



I. Paul Before King Agrippa (26:1 - 23) 1. Paul's Introduction (1 - 3)

Verse 1

Then Agrippa (=“hero like”) said to Paul,
 “You have permission
 to speak for yourself.” [Agrippa was presiding]
 So Paul motioned with his hand [Still chained to a soldier]
 and began his defense:

Verse 2

“King Agrippa,
 I consider myself fortunate (makarios = blessed)
 to stand before you today
 as I make my defense
 against all the accusations of the Jews,

Note: Paul spoke for himself – not lawyer support

Verse 3

and especially so because you are well acquainted
 with all the Jewish customs (ethos = ones ways of
 thinking about life)
 and controversies. (zetema = debates/disputes)
 Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

King Agrippa was a proselyte of the Jewish religion, therefore, was more understanding of the price and process of the Jewish faith. He was a scholar of things related to the Jews. However, he comes from a long line of family who has attempted to destroy the Christian faith.

I. Paul Before King Agrippa (26:1 - 23) 2. Paul's Jewish Life (4 - 5)

Verse 4

[so then]“The Jewish people all know
 the way I have lived (biosis = lifestyle)
 ever since I was a child,
 from the beginning of my life
 in my own country, [Born in Tarsus]
 and also in Jerusalem. [Trained in Jerusalem]



Tarsus Turkey

Verse 5

They have known me for a long time [Reputation]
 and can testify, if they are willing,
 that I conformed to the strictest sect of our
 religion, living as a Pharisee.

What is a Pharisee?

Larry Pierce – Online Bible Summary

“A sect that seems to have started after the Jewish exile. In addition to OT books the Pharisees recognized in oral tradition a standard of belief and life. They sought for distinction and praise by outward observance of external rites and by outward forms of piety, and such as ceremonial washings, fastings, prayers, and alms giving; and, comparatively negligent of genuine piety, they prided themselves on their fancied good works. They held strenuously to a belief in the existence of good and evil angels, and to the expectation of a Messiah; and they cherished the hope that the dead, after a preliminary experience either of reward or of penalty in Hades, would be recalled to life by him, and be requited each according to his individual deeds. In opposition to the usurped dominion of the Herods and the rule of the Romans, they stoutly upheld the theocracy and their country's cause, and possessed great influence with the common people. According to Josephus they numbered more than 6000. They were bitter enemies of Jesus and his cause; and were in turn severely rebuked by him for their avarice, ambition, hollow reliance on outward works, and affection of piety in order to gain popularity.”

I. Paul Before King Agrippa (26:1 - 23)

3. *Paul Questions Agrippa (6 – 8)*

Verse 6

And now it is because of my hope [I Peter 3:15]
in what God has promised our ancestors
that I am on trial today. [The resurrection of the dead]

Verse 7

This is the promise
our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled
as they earnestly serve God day and night.
King Agrippa,
it is because of this hope
that these Jews are accusing me.

Verse 8

Why should any of you
consider it incredible
that God raises the dead?

} The use of pointed
questions to allow the
Holy Spirit to convict.

To believe this is to believe that God is not omnipotent!

As we have noted many times in the past few chapters, the real reason Paul is being prosecuted is because of the internal philosophical war that is raging between Sadducees and Pharisees over the theology of resurrection of the dead.

Resurrection is still the “tip of the spear” of the philosophical war we are fighting with secularism today.

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4. *Paul's Persecution of Christians (9 – 11)*

Verse 9

[so then]

“I too was convinced
that I ought to do all that was possible
to oppose (enantios = hostile/violent)
the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

Verse 10

And that is just what I did in Jerusalem.
On the authority of the chief priests
I put many of the Lord's people in prison,
and when they were put to death,
I cast my vote against them. [Sanhedrin]

Paul was a man of action – not just talk!

Verse 11

Many a time
I went from one synagogue to another
to have them punished,
and I tried to force them to blaspheme.
I was so obsessed (perissos emainnomai = furiously
enraged)
with persecuting them
that I even hunted them down
in foreign cities.

Paul strengthens his argument by admitting his failures and humbling himself with his audience. This would also be a huge point of relation with the Jews there – Agrippa specifically.

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5. *Paul's Conversion to Christ (12 – 15)*

Verse 12

[so] “On one of these journeys
I was going to Damascus
with the authority
and commission
of the chief priests.

Verse 13

About noon, [hemera – midday]
King Agrippa,
as I was on the road,
I saw a light from heaven, [Heavenly vision]
brighter than the sun,
blazing around me and my companions. [eye witnesses]

Verse 14

We all fell to the ground,
and I heard a voice saying to me [heavenly voice]
in Aramaic, [Paul's personal language]
'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?
It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

To “kick against” the goad would be to resist direction.

Verse 15

“Then I asked,
'Who are you, Lord?'
'I am Jesus, [clear identification]
whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied.

A goad is “a sharp pointed stick
for urging on cattle, etc.”



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6. Paul's Call By Christ (16 - 18)

Verse 16

[but] 'Now get up and stand on your feet.
I have appeared to you [for this purpose]
1) to appoint you as a servant (hyperetes = a minister)
2) and as a witness (martyr = eye-witness/proclaimer)
of what you have seen
and will see of me.

Verse 17

I will rescue [pluck out] you from your own people
and from the Gentiles.
3) I am sending you to them (apostello = as a
representative to handle my affairs)

Verse 18

4) to open their eyes
5) and turn them (epistrepho = return/convert)
from darkness to light,
and from the power (exousia = dominion)
of Satan to God,
6) so that they may receive forgiveness (aphesis =
pardon from the penalty) of sins
7) and a place (kleros = an inheritance)
among those
who are sanctified (hagiazō = participle = those
who are being made pure through separation and renewing)
by faith in me.' [The source]

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7. Paul's Obedience for Christ (19 - 20)

Verse 19

[So then] King Agrippa,
I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven.

Verse 20

[but] First to those in Damascus,
then to those in Jerusalem
and in all Judea,
and then to the Gentiles, } Similar to Acts 1:8
I preached that 1) they should repent (metanoeo)
2) and turn to God (epistrepho)
3) and demonstrate their repentance
by their deeds. (ergon = good works)

Verse 21

That is why some Jews
seized me in the temple courts
and tried to kill me.

Verse 22

[But] God
has helped me to this very day;
so I stand here
and testify to small and great alike.
I am saying nothing beyond
what the prophets
and Moses said would happen—

Verse 23

1) that the Messiah would suffer (pathetos = His
destiny was to suffer while here on earth – Isa. 53)
First proof for Christ as THE Messiah.
2) and, as the [first to rise] [resurrection]
from the dead,
Second proof – Christ's resurrection
3) [He would be first] would bring
the message of light
to his own people
and to the Gentiles.”

Third proof – His teaching

Paul was convinced by these proofs that Jesus is the Christ the
3 Messiah that his people had been waiting on.

II. Festus and Agrippa's Response (26:24 - 32)

Verse 24

At this point

Festus interrupted Paul's defense.

"You are out of your mind, Paul!" he shouted.

"Your great learning (gramma = sacred writing) is driving you insane."

Verse 25

"I am not insane, most excellent Festus," Paul replied.

"What I am saying is true and reasonable.

Verse 26

The king is familiar with these things, and I can speak freely to him.

I am convinced that none of this has escaped his notice, because it was not done in a corner. [secret place]

Verse 27

King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do."

Another question to challenge the logical basis of Paul's argument. If you are a Jew – then you believe in the Torah and the Prophets – If the Prophets said it would happen this way – why would you debate it?

Verse 28

Then Agrippa said to Paul,

"Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"

Verse 29

Paul replied,

"Short time or long— I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains."

Verse 30

The king rose, and with him the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them.

Verse 31

After they left the room, they began saying to one another, "This man is not doing anything that deserves death or imprisonment."

Verse 32

Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Agrippa was convinced of Paul's innocence. However, he feels obligated by the Roman Law to send Paul on to the Caesar.