

Acts 22

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1. How does Paul address the mob?

Acts 22: 1-2

1 Brethren and fathers, hear my defense which I now *offer* to you.”

2 And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew dialect, they became even more quiet; and he *said,

2. Describe Paul's former life.

Acts 22: 3-5

3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated under Gamaliel, strictly according to the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today.

4 "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons,

5 as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

1. He was a Jew: not a foreigner, but as much a Jew as any of his listeners. He had been born a Jew.
2. He was born in Tarsus but reared in Jerusalem where he was educated at the feet of one of Israel's greatest teachers (**educated under Gamaliel**).
3. He was educated in the strictest law of the fathers.
4. He was zealous toward God in keeping the law, as zealous as any Jew.
5. Paul persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons.
6. I also received letters from the high priest and the Council of the elders to the brethren in Damascus, in order to bring those of the Way who were there, to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.

3. What does Paul say concerning his conversion?

Acts 22: 6-11

6 “But it happened that as I was on my way, approaching Damascus about noontime, a very bright light suddenly flashed from heaven all around me,

7 and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’

8 “And I answered, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said to me, ‘I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.’

9 “And those who were with me saw the light, to be sure, but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.

10 “And I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And the Lord said to me, ‘Get up and go on into Damascus, and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do.’

11 “But since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me and came into Damascus.

Conversion of Saul (Paul)

Acts 9: 1-30 (Luke's narrative of Paul's experience)

Acts 22: 6-21 (Paul's own testimony to the event, delivered in his defense speech before the Jewish mob)

Acts 26: 4-23 (Paul's own testimony to the event, delivered in his defense speech before Agrippa and the Roman officials)

Acts 22: 6 gives the specific detail that it was “about noon” when the vision came upon Paul. This heightened the emphasis on the brightness of the vision. It happened in broad daylight, at noon when the sun was at its brightest.

Acts 22: 7 is closely parallel to Acts 9: 4, relating how Paul fell to the ground and heard the heavenly voice addressing him by his Hebrew name, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”. As in Acts 9: 5, Paul responded by asking the heavenly voice to identify himself—“Who are you, Lord?”

Acts 22: 8 - Jesus said to Paul “I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting?”

The full designation “Jesus of Nazareth” was appropriate to the Jewish audience before whom Paul was relating his experience.

Acts 22: 9 - Paul's traveling companions saw the light but did not understand the voice speaking to Paul. In Acts 9: 7 the companions are said to have heard the sound but not to have seen anyone.

The companions were witnesses to the experience and could verify that something objective took place.

The companions were not participants in the experience: they heard a sound but did not receive the message, saw a light but not the risen Lord. The vision itself was solely Paul's experience.

Acts 22:10 parallels Acts 9: 5-6 with the difference that in Paul's account he referred to Jesus as "the Lord" when relating the command to rise and go into Damascus.

Now he knew that it was Jesus, the risen Lord. Up to this point in his speech, Paul had identified closely with his Jewish listeners. In every way he had shown himself to be as Jewish as they were. Now he began to draw the line that differentiated himself from them.

On the Damascus Road he had seen the risen Jesus. Now he confessed Jesus as Lord. He surely wished the same for them.

Acts 22: 11 concludes the opening scene of Paul's conversion account. It parallels Acts 9: 8, relating Paul's blindness and how his companions had to lead him by hand into Damascus.

The most significant difference from the earlier account is the reference to “the brilliance of the light” in Paul's account. The emphasis on light is striking when one compares chapter 9 with chapter 22. The light was so great it overwhelmed the noonday sun (Acts 22: 6). Paul's companions “saw the light” (Acts 22: 9).

4. How does Paul describe Ananias's character?

Acts 22: 12

12 “A certain Ananias, a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, *and* well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there,

Acts 22: 12 - Paul introduced Ananias as a pious Jew, a strict observer of the Law and a person held in high esteem by the Jewish community in Damascus.

This contrasts to Acts 9: 10, where Luke introduced Ananias as a “disciple”.

5. What did Ananias tell Paul?

Acts 22: 13-16

13 came to me, and standing near said to me, ‘**Brother Saul, receive your sight!**’ And at that very time I looked up at him.

14 “And he said, ‘**The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will and to see the Righteous One and to hear an utterance from His mouth.**’

15 ‘**For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard.**’

16 ‘Now why do you delay? **Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name.**’

Acts 22: 13 relates to how Ananias came to Paul and standing near him said, “Brother Saul, receive your sight!’ And at that very time I looked up at him.”

Acts 9: 17-18

17 So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized;

Acts 22: 14 is not really paralleled in chapter 9. The idea of Paul's being "chosen" is related in Ananias's vision at Acts 9: 15.

Ananias's words to Paul have a strong Jewish flavor. "God of our fathers" is strong Old Testament language. The "Righteous One" is a Jewish messianic title, found earlier in the speeches of Peter and of Stephen to Jews (Acts 3: 14; Acts 7: 52).

Acts 22: 15 - Ananias delivered Christ's commission to Paul. He was to be a witness to all people (Acts 22: 15; Acts 9: 15).

Acts 22:16 - Ananias told Paul to "Get up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name."

In Acts 9:18b - Paul got up and was baptized.

6. What happened when Paul was praying in the temple?

Acts 22: 17-18

17 “It happened when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I fell into a trance,

18 and I saw Him saying to me, ‘Make haste, and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.’

Acts 22: 17 - Paul concluded his conversion account by telling of a vision he had in the temple which occurred on his “return” to Jerusalem (Acts 22: 17). This would indicate that it took place on his first visit to Jerusalem following his conversion (Acts 9: 26–30). The account of Acts 9 does not relate this incident.

Acts 22: 18 – The Lord told Paul in a vision to leave Jerusalem. This was perhaps connected with the conflict he encountered in the synagogue of the Hellenistic Jews (Acts 9: 29). They would not accept Paul’s testimony and wanted to kill him.

7. How did Ananias and the Lord describe Paul's commission?

Acts 22: 19-21

19 “And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves understand that in one synagogue after another I used to imprison and beat those who believed in You.

20 ‘And when the blood of Your witness Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the coats of those who were slaying him.’

21 “And He said to me, ‘**Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.**’ ”

8. Why was the mob enraged at Paul?

Acts 22: 22-23

22 They listened to him up to this statement, and *then* they raised their voices and said, “Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he should not be allowed to live!”

23 And as they were crying out and throwing off their cloaks and tossing dust into the air,

9. What method did the commander want to use to interrogate Paul?

Acts 22: 24

24 the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, stating that **he should be examined by scourging** so that he might find out the reason why they were shouting against him that way.

10. What did Paul relate to the commander?

Acts 22: 25-28

25 But when they stretched him out with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman and uncondemned?”

26 When the centurion heard *this*, he went to the commander and told him, saying, “What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman.”

27 The commander came and said to him, “Tell me, are you a Roman?” And he said, “Yes.”

28 The commander answered, “I acquired this citizenship with a large sum of money.” And Paul said, “But I was actually born a citizen.”

11. How did the Romans react to this information and what did the commander do?

Acts 22: 29-30

29 Therefore those who were about to examine him immediately let go of him; and the commander also was afraid when he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had put him in chains.

30 But on the next day, wishing to know for certain why he had been accused by the Jews, he released him and ordered the chief priests and all the Council to assemble, and brought Paul down and set him before them.