



STUDY 2

Acts 21:15-22:30

Jerusalem, Jerusalem

Paul has been warned by God's Spirit that disaster is waiting for him at the hands of the Jews in Jerusalem - but he heads there anyway. As we saw last week, for Paul, there's something far more important than his personal safety and convenience.

Review

According to the prophecy of Agabus in 21:11, what will happen to Paul in Jerusalem?

GATHERING STORMCLOUDS

Keep those words in mind as you read the account of Paul's visit to Jerusalem in Acts 21:15-40.

1. How was Paul received by

- a) the *brothers* in Jerusalem?
- b) James and the elders in Jerusalem?

2. What does Paul particularly TELL James and the elders?

3. What BAD NEWS is there from James?

Are the rumours that James reports TRUE?

What important difference should we notice between the GENTILES Paul is speaking about, and the JEWS WHO LIVE AMONG THE GENTILES? What do you think Paul would say to each of these groups about THE LAW OF MOSES?

What advice does James give to Paul? What is his motive?

What does Paul do?

THE ATTACK

Read what happens next, in Acts 21:27-40.

4. What accusation is made against Paul?

Is it true?

5. In what ways do the events of verses 30 to 36 remind you of what happened to JESUS when he came to Jerusalem? (Look at Luke 19:45-47 for an example.)

Paul asks if he can address the crowd. The Roman commander agrees - he's confused, because he thought Paul was an Egyptian terrorist. Now he's just trying to figure out what all the fuss is about. READ PAUL'S SPEECH TO THE JEWS in chapter 22, and fill in the following blanks as you go...

- a) Paul speaks to them in _____ - their own local dialect.
- b) Paul says, "I am a _____, born in Tarsus, brought up in _____
- c) I was educated under _____ (the most honoured Rabbi in the city)
- d) I was thoroughly trained in _____ and was _____.
- e) I _____ followers of the way (Christians), arresting or killing them.
- f) The _____ and the _____ can confirm this!
- g) As I came towards Damascus, I was struck down by a light and heard the voice of _____
- h) I was taken to a man called Ananias, who was _____ and highly respected by _____.
- i) Ananias said, "The _____ has chosen you to know His will. You will be a witness to _____ of what you have seen and heard."
- j) When I came back to Jerusalem, the Lord told me to leave quickly, because _____.
- k) I said, "Lord they'll listen to me because _____"
- l) The Lord said, "Go - I will send you to _____."

Oooops! Paul just said that G-word again! How do the Jews respond when they hear that God wants to include NON JEWS in his family? **Read what happens next in verses 23 to 30.** Paul's Roman citizenship saves his skin again - but only long enough to get him in front of the Sanhedrin, the same Jewish council that had condemned Jesus. But more of that next time...



WHAT ABOUT US?

When we read about the attitude of the Jews, who so much wanted to keep God's favour to themselves, it's easy to be critical. But are there ways that we do exactly the same thing? Think about these...

i) Are you RACIST? That's what the Jews were. They thought they were better than everyone else, and so DESERVED to be the people of God. Do you have attitudes that need reforming in this area?

ii) Are you SELECTIVE about the sort of people you think are eligible to be Christians, or part of our church? How welcoming are YOU to people who are different?

iii) Are you SELFISH about sharing the gospel? YOU KNOW the way to be right with God... are you keen for other people to hear about it, or do you want to keep it to yourself?

