

Part I

“Paul’s Defense of His Jewish Heritage & Hope!”

Acts 26:1-11

Then (King Herod) Agrippa (II) Said to Paul, “You Are Permitted to Speak for Yourself!” So, Paul Stretched Out His Hand (For Silence) and Answered for Himself. “I Congratulate Myself, King Agrippa, Because Today I Shall Answer For Myself Before You Concerning All the Things of Which I am Accused by the Jews (Sanhedrin), Especially Because You are (an) Expert in All Customs and Questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore, I (Paul) Beg You (King) to Hear Me Patiently. My Manner of Life From My Youth, which was spent from the beginning among My Own Nation (Israel) at Jerusalem, All the Jews Know (as Fact). They (Sanhedrin) Knew Me from the First, If They Were Willing to Testify, that According to the Strictest Sect of Our Religion I (Paul) Lived (as) a Pharisee. And now I (Paul) Stand and (I) am Judged for the ‘Hope of the Promise’ Made by God to Our Fathers. To this Promise Our Twelve Tribes, Earnestly Serving God Night and Day, Hope to Attain. For this Hope’s Sake, King Agrippa, I (Paul) am Accused by the Jews (Sanhedrin). Why Should It Be Thought Incredible by You (O’ King) That God Raises the Dead? Indeed, I Myself Thought I Must Do Many Things Contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I (Paul) also Did in Jerusalem, and ‘Many of the Saints’ I (Myself) Shut Up in Prison, Having Received Authority (As Orator & Praeco & Procurator) from the Chief Priests (& Sanhedrin); and When They (Saints) Were Put To Death, I (Myself) Cast My Vote Against Them. And I (Paul) Punished Them (Saints) Often in Every Synagogue and Compelled Them To Blaspheme; and Being Exceedingly Enraged Against Them, I (Myself) Persecuted Them Even to Foreign Cities.”

Acts 26:1-11 (NKJV)

Central Question

“What Is Paul Actually Presenting Here To This Formal & Official Audience?”

Central Answer

Paul’s ‘Apologia Pro Vita Sua’

“A Complete & Formal Defense of One’s Beliefs, Philosophy, & Worldview!”

NOTE

We Will Study Paul’s Presentation – His ‘Apologia Pro Vita Sua’

In Three Parts Over Three Weeks As We Look At The Whole of Acts Chapter 26!

Formal & Official Setting Of Today’s Audience

So, the Next Day, When King (Herod) Agrippa (II) and (Queen) Bernice Had Come with ‘Great Pomp’, and had entered the Auditorium with the **Commanders** and the **Prominent Men** of the City (Caesarea Maritima), at (Governor) Festus’ Command Paul was Brought In (Before Them All). Acts 25:23

King Herod Agrippa II’s Invitation To Speak Openly

Then (King Herod) Agrippa (II) Said to Paul, “You Are Permitted to Speak for Yourself!” So, Paul Stretched Out His Hand (For Silence) and Answered for Himself. Acts 26:1

I. Paul’s ‘Apologia Pro Vita Sua’

A. Exordium – Introduction of a Speech / Story / Treatise

Paul Simply Asks To Be Heard & Understood To The End of His Discourse!

“I Congratulate Myself, King Agrippa, Because Today I Shall Answer For Myself Before You Concerning All the Things of Which I am Accused by the Jews (Sanhedrin), Especially Because You are (an) Expert in All Customs and Questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore, I (Paul) Beg You (King) to Hear Me Patiently.” Acts 26:2-3

B. Early Life, Calling, & Vocation

“My Manner of Life From My Youth, which was spent from the beginning among My Own Nation (Israel) at Jerusalem, All the Jews Know (as Fact). They (Sanhedrin) Knew Me from the First, If They Were Willing to Testify, that According to the Strictest Sect of Our Religion I (Paul) Lived (as) a Pharisee.” Acts 26:4-5

Paul’s Early Life To Date Was Well Documented

Being Accepted Into The Nation’s Highest Rabbinical School of Study
Under Rabbi / Professor Gamaliel In Jerusalem From Age 12 to 28!

Further, Paul Graduated At The Top of His Class As A Part of the Rabbi Sect of Pharisees.
Thus, He Is Approved To Speak of the Promise of God To The Jewish People Concerning the
Coming of the Messiah & The Known Fact of the Resurrection from the Dead!

C. Promise of Messiah & Hope of the Resurrection

“And now I (Paul) Stand and (I) am Judged for the ‘Hope of the Promise’ Made by God to Our Fathers. To this Promise Our Twelve Tribes, Earnestly Serving God Night and Day, Hope to Attain. For this Hope’s Sake, King Agrippa, I (Paul) am Accused by the Jews (Sanhedrin).” Acts 26:6-7

Paul Gives His Testimony & Restates the Facts Surrounding the
Long Wait for the Coming of the Messiah & the Hope He Brings
Of Salvation, & the Forgiveness of Sins,
& the Hope of the Resurrection & Life Everlasting!

D. Central Question of Accusation & Debate

Paul Now Asks The Primary Question of All the Jews: King, Queen,
Prominent Men, Religious Leaders, & Every Jewish Person:

“Why Should It Be Thought Incredible by You (O’ King) That God Raises the Dead?” Acts 26:8

E. Paul’s Zeal For Persecution & Defense of His Ancestral Faith *Is Well Known By All the Jews & Christians Alike!*

“Indeed, I Myself Thought I Must Do Many Things Contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I (Paul) also Did in Jerusalem, and ‘Many of the Saints’ I (Myself) Shut Up in Prison, Having Received Authority (As Orator & Praeco & Procurator) from the Chief Priests (& Sanhedrin); and When They (Saints) Were Put To Death, I (Myself) Cast My Vote Against Them. And I (Paul) Punished Them (Saints) Often in Every Synagogue and Compelled Them To Blaspheme; & Being Exceedingly Enraged Against Them, I (Myself) Persecuted Them Even to Foreign Cities.” Acts 26:9-11

Paul Managed On This Day, - Almost 2,000 Years Ago,
To Present The ‘Central Question’ That Is Asked Of All Humanity,
Each of Us - One By One!

The ‘Central Question’ For Us Today,
& The ‘Only Question’ We Must Present To Fulfill Our Earthly Mission From God,
The ‘Paramount Question’ We Are Tasked To Ask Of Everyone We Meet,
Is Understood In **Seven Layers of Depth & Truth!**

I. God’s **Eternal Plan** Of **“Community & Fellowship”**

The Plan He Established Before He Created The Universe & Us

II. God’s **Eternal Plan** Has **“Salvation”** Woven Within It

Even Though He Knew We Would Not Remain Faithful & Fall From His Grace

III. All **People Are Inherently Selfish & Choose Their Will** & Their Desires Over God’s & Others.
They Commit Sin & Separate Themselves From God & Others

IV. Gods Eternal Plan Of "Community, Fellowship, & Salvation"
Includes All People On The Earth For All Time (Believers & Unbelievers, Jews & Gentiles)

V. God Has Been Speaking His Eternal Plan Of "Community, Fellowship, & Salvation"

Since The Beginning Of Time Through:

- 1) His Written Word – **Logos**
- 2) His Spoken Word – **Rhema**
- 3) His Creation – **Order & Design**
- 4) His Signs – **Miracles & Wonders**
- 5) His Angels – **Dreams, Visions, Appearances, & Revelations**
- 6) His People – **Actions & Words**
- 7) Himself - **Dreams & Visions (Theophanies)**, Direct **Visitations & Revelations (Epiphanies)**
And In These **'Last Days'** (Last 2,000 Years +) Directly As **God In The Flesh – Emmanuel**,
In the **Incarnation of Jesus Christ The Lord of Lords, & King of Kings!**

VI. God Has Given Us All A Freewill To Choose How We Want To Respond To Him
And To His **Eternal Plan Of "Community, Fellowship, & Salvation"**

VII. God Always Keeps His Promises & His Word

He Is **Always Faithful**, No Matter What We Choose!

"Therefore, Let Us Each Answer The 'Question of Questions?'"

"Who Is Jesus Christ To Me, To Us, To His Church?"

"Let Us Present God's 'Question of Questions' To Everyone We Meet,

Everyone We Mentor, Everyone We Rub Shoulder to Shoulder,

Everyone, Especially Our Enemies,

Who Are Currently The Enemies of Our God!"

"This Is Our Two-Fold Mission: 1) Seek & To Save The Lost,

By The Direction & Help of the Holy Spirit Indwelling Us,

& 2) Serve All With An Eternal Love,

That Will Dispel Their Anger, Distrust, & Unbelief

In the Ever Faithful & Merciful Lord Our God!"