

## Outline

1. Addressing the riot
  1. Recounts personal history
  2. Gives account of conversion
  3. Tells of being sent to the Gentiles
2. Riot resumes
  1. Jews call for Paul to be executed
  2. Paul to be examined by flogging
  3. Paul's Roman citizenship revealed
3. Commander summons the Jewish leaders

## Commentary

While Luke pays special attention to the accusation that Paul had brought a Gentile into the temple, the major charge against him appears to be that of apostasy: "...against the people, the law, and this place..." (Acts 21:28). It appears to be this charge that Paul is attempting to refute by his speech.

Some try to make the most of the differences in language between this account of Paul's conversion and those found in Acts 9 and Acts 26. For instance, in Acts 9:27 we are told that the men with Paul heard the voice, but saw no one. In this account, we learn that they did not hear the voice, and in Acts 26:14, Paul only mentions himself as hearing the voice. The English Standard Version translates the phrase as "did not understand" which is likely the more correct form. W. E. Vine explains it this way:

“

*akouo* (ἀκούω, 191), the usual word denoting "to hear," is used (a) intransitively, e.g., Matt. 11:15; Mark 4:23; (b) transitively when the object is expressed, sometimes in the accusative case, sometimes in the genitive. Thus in Acts 9:7, "hearing the voice," the noun "voice" is in the partitive genitive case [i.e.,



hearing (something) of], whereas in 22:9, “they heard not the voice,” the construction is with the accusative. This removes the idea of any contradiction. The former indicates a “hearing” of the sound, the latter indicates the meaning or message of the voice (this they did not hear). “The former denotes the sensational perception, the latter (the accusative case) the thing perceived” (Cremer). (W. E. Vine, 296.)

We find out more of what Ananias says to Paul in this passage than we do in Acts 9. There we only learn of the command to be baptized. Here, we also learn that Ananias tells Paul that he would be “a witness for him to everyone” (Acts 22:15).

The attempt to interrogate Paul by means of torture is only circumvented by means of the revelation of Paul’s Roman citizenship. The Valarian Law dates back to 509 BC and was intermittently administered until around 299 BC when Livy mentions its 3rd enactment (Livy, 10.9.3-4). It prohibited Roman citizens from being condemned to death or scourging (Livy, 10.9.6). The law was expanded upon in the three Porcian Laws (enacted between 199-184 BC) to include flogging. These laws gave Romans the right to an appeal to the people and would have necessitated a trip to Rome. The third of those laws prescribed punishment that likely included death but was in any case severe enough that one Roman (Verres) went into voluntary exile rather than face a guilty verdict at his trial (Wikipedia).

### **Thought Questions**

Consider the following thought questions:

1. Why does Paul begin his speech with a recounting of his upbringing?
2. Why do the Jews not set upon Paul again at the mention of Jesus in Acts 22:8?
3. Explain the significance of Paul’s reply to the Lord in Acts 22:19.
4. Why does the tribune order Paul’s examination by flogging? What might this indicate about why he allows Paul to speak in the first place?

5. By what authority does the tribune command the “chief priests and all of the council” to meet?