

THE ARRIVAL IN JERUSALEM

ACTS 21:27-40

Text:

Introduction:

Looking at this passage, we see the arrest of Paul. But we also see the measure of the man who is seen in the midst of this dreadful circumstance.

I may never get arrested. I may never have to face what Paul did, but I need to learn the lessons of humility that he exemplified.

From verse 27 on, Paul is a prisoner. His days as a free man are up, and from here on he's a prisoner in various places.

Paul finds himself in an unusual situation.

Paul knew how to take a negative situation and make it into a positive testimony.

Paul never viewed his situation as anything other than God authored. He never viewed his imprisonment as an imprisonment of men. He doesn't say, "I write unto you, Paul, a prisoner of Rome." He's always a prisoner

of Jesus Christ. It was Christ who allowed him to be in such a situation.

As we move toward verse 27 of Acts 21, we are reminded that Paul has arrived in Jerusalem. He has tried to accommodate the Jewish Christians. The Jewish Christians there in Jerusalem had heard that he was against everything that had been the tradition of Jewish life, and that wasn't true.

He is met by a mob, who in a frenzy try to murder the Apostle Paul, and they haven't got the foggiest idea what they're doing, or why they're doing it.

1. THE ATTACK (VS. 27)

Acts 21:27-30

²⁷ And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, ²⁸ Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. ²⁹ (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) ³⁰ And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

A. The Culprits in the Attack

Some Jews who were from Asia, when they saw Paul in the temple, they saw their opportunity.

When they saw him in the temple, they stirred up all the people.

Sadly, lies can move people to action quicker than truth oftentimes.

IT IS ALWAYS EASIER TO ROUSE MEN TO FIGHT FOR THEIR RELIGION THAN TO LIVE BY IT.

The culprits in the attacks were religious people, in fact, very religious people.

B. The Charges in the Attack

“This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere”

1. They said that he was against the Jews
2. They said that he was against the law and Moses
3. They said that he was against Jerusalem
4. He brought Greeks into the temple and polluted the holy place

For a Gentile to enter the temple was terrible. The Gentiles could only go to the outer court. In fact since that was true, it became known as the Court of the Gentiles.

2. THE ARREST

The one great thing that the Roman Government wanted in its colonies and its possessions was civil order. They didn't tolerate civil disorder. They didn't tolerate it from the people, and any commander who allowed it was in real trouble.

As a result, they had an observation tower to watch because most of what went on in terms of congregating went on in the temple courtyard, and there was a garrison of at least 1,000 men in the northwest corner of the Temple area.

A. Intervention of the Soldiers (vs 31)

Acts 21:31

³¹ And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

Well, the soldiers looking down saw what was going on.

Immediately soldiers came bursting through the crowd the soldiers and centurions, and when they saw the

chief captain and the soldiers barreling into the crowd, they stopped beating Paul.

B. Incarceration by the Soldiers (vs 33-34)

Acts 21:33-34

³³ Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded *him* to be bound with two chains; and demanded who he was, and what he had done. ³⁴ And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.

It is assumed that Paul is guilty of something. He assumes the crowd wouldn't do this unless Paul was guilty of some crime.

3. THE ATTITUDE

In all of this, Paul hasn't struggled or said anything.

Notice:

A. He Submitted His Success to God

When he first comes back in verses 19 and 20, and he's giving the report about his missionary tour.

Acts 21:19-20

¹⁹ And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. ²⁰ And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord, and said unto

him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

Paul never interjected himself into the accomplishment of God. He didn't say, "Look what I did. Look what I did." It was always what God did, absolutely submissive to God. All he wanted to do was glorify God.

B. He Submitted to God's Servants

God had given authority in the Church to the elders, and when the elders said, "Paul, do this," he never said one word. He did it.

C. He Submitted to Suffering

Humility submits to God, to others, and to God's will, even though it involves suffering at the hands of the world.

Close:

So we see the attack of the mob and the arrest by the Romans and the attitude of Paul.

Paul's experience can teach us three things

1. Tribulation and trials are inescapable
2. The reason for them is often unpredictable

3. Our reaction to it need not be questionable

Our reactions to these times in our lives display much about our character.