

## **Acts 26:1-32 ESV - Paul Before Agrippa**

Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense: 2 "I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am going to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 especially because you are familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews. Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.

4 "My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews. 5 They have known for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that according to the strictest party of our religion I have lived as a Pharisee. 6 And now I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers, 7 to which our twelve tribes hope to attain, as they earnestly worship night and day. And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O king!

8 Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead? 9 "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

10 And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many of the saints in prison after receiving authority from the chief priests, but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them.

11 I punished them often in all the synagogues and tried to make them blaspheme, and in raging fury against them I persecuted them even to foreign cities. 12 "In this connection I journeyed to

Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.

13 At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

15 And I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' And the Lord said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, 17 delivering you from your people and from the Gentiles--to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

19 "Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

21 For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to

pass: 23 that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

24 And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind." 25 But Paul said, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words. 26 For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner.

27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe." 28 And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?" 29 And Paul said, "Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am--except for these chains."

30 Then the king rose, and the governor and Bernice and those who were sitting with them. 31 And when they had withdrawn, they said to one another, "This man is doing nothing to deserve death or imprisonment." 32 And Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

### **The Storm - Acts 27:1-44 ESV**

And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named Julius. 2 And embarking in a ship of

Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica.

3 The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for.

4 And putting out to sea from there we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us.

5 And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. 6 There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board.

7 We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone. 8 Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

9 Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, 10 saying, "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

11 But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. 12 And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that

somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.

13 Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. 14 But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land.

15 And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. 16 Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat.

17 After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. 18 Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo.

19 On the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

21 Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. 22 Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, 24 and he said, 'Do not be afraid,

Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

25 So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. 26 But we must run aground on some island."

27 When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. 28 So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. 29 And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come.

30 As the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow, 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.

33 As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing. 34 Therefore I urge you to take some food. For it will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you."

35 And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat. 36 Then they all were encouraged and ate some food

themselves. 37 (We were in all 276 persons in the ship.) 38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

39 Now when it was day, they did not recognize the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore. 40 So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach. 41 But striking a reef, they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf.

42 The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape. 43 But the centurion, wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, 44 and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so it was that all were brought safely to land.

### **Paul in Rome - Acts 28:1-31 ESV**

After we were brought safely through, we then learned that the island was called Malta. 2 The native people showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold.

3 When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. 4 When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a

murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live."

5 He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. 6 They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. 8 It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him. 9 And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured.

10 They also honored us greatly, and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed. 11 After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead.

12 Putting in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. 13 And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. 14 There we found brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome. 15 The brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage. 16 And when we



came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier that guarded him.

17 After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and when they had gathered, he said to them, "Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18 When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case. 19 But because the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar--though I had no charge to bring against my nation. 20 For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain."

21 They said to him, "We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you. 22 But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. 24 And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved.

25 Disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet: 26 "'Go to this people,

and say, You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive. 27 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.' 28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen." 29 When he had said these words, the Jews departed, having much dispute among themselves.

30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, 31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

### **Psalms 94:9-15 ESV**

He who planted the ear, does He not hear? He who formed the eye, does He not see? 10 He who disciplines the nations, does He not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge-- 11 the LORD--knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath.

12 Blessed is the man whom You discipline, O LORD, and whom You teach out of Your law, 13 to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked.

14 For the LORD will not forsake His people; He will not abandon His heritage; 15 for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it.