

## The Book of Acts; Lesson #11 – Arrest In Jerusalem (Acts 18:24-21:15)

### Memory Verse

**Acts 23:11** (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.”

### From here on everything changes in the book of Acts, Paul is a prisoner. An Ominous Trip

**Acts 20:22–24** (NKJV) And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

**Acts 21:4** (NKJV) And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem.

**Acts 21:10–14** And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul’s belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’ ” Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, “What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, “The will of the Lord be done.”

### Revelation of Jesus’ Death

**Matthew 16:21–23** (NKJV) From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!” But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”

**Luke 9:51** (NKJV) Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,

### Meeting the Jerusalem Leaders

**Acts 21:18–24** (NKJV) <sup>18</sup> On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. <sup>19</sup> When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. <sup>20</sup> And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; <sup>21</sup> but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. <sup>22</sup> What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. <sup>23</sup> Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. <sup>24</sup> Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.

“The Spirit of God did not prompt this instruction; it was the fruit of cowardice. The leaders of the church in Jerusalem knew that by non-conformity to the ceremonial law, Christians would bring upon themselves the hatred of the Jews and expose themselves to persecution. The Sanhedrin was doing its utmost to hinder the progress of the gospel. Men were chosen by this body to follow up the apostles, especially Paul, and in every possible way to oppose their work. Should the believers in Christ be condemned before the Sanhedrin as breakers of the law, they would suffer swift and severe punishment as apostates from the Jewish faith.” {AA 404.1}

**Romans 2:28–29** (NKJV) For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; <sup>29</sup> but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

### Riot in the Temple

**Acts 21:27–32** (NKJV) Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, <sup>28</sup> crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.” <sup>29</sup> (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and

immediately the doors were shut. <sup>31</sup> Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. <sup>32</sup> He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

### Before the Crowd

**Acts 21:37–40** (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Then as Paul was about to be led into the barracks, he said to the commander, “May I speak to you?” He replied, “Can you speak Greek? <sup>38</sup> Are you not the Egyptian who some time ago stirred up a rebellion and led the four thousand assassins out into the wilderness?” <sup>39</sup> But Paul said, “I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people.” <sup>40</sup> So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying,

#### Acts 21:1-21 His defense

### Before the Sanhedrin

**Acts 23:1–5** (NKJV) Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, “Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” <sup>2</sup> And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth. <sup>3</sup> Then Paul said to him, “God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?”

<sup>4</sup> And those who stood by said, “Do you revile God’s high priest?”

<sup>5</sup> Then Paul said, “I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, ‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’”

**Acts 23:6–10** (NKJV) But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!”

<sup>7</sup> And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. <sup>8</sup> For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. <sup>9</sup> Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees’ party arose and protested, saying, “We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God.” <sup>10</sup> Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the

soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.

### Transfer to Caesarea

#### The Plot Against Paul

**Acts 23:11–22** (NKJV) But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.”

<sup>12</sup> And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. <sup>13</sup> Now there were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. <sup>14</sup> They came to the chief priests and elders, and said, “We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul. <sup>15</sup> Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near.”

<sup>16</sup> So when Paul’s sister’s son heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. <sup>17</sup> Then Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, “Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him.” <sup>18</sup> So he took him and brought him to the commander and said, “Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you.” <sup>19</sup> Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside, and asked privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?”

<sup>20</sup> And he said, “The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him. <sup>21</sup> But do not yield to them, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you.”

<sup>22</sup> So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded him, “Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me.”