

St. Jerome Adult Bible Study

The Acts of the Apostles

Study Questions¹ Chapters 21 - 28

1. Agabus (see 11:27-29) warns Paul in a very demonstrative manner. Why does Paul ignore him?
2. Why does Paul want to go to Jerusalem?
3. Does Paul actually teach Jews to turn away from the Law? Why did the Jews think so? Are there groups today that, in ignorance, condemn the Church and its leaders?
4. Paul speaks to the tribune commander in Greek but speaks to the crowd in Hebrew (probably Aramaic). Why? Why speak to the crowd at all? (As a Roman citizen, he would have known Latin as well.)
5. Wow! What a speech in 22:1-21! How has your own personal testimony influenced others?
6. Does the phrase “whitewashed wall” sound familiar? (hint: see Mt 23:27) Does Paul actually rescind his accusation?
7. When Luke says “the Jews formed a conspiracy” did he mean *ALL* Jews, just the Pharisees, or only the Sadducees? How do you explain their fierce determination?
8. Compare and contrast the Tribune’s treatment of Paul and Pilate’s treatment of Jesus.
9. Contemporary historians Tacitus and Josephus paint Felix as a brutal, incompetent politician who was finally replaced. He stole his wife, Drusilla, from her first husband. Felix might have been upset with Paul’s preaching on morality and self-restraint.

Paul’s trial before Felix gives us a glimpse into first century proceedings. Tertullus, a lawyer (called a “rhetorician”) hired by Ananias, does not focus on legal technicalities but, rather, gives stirring oration to persuade the judge. After Tertullus’ accusation, Paul puts on his defense using the same persuasive technique.

10. What is Festus’ Dilemma?
11. Can you spot the parallels between the trials of Jesus and Paul? Luke is the only writer who emphasizes this.
12. For the third time, Acts describes Paul’s conversion. Do you agree that it must be extremely important?

Acts 26 has been called “the Christological climax of Paul’s defense.” All the trials of Acts 22 – 26 culminate in the hearing before Agrippa and Festus with its verdict of not guilty. Paul’s speech almost moves Agrippa! Also, the Romans begin to see the difference between “Christians” and Jews.

13. Are you confused? (Herod) Agrippa II declares Paul not-guilty and says that he should have been set free except that he appealed to Caesar. This must be some obscure Roman law we don’t get. So, Paul is still a prisoner -- but not too tightly held -- until he can appear before Caesar and, thus, fulfill his need to go to Rome and the Church there.
14. Paul warns Julius and others that disaster looms but they ignore him. When it strikes and the situation looks darkest, Paul claims that God told him all would be spared. Compare the possible changes in attitudes toward Paul
15. In light of all that Paul has been through, how do you think he felt when he heard the Jews’ response in 28:21-22? How is their attitude different from the Jews in Jerusalem? Why is it different?

¹ Questions courtesy of *The Serendipity Bible*® (NIV®), (Littleton, CO., Serendipity House, 1998)