

LESSON ONE: CHAPTERS 19 AND 20

CHAPTER 19 EVENTS

- 1-7: Paul baptized the 12 disciples of John the Baptist
- 8-10: The gospel is preached to every one in Asia Minor
- 11-12: Special miracles done by Paul
- 13-16: Seven sons of Sceva are mauled by the demons
- 17-20: Results of the preaching
- 21-41: Demetrius leads the riot of the silversmiths, the city is disturbed, and the mayor calms the mob down

CHAPTER 19 DEFINITIONS

- 1. Disciple: one who learns
- 2. Divers: many certain persons
- 3. That way: the gospel of Christ
- 4. Wrought: worked through
- 5. Exorcist: one who claims to be able to cast out devils
- 6. Adjure: ask; plead
- 7. Curious arts: magic; sorcery
- 8. 50,000 pieces of silver: \$8000 plus
- 9. Nought: nothing; zero
- 10. Adventure: risk going into
- 11. Townclerk: probably the mayor
- 12. Image which fell down from Jupiter: probably a meteor
- 13. Implead: accuse
- 14. Concourse: riot

CHAPTER 19: Paul's missionary journeys continue and the church is established in Ephesus.

This chapter introduces us to the church in Ephesus which was one of Paul's most cherished churches. The chapter tells of the **establishment** of the church in Ephesus and elsewhere. The **elders** of that church confer with Paul in Acts 20; there is a book from Paul to them (**Ephesians**) in which nothing bad is said about them and there is a letter to them from the **Lord** (Revelation 2) in which Jesus said they had left their **first love**.

When Paul returned to Ephesus (18:19), he found twelve men who knew only the baptism of John (vv 2-4) and who were probably converted by **Apollos** (18:25). Paul baptized these men in the name (authority) of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20) and laid his hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit (v 6). **Aquila** and **Priscilla** were already in Ephesus (18:19), so these became the nucleus of one of Paul's most loved churches.

As in other places the Jews hardened their hearts when Paul preached the gospel to them (vv 8,9), so he separated the new Christians to a school belonging to Tyrannus and there preached the gospel for two years (v 9). As a result, **the gospel went to all that dwelt in Asia, both Jews and Greeks**. This is the aim of the church today: **to preach**

the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15,16). This preaching was accompanied by special miracles by Paul's hands (vv 11, 12).

Who were these **exorcists** in verse 13? Exorcists were people who claimed to be able to cast out devils and seven sons of Sceva, a chief priest, began trying to cast demons out in the name of Jesus. The demons said they knew Paul and Jesus but didn't know them, and the man they had possessed overwhelmed those sons of Sceva (vv 13-16).

Casting out demons was a **sign which followed them which believed**. Mark 16:17: *"In my name shall they cast out devils."* People are baptized in the name of Christ (Matthew 18:18-20) and in the name of Christ demons were cast out in the first century and in the first century only.

Only those people in the New Testament who had believed and were baptized (Mark 16:16) and who had an apostles' hands laid on them (Acts 8 and 19) could cast out demons. No apostles are alive today and therefore no demons can be cast out.

When the gospel went to every creature (Colossians 1:23) in the first century, every demon was cast out. **People who claim to be able to cast out devils today must produce the apostle who laid hands on them!**

The Ephesian people were amazed and frightened by this event and turned to God, even to the point of burning their sorcery books (50,000 pieces of silver's worth or about \$30,000 in our currency). What **repentance!**

When people truly believe, they must turn from ungodly ways (repentance) and do the will of God.

However, this massive repentance hit the pocketbooks of people who made silver shrines (idols) for the worship of Diana, the Roman goddess of hunting, and **Demetrius**, the silversmith, led the charge against the church. The silversmiths became so emotional and boisterous that it disturbed the entire city.

When Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's companions, were brought into the theater (where Roman gladiator death games were held), the uproar got even more loud because many in the confused mob didn't even know why they were there (v 25-32). The town clerk (mayor?) settled them down, for the time being, by appealing to them to resort to Roman law to settle their differences.

Mobs are mindless. Today, when the gospel is discussed and people refuse to listen to the Bible, the only thing they have left is the **mob mentality**. They become **emotional**, they **raise** their voice, they try to **hurt** the one who has taught them and they make perfect **dolts** out of themselves!

When you read the Bible, read it to learn what you must do to become a Christian and not become a mob member.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 19 2, received the Holy Ghost...not heard 3, John's baptism 4, all verse 5, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus 8, boldly...disputing...persuading...the kingdom of God 10, all verse 13, Paul preacheth 15, all verse 16, leaped...naked...wounded 17, fear fell 18, believed came...confessed...shewed 19, books...burned....50,000 (\$16,000) 20, mightily grew...prevailed 23, that way 26, persuaded...turned 28, wrath 29, whole city 32, confused....knew not wherefore they were come together 35, image which fell down from Jupiter 37, robbers of churches 40, called in question

CHAPTER 20 EVENTS

- 1-6: Paul's second visit to Macedonia and Greece
- 7-12: A Lord's day in Troas
- 13-16: From Troas to Miletus
- 17-38: Meeting with the Ephesian church elders on Miletus

CHAPTER 20 DEFINITIONS

- 1. First day of of the week: Sunday
- 2. Break bread: Lord's supper
- 3. Upper chamber: second floor
- 4. Broken bread and eaten: a regular meal
- 5. Afoot: by land
- 6. Hasted: hurried
- 7. Counsel: teachings of God
- 8. Overseers: elders
- 9. Grievous: savage
- 10. Coveted: wanting something so bad you'll do anything to get it

CHAPTER 20: Paul goes to several other places and has a conference with the Ephesian elders.

There are several good things to learn in this chapter and our study is going to be a little longer than in other chapters. **You're about to learn something very valuable in your service as a Bible-believing first century Christian.**

After the mess in Ephesus, Paul concluded his teaching work there and departed for Greece where he stayed three months and where the unbelieving Jews gave him even more trouble (vv 1-3). Luke had joined the group (v 5) and when they came to Troas "*...upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight*" (v 7). After such a long sermon, young Eutychus fell down, but Paul brought him back to life. They then broke bread (ate supper) and continued their discussion.

We pause here to discuss what the phrase “breaking bread” means because it’s used twice in this passage. Does “breaking bread” in the New Testament refer to taking the Lord’s supper? Yes. Does “breaking bread” in the New Testament refer to eating a meal? Yes, again. Well, how in the world do we know the difference?

Acts 20:7-11 and Acts 2:42-46 have our answers. We’re putting all these verses into this lesson so you can see the difference between the Lord’s supper and eating a fellowship meal.

Acts 2:42-26: *“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and, and in **breaking of bread**, and in **prayers**. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and **breaking bread from house to house**, did eat their **meat** with gladness and singleness of heart.”* Acts 2 shows us that there is a difference between taking the Lord’s supper and eating a fellowship meal, even though the same phrase, “breaking of bread” is used.

The same is true in Acts 20:7-11: *“And upon the **first day of the week**, when the disciples came together to **break bread**, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead. And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him. When he therefore was come up again, and had **broken bread, and eaten**, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.”*

Christians take the Lord’s supper on the first day of every week (every Sunday), so the first “break bread” mentioned in these verses refers to the Lord’s supper. The church in Troas took the Lord’s supper (break bread) and then ate a fellowship meal later (broken bread and eaten).

If we take the Lord’s supper on any other day than Sunday, it’s false worship. If we mix taking the Lord’s supper with a fellowship meal, it’s also false worship. Let’s do things according to the Bible!

There are several important things about the first day of the week which is worth our noticing:

1. On the first day of the week, Jesus **rose from the dead** (Matthew 28:1)
2. The **church was established** in Acts 2 on the first day of the week, the day of Pentecost. The feast of Pentecost happened fifty days after the Jewish Passover feast. Passover was always on a Saturday, so seven Saturdays from Passover equals forty-nine; therefore, Pentecost was on the first day of the week and that’s when the church was established.
3. And here in Acts 20:7, the early Christians **took the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week**.

Now, beginning in verse 17, we have the conference that Paul and the Ephesian elders had on Miletus. Notice that these are men and that they are elders. Another word for “elder” is “pastor.” Many preachers today call themselves “pastors” but they are not elders; as a matter of fact, most churches today don’t even have elders. They just let the preacher run things.

Qualifications (requirements) for elders in the local church are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. Read these verses and live by them so that someday you may become an elder (pastor) in the local church. Let me repeat again: **preachers are not pastors unless they also are qualified to be elders.**

Now, these are the contents of Paul's discussion with these Ephesian elders:

1. He reminds them that he did not work with them for personal profit, nor did he get discouraged by the unbelieving Jews (vv 17-19)
2. He taught them the whole truth and did not keep one thing back (v 20)
3. He didn't make any difference as to whom he preached: he taught Jews and Greeks the gospel
4. On his current journey to Jerusalem, he had no idea what would happen, but that God wanted him to make the trip (vv 22, 23)
5. The most important thing to Paul was preaching the gospel of the grace of God (v 24) and that this would be his last meeting with them (v 25)
6. The reason he had a clear conscience (pure from the blood of all men) was because he preached all the counsel of God (v 27)
7. They should be careful to be true to the truth and feed the truth to churches where they served (v 28)
8. He warns them that apostasy would come from their own ranks and will tear up the flock (the church) (vv 29,30). The apostasy which resulted in the formulation of the catholic church began with church leaders, a sad situation which we have even today.
9. For three years he worked among them, taught them, worked with his hands to supply his support and showed them how they should act as elders (vv 31-35), always being loyal to Christ's teaching that "*it is more blessed to give than to receive.*"

It's always sad to say good-bye to someone you love and these elders were no exception. Acts 20 ends with the sad pathos which comes when a loved one leaves to be seen no more.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 20: **6**, unleavened bread **7**, all verse **9**, Eutychus...dead **11**, broken bread and eaten **16**, day of Pentecost **18**, humility...tears...temptations **20**, all verse **21**, testifying....repentance...faith **23**, bonds and afflictions **24**, all verse **25**, preaching the kingdom of God **26,27, 28** all three verses **30**, of your own selves...perverse things **31**, watch...remember **32**, the word of his grace...build you up...inheritance **35**, all verse

LESSON TWO: CHAPTERS 21 AND 22

CHAPTER 21 EVENTS

- 1-16: Paul journeys from Miletus to Jerusalem
- 17-26: The elders receive and advise Paul
- 27-40: Paul is mobbed and rescued by the chief captain

CHAPTER 21: Paul travels from Miletus to Jerusalem

Paul continues his travels on his way to Jerusalem for the Jewish feast of Pentecost. While he traveled, he always looked up Christians and stayed with them, which is a good piece of advice for us today! While he was in Tyre, notice what is said in verse four: "*And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.*" Did Paul disobey the instructions from

the Holy Spirit? No. The best explanation of this statement is that he was told not to go to Jerusalem at that precise time, but to wait awhile longer.

CHAPTER 21 DEFINITIONS

1. Unlade: unload
2. Girdle: belt
3. Besought: begged
4. Must needs: certainly
5. Tidings: news
6. Centurion: commander of a hundred soldiers
7. Tumult: riot
8. Castle: fort
9. No mean city: a metropolitan city

When they came to Caesarea, they stopped at Philip's house. Philip was one of the seven servants appointed back in Acts chapter six. Verse nine speaks of Philip's four virgin daughters who prophesied. A prophet in the first century was a baptized person who had an apostle's hands laid on him to give him the gift of prophecy (Acts 8 and 19). The prophet then spoke publicly to the church the words he received directly from the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12 and 14). We are told that all the prophets in the New Testament were men, except for these four young ladies.

To whom did these young ladies prophesy? Read 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 which says "*let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak.*" Now check out Ephesians 5:19 which says "*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.*" Paul said women were not to speak in the church, yet singing is a "speaking." That means there are **some things a woman can speak** in the church and there are **some things a woman cannot speak**.

The key to this is 1 Timothy 2:12: "*But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*" "Usurp authority" means to take over doing something that men are supposed to do. **There are no women elders, deacons or preachers in the Bible church because to be so would take over positions that God intended men to fill.**

Philip's daughters prophesied (taught), but their prophesying could not be as an elder, a deacon or a preacher. What did they do? They must have taught other women (Titus 2:3-5), or children. Many churches today have women preachers, but this is just not the Bible way.

The man, Agabus, was a prophet who prophesied that Paul would be bound and turned over to the Gentiles by the Jerusalem Jews. The brethren there were heartsick and tried to persuade Paul not to go, but he was determined to make the Jerusalem journey. They did go to Jerusalem and met with James, the Lord's brother, and the other elders. The elders were glad to hear of the success of Paul's work and gave him some advice. They told him that his reputation had gone before him and people thought he was not being a patriotic Jew, which was not true at all, so they advised him to join four men who had taken a vow, which thing Paul did.

We stop here to make some points about this event. Paul fought hard with Judaizing teachers who were trying to get Gentiles to become Jews first before they became Christians. The book of Galatians especially hits hard at this kind of false teaching. The anonymous writer of the book of Hebrews also hits this heresy hard.

So, what was happening here in Jerusalem? Was Paul being a hypocrite? Not at all. This is a man who said just two chapters later, "*Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day*" (Acts 23:1). Paul was a **Christian first**, but he was a **Jew by nationality**. **He took the vow because it was part of the Jewish nation's tradition** and not because he was still spiritually bound to the old Law of Moses.

Paul wanted to wisely do something that would show he was loyal to the national laws of Judea, but it didn't do any good because the Asian Jews falsely accused him of defiling the temple. There was a sign on the outside of the temple that said, "No one but Jews allowed here; all others will be killed." Paul didn't take Trophimus (v 29) into the temple, but what good is truth when people are wanting to believe their own lies!

These Jewish cowards who were beating Paul stopped when the law came to intervene (v 32) . This mob hated Paul so much they contradicted themselves (v 34) and when the chief captain carried Paul into the prison, it looks like the soldiers had to carry him on their shoulders (v 35)! The chief captain thought he was a rioter (v 38), but Paul told him he was a Jew and also asked to speak with the mob (v 39).

Again, we repeat a sad, but very true lesson from this occasion: **A mob is a mindless thing and when people whip a mob up into doing crazy things, even murder can result.** This cannot happen in Christianity; it is ungodly.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 21: **4**, not go up to Jerusalem **5**, kneeled....prayed **8**, Philip, the evangelist **9**, prophesy **10**, Agabus **12**, besought **13**, all verse **14**, will of the Lord be done **17**, gladly **18**, James...elders **20**, zealous of the law **24**, take...purify...shave...orderly...keepst **27**, stirred **28**, polluted **31**, kill him...uproar **35**, borne of the soldiers **38**, Egyptian **40**, stairs

CHAPTER 22 EVENTS

1-223: Paul's account of his conversion and the reaction of the Jewish mob

24-30: Paul's conversation with the chief captain

CHAPTER 22 DEFINITIONS

1. Gamaliel: a famous Jewish religious teacher in those days
2. This way: Christianity
3. Just One: Christ
4. Martyr: a person who dies for his religious beliefs
5. Bade: asked
6. Chief captain: probably the equivalent of our major or colonel

CHAPTER 22: Paul's speech on the castle (fort) steps

From reading Acts, we know what Paul's life was like before he became a Christian. He was first the **powerful persecutor**, then the **committed convert** to Christ, the **dynamic debater** with those in error, and the **peerless apostle** to the Gentiles. Why did he repeat a good portion of his life here in chapter twenty-two if most everybody knew what had happened to him? He did it because he was **1)** arguing for his life, **2)** because truth is truth no matter how many times it is told and **3)** what happened to him was what Jesus wanted him to do. Here are Paul's points in his sermon: which was delivered in the Hebrew tongue (V 2) which immediately quieted the mob (v 3).

1. Paul was an educated man (v 3) and a very zealous Jew (v 3)
2. He killed Christians during his persecutions (v 4); this fact was known to the Jewish leaders (v 5).
3. The Damascus road noonday bright light (v 6) and the voice of the Lord (vv 7,8) turned Paul around.
4. His instructions from Christ were: **1)** go into Damascus and **2)** he will learn what the Lord wanted him to do. **He was not saved on the road to Damascus.**
5. The visit of devout Ananias who was respected by all (v 12)
 - a. Healed Paul of his blindness (v 13)
 - b. Told Paul he would be a witness unto all men for the gospel (v 14,15)
 - c. Told Paul to **"arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"** (v 16)

NOTE: Paul later wrote in Romans 10:13: "*whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" Paul himself was "*baptized, calling on the name of the Lord.*" A person can't "*call on the name of the Lord*" and not be baptized into the Lord (Romans 6:3,4). Calling on the name of the Lord is what Paul did and that included being baptized.

Paul then told of his return to Jerusalem (about 135-150 miles from Damascus) where, while Paul was in a trance, Jesus told him to flee Jerusalem to avoid death (v 18) and that he would send him to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

The mob rebelled at the mention of the word “Gentiles” because of the Jews’ blind hatred of anyone who wasn’t Jewish. They showed their hatred of Paul by throwing dust into the air, something we don’t do today but which was done back then to show hatred and rejection. When the chief captain wanted to scourge Paul (v 24), Paul used his Roman citizenship to save himself from the lash (vv 25-28).

Roman citizenship was very valuable in the first century. **1)** It was given by the Roman senate for good conduct, **2)** it could be inherited from a father who was a Roman citizen, **3)** it was a birth right of someone born in a free city such as Tarsus and **4)** it could be bought with money.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 22: **1**, defence **2**, Hebrew...silence **3**, Tarsus...Gamaliel...perfect ...zealous **5**, witness...punished **6**, noon...persecutest thou me **8**, Jesus **9**, heard not **10**, told...all things...appointed **12**, devout...good report **13**, same hour **14**, know his will...see...hear **16**, all verse **18**, not receive **19**, imprisoned...beat...believed **21**, far hence unto the Gentiles **24**, bade... scourging **26**, Roman **28**, free born certainty...loosed...commanded

LESSON THREE: CHAPTERS 23 and 24

CHAPTER 23 EVENTS

- 1-10: Paul's speech in his own defense before the council
- 11: The Lord's encouragement
- 12-15: The forty-man plot to kill Paul
- 16-22: The plot discovered and Lysias is informed
- 23-35: Paul is taken to Governor Felix in Caesarea

CHAPTER 23 DEFINITIONS

- 1. Whited wall: white-washed tomb
- 2. Wist: knew
- 3. Sister's son: nephew
- 4. Shewed: told
- 5. Straightway: immediately
- 6. Epistle: letter

CHAPTER 23: : The appearances of Paul before the Jewish council.

What was this Jewish council? Since it was presided over by the high priest, Ananias, it probably was the council called the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin was composed of seventy men who had the responsibility of making decisions about Jewish law, Jewish traditions and sometimes pass sentence of death on people. Whatever this council was, it now had the opportunity to hear Paul's defense. The events that happened before the council are as follows:

1. Paul said he had lived in good conscience before God (v 1). The word “conscience” means a “knowing within” and, even when Paul was doing wrong, he thought he was doing right!

2 Timothy 1:3, Paul said: *“I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day.”*

NOTE ABOUT THE CONSCIENCE: Let your conscience be your guide, **BUT** let your conscience be guided by the Bible!

It was against Moses’ law for an accused person to be physically harmed until judgment was passed, so when Ananias commanded that Paul be hit in the mouth, he disobeyed the law! That’s why Paul spoke so sharply to Ananias (v 3). When Paul found out that this person was the high priest he apologized, quoting Exodus 22:28.

2. Paul used the religious division between Sadducee and Pharisee to make his point. The Pharisees and Sadducees were two Jewish religious groups and usually they were enemies because of their differences of opinions. (Pharisees believed in angels, spirits and the resurrection of the dead but the Sadducees did not.)

3. Notice what happens when religious people get into a fight: *“And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.”*
4. Jesus comforted Paul and said he was to go to Rome to preach (v 11)

More religious evil! Forty men put themselves under a curse (instead of swearing an oath!) That they would not eat or drink until Paul was killed(v12). Wasn't that a nice way to be religious? And their religious leaders went along with them (v 13,14)! But Paul's nephew (v 16) heard the plot he told Paul who sent him by the soldiers to the chief captain. This young man told Lysias, the chief captain, and Paul was taken to Caesarea accompanied by 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen and 200 spearmen at 9:00 PM. Lysias sent the Roman governor, Felix, a letter explaining the situation and Felix told Paul he would hear his case.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 23: **1**, lived in good conscience **2**, smite **3**, contrary to the law **6**, Sadducees...Pharisees...hope...resurrection of the dead **7**, dissension...divided **9**, cry...strove...no evil...spirit...angel...not fight against God **10**, pulled in pieces **11**, Jerusalem...Rome **12**, curse...killed Paul **13**, forty **16**, sister's son (nephew) **21**, lie in wait...killed **23**, two hundred...threescore (70)...200...third hour of the night (9:00) **24**, Felix **29**, questions of their law...nothing laid to his charge...death...bonds

CHAPTER 24: Paul's appearances before governor Felix.

CHAPTER 24 EVENTS

- 1-9: Paul is accused before governor Felix by the Jews
- 10-21: Paul defends himself
- 22-,23: Felix frees Paul in the custody of a centurion
- 24-26: Paul teaches Felix and his wife, Drusilla
- 27: Festus becomes governor

Paul was in custody for five days before Ananias, the high priest, the elders and an orator (probably a lawyer) named Tertullus came down from Jerusalem to Caesarea to bring accusations against Paul. Tertullus greased his speech with compliments to Felix, then told lies about Paul: that he was obvious, rebellious (seditious), a ringleader of the Christians (sect of the Nazarenes), a profaner of the temple and would have been judged by Jewish law except for the interference of Lysias (vv 2-8).

CHAPTER 24 DEFINITIONS

- 1. Descended: Jerusalem was on a mountain top and Caesarea was by the sea
- 2. Providence: provision
- 3. Clemency: indulgence
- 4. Sedition: rebellion
- 5. Profane: desecrate
- 6. Assented: agreed
- 7. Heresy: an opinion given as law
- 8. Void of offence: free and clear
- 9. Know the uttermost: make a decision
- 10. Felix' room: the position of governor of Judea

Paul defended himself very well by saying: **1)** he could answer for himself (v 10), **2)** his purpose for being in Jerusalem was to worship (v 11), **3)** he didn't even teach in the temple and certainly wasn't rebellious besides they couldn't prove their accusations (v 12) **4)** what they considered to be false, he knew was true, **5)** His conscience was clear because of the truth (v 16), **6)** he had come to Jerusalem to bring money (v 17) **7)** the Jews hated him so much they wouldn't listen to the truth he spoke (v 18) **8)** All of them didn't even show up for his trial before Felix (v 19, 20) and **9)** Their problem was that they didn't agree with his teaching about the resurrection. Felix knew about Christianity (v 22) and freed Paul to custody of a centurion (v 23).

A pagan Roman governor could see the truth better than religious Jews! The same is true today. **When people read the Bible and understand its simple teachings, other religious people who are set in their ways will not hear and will become infuriated at pure, clean Bible teaching.**

Felix evidently wanted his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess, to hear what Paul had to say, so they both gave him time to talk.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Felix was an ex-slave who had been appointed governor of Judea. Drusilla was the oldest child of Herod Agrippa, the Herod who had killed James, the brother of John, and threw Peter into prison. Tradition says that Felix was banished to France where he died in disgrace. A Jewish history named Josephus said that Drusilla and her son died in Pompeii when Mt. Vesuvius erupted and blotted that city off the face of the earth.

Paul spoke of “**the faith in Christ**” (v 24). Anytime you see the definite article “**the**” in front of the word “**faith**”, it refers to the gospel **truth**, the revelation of God’s will for men. When we preach the truth, we also must apply it to our audiences like Paul did here.

“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee” (Acts 24:25). Notice that the truth scared Felix so much that he trembled, but being scared of not obeying God wasn’t enough for him to become a Christian. He also was a greedy man and thought some bribe money could exchange hands (v 26); he spoke with Paul several times for the next two years until Festus came to be governor (v 27).

UNDERLINING CHAPTER 24: **2**, quietness...providence **5**, pestilent...sedition...sect of the Nazarenes **9**, assented **10**, answer for myself **12**, disputing...raising up the people **13**, prove **14**, all verse **16**, conscience void of offense **17**, alms **22**, more perfect **24**, Drusilla...Jewess...the faith in Christ **25**, all verse **26**, money **27**, Festus

CHAPTER 25 EVENTS

- 1-12: Paul’s trial before governor Festus
- 13-22: Festus tells Herod Agrippa II about Paul
- 23-27: Festus states Paul’s case

CHAPTER 25 DEFINITIONS

- 1. Besought: begged
- 2. Thither: there
- 3. Grievous: serious
- 4. Conferred: had a discussion
- 5. Licence: opportunity
- 6. Superstition: religion
- 7. Augustus: the Roman emperor
- 8. Pomp: ceremony

LESSON FOUR: CHAPTERS 25 AND 26

CHAPTER 25: Paul makes his case before Governor Festus

Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor of Judea and reigned from about 60 to 62 AD. As chapter 25 opens, we notice that he “ascended” from Caesarea to Jerusalem, but when you look at a map, you notice that Caesarea is north of Jerusalem. Some unbelievers say this is a contradiction, but the problem is solved when we remember that Jerusalem set on top of a mountain (Mt. Zion) and Caesarea was located north of Jerusalem by the seaside. Festus did go south, but ascended because of the elevation difference.

The Jews from Jerusalem wanted Paul to be brought from Caesarea up to Jerusalem but they intended to kill him on the way (v 3). However, Festus saw through their deceit and said Paul would be kept at Caesarea (v 4), but that the Jews could once again present their case against Paul (vv 5,6); however, when they came, they just couldn’t prove their case (v 7). Lies only get us into trouble, but truth always has nothing to fear.

What does it mean that Paul appealed to Caesar? Remember we discussed how valuable Roman citizenship was and now we make the point that one of the benefits of being a Roman citizen was the right to appear before Caesar himself if the citizen wished, and could afford to do so. Not only was Paul unjustly accused and wanted the wrong made right, but he also wanted to take the gospel to the very room of Caesar himself. The Caesar at this time was Nero. Caesar is referred to as “Augustus” in this chapter; all caesars (Roman kings) were called Augustus.

When Herod Agrippa II, the son of Herod Agrippa I, and his sister Bernice visited Festus, he stated Paul's case and wanted Agrippa's opinion of it. (It's interesting to note that Bernice was the sister of Drusilla, who was Felix's wife). Herod agreed to listen to Paul (v 22) and when Paul appeared before them, Festus said *"I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death"* (v 25). That put Festus in a fix because, when he sent Paul to Rome, he would have no provable charges against him! Herod later said that if Paul had not appealed to Caesar he would have been released.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 25: 1, ascended 3, lying wait in the way to kill him 4, kept 5, wickedness judgment seat 7, many...grievous...could not prove 8, law...temple...Caesar 11, I appeal to Caesar 13, Agrippa....Bernice (his sister) 19, superstition...Paul affirmed to be alive 21, Augustus 25, committed nothing worthy of death 27, unreasonable

CHAPTER 26 EVENTS

- 1-11: Paul's history before his conversion to Christ
- 12-18: his experience on the road to Damascus
- 19-23: The explanation of his bonds
- 24-29: Festus interrupts but Paul continues
- 30-32: The meeting adjourned with the conclusion that Paul would have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar

CHAPTER 26 DEFINITIONS

- 1. Straitest: strictest
- 2. Oft: often
- 3. Strange cities: foreign cities
- 4. Pricks: ox goads
- 5. Beside thyself: crazy
- 6. Soberness: sound words
- 7. Not done in a corner: was not hidden

CHAPTER 26: Paul defends himself before Agrippa.

Here we have Paul in the company of a king giving an account of his life, including his manner of life (v 4) as a Pharisee (v 5) which was well known of the Jews, but they wouldn't admit it (v 5). Paul also observed that Agrippa was an "expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews" meaning that he was familiar with the Jewish religion. We wonder if Agrippa already knew about Paul and how he violently and maliciously persecuted the church even to other cities (vv 9-12). Again he tells about his conversion (vv 14-18).

Paul here tells more about what Jesus told him than in the other accounts and it is worth our while to listen to what Jesus told him:

1. Paul couldn't kick against God (v 14). A "**prick**" or "**goad**" was a sharp stick nailed to the bottom of an ox cart and when the ox would kick against the cart, he would only hurt himself by hitting the pricks
2. The reason Jesus appeared to Paul was to make him a minister to the Gentiles (v 17) so they would be converted and turn from Satan's power for the forgiveness of sins and the heavenly home waiting for faithful Christians (vv 17,18).

Jesus has this same concern for us today, *"not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (2 Peter 3:9b).

Paul continues by saying that he was obedient to Jesus (v 19) and that the Jews hated him so much they tried to kill him several times, but he still continued to preach the gospel (vv 20-23). When he mentioned the resurrection from the dead (v 223), Festus shouted, *"Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad"* (v 24). Paul denied being insane and then turned to King Agrippa and said, *"For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"* (vv 26-28)

Paul was not afraid of anybody, even a king! He didn't skirt around the truth, he simply said what was so and put the burden on Agrippa to make some sort of decision. Some people believe that Agrippa used the word "Christian" in a sneering way, but that's not true because Paul said he knew Agrippa knew the prophets' foretelling of a new name given by God to his people (Isaiah 62).

People today must be persuaded fully and to the point of obeying the Lord. Halfway persuasion is not enough.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 26: 1, permitted...answered 3, expert in all customs and questions 4, know all the Jews 5, from the beginning....Pharisee 7, hope's sake 8, all verse 10, shut up in prison...put to death 11, every synagogue 15, I am Jesus 16, all verse 18, all verse 20, repent and turn to God 23, all verse 24, learning doth make thee mad 26, none of these things are hidden from him...not done in a corner 28, all verse 29, all verse 31, nothing worthy of death or of bonds

LESSON FIVE: CHAPTERS 27 and 28

CHAPTER 27 EVENTS

- 1-12: The voyage from Caesarea to Fair Havens
13-44: The storm at sea and the ship is wrecked

CHAPTER 27 DEFINITIONS

1. Augustus' band: elite soldiers
2. Commodious: comfortably safe
3. Tempestuous: strong
4. Strake: struck
5. Abstinence: doing without food
6. Harkened: listened
7. Deemed: sensed; decided
8. Foreship: the prow
9. Hinder: rear of the ship

CHAPTER 27: The beginning of Paul's journey to Rome

This chapter contains a lot of geographical information, which means that Luke, the author of Acts, was most probably on board ship while they sailed. The centurion (commander of a hundred men) was named Julius and he was of Augustus' band, probably a reference to what today we would call Special Forces. Julius was very kind to Paul throughout this trip (v 3) and mostly listened to Paul's advice. When they were at Fair Havens, Julius didn't listen to Paul's warning of future danger (v 10) with disastrous results later.

The voyage was beset by a wind called Euroclydon (v 14) and the sailors lightened the ship, including the tackle (v 18). It was so rough they didn't even eat (v 21), but Paul reported seeing an angel which told him that God would spare the lives (v 24). The tempest blew for two weeks (v 27) and when the sailors were getting ready to abandon ship, Paul told Julius that their lives wouldn't be saved if the sailors jumped ship (v 31). The 276 people in the ship (v 37), on Paul's advice, ate some food (vv 33-36) and were nourished enough to face the rest of this disastrous voyage. The sailors hauled anchor and let the ship run with the wind (v 40) and stuck on a pile of rocks, the front part of the ship being held fast and the back part being torn by the wind (v 41). The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners, but Paul convinced Julius to spare them, so they all escaped to land (v 44).

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 27: 1, Julius...Augustus' band 3, courteously....liberty 9, dangerous 11, believed the master 14, Euroclydon 17, quicksands 22, no loss...of the ship 23, all verse 25, shall be even as it was told me 29, wished for the day 34, not a hair fall from the head of any of you 35, all verse 37, two hundred threescore and sixteen (276) 38, cast out the wheat 44, safe to land

CHAPTER 28 EVENTS

- 1-6: Paul's experience with a snake on the island of Melita
- 7-10: Paul's work in Melita
- 11-16: The trip from Melita to Rome
- 16-28: Paul meets with Jewish religious leaders
- 30.31: Paul's two year Roman imprisonment

CHAPTER 28 DEFINITIONS

- 1. Barbarous: uncivilized
- 2. Viper: poisonous snake
- 3. Bloody flux: possibly tuberculosis
- 4. Laded: loaded down
- 5. Constrained: compelled
- 6. Caesar: the Roman king; at this time it was Nero
- 7. Waxed gross: made hard

CHAPTER 28: Paul at Malta, then Rome and the conclusion of the book

The island they shipwrecked on was called Melita in the Mediterranean Sea. The word "barbarous" referring to the inhabitants of the island means that these were uncivilized people. These folks kindled a fire for Paul and his shipmates (v 2) and as Paul gathered sticks, a poisonous snake bit him on his hand (v 3). It didn't harm him (5), even though the barbarians sat back and waited for him to die (v 4). When he didn't die, they thought he was some sort of a god (v 6)!

NOTE: Mark 16:15-18 reads: "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*"

Some religious people today believe that Christians should handle snakes as part of their worship and they quote this scripture to "prove" it. However, this scripture is fulfilled in Acts 28, when Paul was not killed by the poisonous viper. **In the first century, while the gospel was going to every creature, the preachers of the gospel were protected by the Holy Spirit while the gospel went into all the world (Colossians 1:23). Handling snakes as part of worship has never been a part of Christian worship and will never be.**

Continuing his narrative, Luke then speaks of Paul's healing Publius' father of a "bloody flux" (probably tuberculosis) and extending his healing to many people on the island (v 9). The purpose of this healing was so Paul could get people's attention to tell them of Christ and the saving gospel. They leave Malta and make their way to Rome, finally getting there (vv 11-16).

The centurion trusted Paul so much that, when he finally got to Rome, he was allowed to stay by himself with a guard present (v 16). "*A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold*" (Proverbs 22:1).

Paul talks with the Jewish leaders in Rome and explains why he is there (vv 17-20). It was surprising that nobody in Judea had written to these leaders about Paul (v 21), but they had heard of the church of Christ because it was "everywhere spoken against" (v 22). Later, Paul preached the gospel of Christ (v 23) with the same results as elsewhere "*some believed the things which were spoken and some believed not*" (v 24).

The same thing happens today: **when the truth is preached, some accept it and some don't. The ones that do will obey it and become Christians; the ones who don't will die in their sins.**

When the Jews disagreed among themselves, Paul quoted Isaiah 6:9 which speaks of their hard hearts and non perception of truth. Because the Jews rejected Christ and the gospel, it went to the Gentiles who believed it (v 28). The book of Acts ends with Paul being a prisoner for two years in his own hired house and all this time "*Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him*" (v 31).

May our lives end in such a way by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

UNDERLINING IN CHAPTER 28: 1, Melita 2, no little kindness...rain....cold 3, viper 4, hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live 6, swollen...fallen down dead...he was a god 7, Publius 8, prayed...laid his hands...healed 9, healed 10, honored 14, we went toward Rome 15, took courage 17, committed nothing...people...customs 18, no cause of death in me 20, hope of Israel 22, sect....spoken against 23, kingdom of God...Jesus...Moses...prophets 24, all verse 26, all verse 28, all verse 31, all verse

THIS CONCLUDES YOUR STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS. PLEASE GO TO THE TEST AT THE END OF THE LESSON. ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

WHEN YOU FINISH, PLEASE RETURN ONLY THE TEST QUESTIONS. THE LESSON IS YOURS TO KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

**TEST QUESTIONS
THE BOOK OF ACTS
Part Three**

YOUR NAME:

ADDRESS

CITY/STATE/ZIP



LESSON ONE: Chapters 19 and 20

MULTIPLE CHOICE (Circle the correct answer)

1. Trips which Paul made to preach the gospel were called **A** sabbaticals **B** Vacations **C** Missionary journeys
2. When Paul preached the gospel to most Jews, they: **A** hardened their hearts **B** Listened well **C** Couldn't care less
3. When people truly believe, they **A** just believe only **B** Join a church **C** truly repent and do the will of God.
4. The first century church "broke bread" (the Lord's supper) **A** On Thursday because that's when Jesus did it **B** On the first day of the week (Sunday) because that's when Jesus arose from the dead **C** Whenever they wanted to
5. Preachers can be called "pastors" **A** When they demand it **B** when they are also qualified and appointed as elders **C** Never

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Acts 20:7: "And upon the _____ day of the _____, when the disciples came together to _____, Paul preached unto them."
2. Three things which happened on the first day of the week in the New Testament are: 1) Jesus _____ from the _____; 2) The _____ was established on the day of _____ in Acts 2; 3) The early Christians took the _____ Supper
3. The church was established in _____ in Acts 19.
4. In the first century every _____ was cast out and people who _____ to be able to cast out devils must produce the _____ who laid his _____ on them
5. The mob mentality makes people become _____, they _____ their voices; they try to _____ the one who has taught them.

TRUE FALSE (Check the correct answer)

- | | | | | |
|--|---|-------|---|-------|
| 1. The silversmiths in Ephesus all accepted Paul's teaching the gospel | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 2. Today, we can eat the Lord's Supper and regular meals together | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 3. The Ephesian church had elders | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 4. Paul was in the preaching business for the money he could earn | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 5. True Christians take the Lord's Supper every first day of the week | T | _____ | F | _____ |

LESSON TWO: Chapters 21 and 22

FILL IN THE BLANKS

- 1 Timothy 2:12: "But I suffer not a _____ to teach, nor to _____ authority over the _____, but to be in _____.
- A _____ is a _____ thing and when people whip a mob into doing _____ things, even _____ - can result. This cannot happen in _____.
- Roman citizenship was granted 1) for good _____, 2) as _____ from the father, 3) as a _____ right and 4) it could be _____ with money.
- Paul was a _____ first, but he was a _____ by nationality.
- There are some things a _____ can speak in the church and there are some _____ a woman _____ speak.

MULTIPLE CHOICE (Circle the correct answer)

- In the first century prophets were **A** public speakers on behalf of God **B** baptized believers who had an apostle's hands laid on him **C** both of these
- When Paul spoke to the crowd on the castle steps in Jerusalem, they rebelled at the mention of the word **A** Satan **B** Angels **C** The Gentiles
- Being baptized for the remission of sins is part of **A** calling on the name of the Lord **B** a church ritual **C** Nothing important
- Women are to keep silence in the church but they are permitted to **A** Confess their faith in Christ **B** Confess their sins **C** both of these
- Paul's nationality was **A** Gentile **B** Iranian **C** Jewish

TRUE FALSE (Check the correct answer)

- | | | | | |
|--|---|-------|---|-------|
| 1. Paul sometimes disobeyed God and the Holy Spirit | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 2. Churches today ought to act as a mob | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 3. Agabus was a prophet who said Paul would be bound | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 4. Philip's daughters taught men in church | T | _____ | F | _____ |
| 5. Paul lived in good conscience before God | T | _____ | F | _____ |

LESSON THREE: Chapters 23 and 24

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. The word _____ means “a knowing _____” and even when Paul was doing _____, he thought he was doing _____.
2. Acts 14:25: “And as he reasoned of _____, temperance and _____ to come, Felix _____; and answered, Go thy way for this time: when I have a _____ season, I will call for thee”
3. Let your _____ be your guide, but let your _____ be guided by the _____.
4. When people read the _____ and understand its _____ teachings, other religious people who are _____ in their ways will not _____ and will become mad at pure, _____ Bible teaching.
5. The Jewish council was called the _____

MULTIPLE CHOICE (Circle the correct answer)

1. The Pharisees believed in **A** Angels **B** Spirits **C** The resurrection of the dead **D** All of these
2. The two Roman governors mentioned in these two chapters are **A** Peter and Paul **B** James and John **C** Felix and Festus
3. Felix’ wife was named **A** Drusilla **B** Maude **C** Bathsheba
4. The definite article “the” before the word “faith” means **A** The gospel **B** The truth **C** both of these
5. Religious fights are the worst kind because people **A** Don’t listen to the Bible **B** don’t use their heads **C** Both of these

TRUE FALSE (Check the correct answer)

- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Drusilla was the oldest child of Herod Agrippa | T _____ F _____ |
| 2. Forty men put themselves under a curse to kill Paul | T _____ F _____ |
| 3. Felix had no emotions when Paul preached the gospel to him | T _____ F _____ |
| 4. Ananias told Paul to arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins | T _____ F _____ |
| 5. Sadducees believed in angels | T _____ F _____ |

LESSON FOUR: Chapters 25 and 26

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Caesarea was located _____ of Jerusalem by the _____.
2. Herod Agrippa’s wife, _____, was the sister of Felix’ wife, _____.
3. Acts 26:26-28: “for I am persuaded that _____ of these things are hidden from him: for this _____ was not done in a _____. King Agrippa, believeth thou the _____? I know that thou _____. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, _____ thou _____ me to be a _____.”
4. The Roman Caesar at the time this part of Acts was written was _____.

5. 2 Peter 3:9b: God is “not willing that any should _____, but that _____ should come to _____.”

MULTIPLE CHOICE (Circle the correct answer)

1. A “goad” was **A** A funny joke **B** an eating utensil **C** a sharp stick nailed to the bottom of an ox cart.
2. The Roman king, Caesar, was also referred to as **A** Augustus **B** Herod **C** Rufus
3. The Jews wanted to kill Paul **A** in Jerusalem **B** in Caesarea **C** Anywhere they could
4. King Agrippa **A** knew about the law and the prophets **B** Knew about the Christ Paul preached **C** Both of these
5. At all of Paul’s trials, **A** he was proven guilty **B** he had done nothing worthy of bonds or death **C** He never showed up

TRUE FALSE (Check the correct answer)

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Paul was afraid of everybody, even King Agrippa | T _____ F _____ |
| 2. Jesus never spoke to Paul | T _____ F _____ |
| 3. King Agrippa used the word “Christian” in a bad and sneering way | T _____ F _____ |
| 4. Paul appealed to Nero Caesar | T _____ F _____ |
| 5. Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor | T _____ F _____ |

LESSON FIVE: Chapters 27 and 28

MULTIPLE CHOICE (Circle the correct answer)

1. Luke, the author of the book of Acts, **A** accompanied Paul on several occasions **B** Was a doctor **C** both of these
2. The hard wind that beat up on Paul’s ship was called **A** Castor **B** Pollux **C** Euroclydon
3. The miraculous gift of “handling serpents” in the first century was for the purpose **A** Of protecting the gospel preachers in the first century **B** of scaring sins out of people **C** of giving them something to eat
4. People who accept the truth and obey the truth become **A** Catholics **B** Protestants **C** Jews **D** Christians
5. Another word for “uncivilized” is **A** Jew **B** Gentile **C** Barbarous

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Proverbs 22:1: “A good _____ is rather to be _____ than great _____ and loving _____ rather than silver and _____.”
2. Handling _____ as part of _____ has never been a part of _____ worship and will _____ be.
3. Paul was in the ship for _____ days before it shipwrecked on the island of _____.
4. Paul was in Rome for two years, “_____ the _____ of God and teaching those things which _____ the _____ Jesus Christ, with all _____, no man _____ him.”

5. Publius' father was healed by Paul of a _____ flux, probably _____.

TRUE FALSE (Check the correct answer)

1. When Paul got to Rome, he spoke to many Jewish religious leaders T _____ F _____
2. The barbarians on Melita thought Paul was a god T _____ F _____
3. Snake handling is not a part of Christian worship today T _____ F _____
4. There were 2,760 people on Paul's ship before it was shipwrecked T _____ F _____
5. People who accept the truth and obey the truth become Christians only T _____ F _____