** (Acts 26:11). *Paul's early life as a Jew can certainly be used as an example of ZEAL; and also of the depth of evil treatment of fellow human beings to which hatred will lead a person.* We would do well to take in that same spirit of zeal Paul had as we involve ourselves in the greatest cause on earth—**preaching the gospel to the lost.** We are

wise also not to allow our hearts ever to be overtaken by such hatred as is described in this text.

4. **...SAYING NONE OTHER THINGS THAN THOSE WHICH THE PROPHETS AND MOSES DID SAY SHOULD COME** (Acts 26:22). Part of the confidence Paul showed forth was due to his love for and respect of the revealed will of God found in Scripture! Paul had a message, the Source of which was Almighty God, through the prophets of old. The reason the Jews were in such an uproar over Paul's conversion to Christ and his preaching Christ, and his preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, was that they did not even understand their own Scriptures. Jesus asked the Jews the question: **Have ye not read?** seven times (Matthew 12:3, 5; 19:4; 22:31; Mark 12:10, 26; Luke 6:3. As an inspired apostle, having been guided into all truth (John 16:13), Paul knew how those Old Testament prophecies related directly to the kingdom, and the time in which he was living, and to the message he was preaching. How blessed we are to live in the SUNLIGHT AGE of revelation from God, with the benefit of the completed written revelation (Jude 3).
5. **PAUL, THOU ART BESIDE THYSELF; MUCH LEARNING DOTTH MAKE THEE MAD** (Acts 26:24). As is often the case even today, we have Festus unable to defeat the arguments which a knowledge of the truth makes possible, and so he resorts to disrespecting the messenger of truth. It is usually the case that when a person has to resort to such name-calling as Festus did here, the conclusion that can be drawn is that the person doing the name-calling has no ability to withstand the truth with logical reasoning. What a blessing it is to have truth on your side! We should buy it and not sell it (Proverbs 23:23).
6. **AND PAUL SAID, I WOULD TO GOD, THAT NOT ONLY THOU, BUT ALSO ALL THAT HEAR ME THIS DAY, WERE BOTH ALMOST, AND ALTOGETHER SUCH AS I AM, EXCEPT THESE BONDS** (Acts 26:29). What a marvelous statement that can sincerely be repeated by EVERY faithful Christian today (with the exception of the last three words)! Do we have the same love of the lost that Paul had? What a beautiful response he gave to the indecision and procrastination of this powerful King. Is it possible that we do not fully understand how blessed we are and that such is seen in the **slight** efforts we make at helping others to obey the gospel? It is a wonderful and blessed way to live life here on earth (John 10:10) to know what Paul knew and stated here in this verse.

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

A F L E S Y H T R O F K A E P S A W M F
 E X P E R T H W H Y R I E J L C M B A V
 B H T C E S T S E T I A R T S X J U N I
 S V S K C I R P E H T T S N I A G A N S
 I H E I M G T P H A R I S E E V H M E D
 W N H U Z M X S V A D D N A P A U E R Q
 U Y C S O F R P E Y Q Z G R H C U S O M
 W A N R H A P P Y T O Y R I A S Z I F U
 T D F D E X U P W R U H C Q H W E M L H
 A D O Y E D E G E O M C H E P T T O I C
 P I B D S A I D I A M J E S U S B R F C
 P M O U U J P B L T M I V S V D C P E B
 I G B F R F O G L J V I I R R R X E I M
 R H T T O S K O P E W R C M K E C H B O
 G H E A R M E P A T I E N T L Y P T R C
 A X R O F D E G D U J M A V R Y H Y S T
 M R A I S E T H E D E A D R E F Y J H D
 Z S S E N T H G I R B E H T E V O B A W
 H H E B R E W T O N G U E B C W O S C R
 A I X N I L X J J M B W T E X M D D R L

[The words (or word locaters) listed below are to be found in the text of our lesson. They also are found in the puzzle above. This is just one more way to reinforce what you have studied from the text. Why not read the whole verse where the word is found one more time as you do the puzzle? Thank you for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. Let's desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow (1 Pet 2:2). DRL]

Acts 26

Agrippa, 1
 speak for thyself, 1
 happy, 2
 expert, 3
 hear me patiently, 3
 manner of life, 4
 straitest sect, 5
 Pharisee, 5
 am judged for, 6
 the promise, 6

Why, 8
 incredible, 8
 God, 8
 raise the dead, 8
 midday, 13
 above the brightness, 13
 Hebrew tongue, 14
 why persecutest, 14
 against the pricks, 14
 said, I am Jesus, 15