



STORY

Paul the Prisoner - Acts 21:15 - 26:32

1/7/04

TEACHER PRAYER

O Lord, Your Almighty Word is very important. Its holy law shows us our many, many sins. Its glorious gospel shows us our dear Savior. Help me to proclaim the whole counsel of God in my classes, "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." Enable my students to treasure Your Word and remain faithful to it all their days. In Jesus' name. Amen.

VOCABULARY

mean - insignificant, small

thongs - a narrow strip of leather, used as a lace or strap

courtesy - politeness, graciousness

OUTER AIM

Paul suffered much for the sake of the gospel.

INNER AIM

The Lord used Paul to advance His Kingdom

BACKGROUND

 (*Rupprecht, Bible History References, Vol. 2, pp. 586-598*)

Shortly after his conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul heard that he would suffer many things for the sake of the Gospel and Jesus, his Savior and Lord. In his epistle he describes them. (II Cor. 11:23-27) He often alluded to them in his writings. This story records a series of imprisonments beginning at Jerusalem and extending to Rome.

Acts 21:15-26 As Paul headed to Jerusalem, various disciples warned him not to go there. They spoke of great dangers awaiting him. They even pleaded with him not to go there. (cf. previous verses) Paul knew what lay ahead. He was determined to go and was ready to suffer, if the Lord so willed. Paul met with the apostles and leaders at Jerusalem. He told them of his journeys, and they rejoiced.

Acts 21:27-40 Only a few days later, Paul was arrested in Jerusalem. Jews from Asia Minor stirred up the crowd against Paul and accused him of many things. A tumult followed. Paul was rescued by the Romans. He requested to defend himself and to speak to the people. Permission was granted.

Acts 22:1-30

Paul explained at some length who he was, what he had done, and what he was now doing. He reviewed for them what his life had been before his conversion. He also conveyed to them what happened to him on the day of his conversion and what had been doing since that day. When they heard about the gentiles being a part of his ministry, the Jews could listen no longer. They would have killed him, but the Romans whisked him away. The Romans would have scourged and interrogated him; but when they learned that he had Roman citizenship, they were afraid. They couldn't understand why the Jews hated him so. They hoped to find out.

Acts 23

Paul was placed on trial before the chief priests and the Jewish high council (the Sanhedrin). Paul explained to all present why he was on trial. Since some believed in the resurrection (Pharisees) and some did not (Sadducees), the Council was divided. A great dissension and tumult followed. The Roman commander again rescued Paul from his enemies. The Lord reassured Paul that He was with him and would help him. (v. 11) There was a conspiracy among the Jews to kill Paul. It was revealed to the Roman commander. Paul was kept safe until he could be escorted safely to Caesarea and the Roman governor.

Acts 24:1-27

vs. 1-9 Paul is charged by his accusers from Jerusalem.

Vs. 10-27 Paul is permitted to defend himself before the Roman governor concerning the charges levied against him. Felix was moved by Paul's testimony. (His wife was Jewish.) He postponed a decision concerning Paul until a more convenient time. (v. 25) He hoped to let Paul go free and was hoping for a bribe from Paul's friends. Paul remained a prisoner in Caesarea for two years.

Acts 25:1-12

Festus replaced Felix as governor of Judea. Again there was a plot against Paul at Jerusalem. Festus kept Paul safe in Caesarea. Paul's accusers again came to Caesarea. Many charges were levied against him, but none could be proven. Paul was permitted to defend himself. Festus encouraged Paul to go back to Jerusalem to be tried in the Jewish court. Paul appealed to Caesar to have his case heard.

Acts 25:13-27 Paul's Defense Before King Agrippa

Festus knew Paul had done nothing worthy of death. He told King Agrippa about the case. The king wanted to hear Paul for himself.

Acts 26 - King Agrippa permitted Paul to speak for himself in his own defense. Paul recounted his pre-conversion life and post-conversion life. He used the opportunity to proclaim Christ. Festus thought Paul was mad, out of his mind. King Agrippa was deeply moved and confessed that he was almost persuaded to become a Christian. All those present realized that Paul was innocent of all the charges levied against him and could have been released. Since he appealed to Caesar, he would be sent to Rome.

STUDENTS' PRAYER TLH #498: 1, 5

Rise, Thou Light of Gentile nations, Jesus, bright and Morning Star;
Let Thy Word, the gladsome tidings, Ring out loudly near and far,
Bringing freedom to the captives, Peace and comfort to the slave,
That the heathen, free from bondage, May proclaim Thy power to save.

May our zeal to help the heathen Be increased from day to day
As we plead in true compassion And for their conversion pray.
For the many faithful heralds, For the Gospel they proclaim,
Let us all be cheerful givers To the glory of Thy name. Amen.

PRESENTATION

There is more than one Bible story within this lesson. It covers both Paul's imprisonment in Jerusalem and in Caesarea. A number of individuals appear in this lesson, people to whom Paul proclaimed Christ. A listing of these individuals and their titles, together with a map of the places mentioned, might be helpful.

APPLICATION

The Lord predicted concerning Paul: “He is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” (Acts 9:15-16) In this lesson we have a graphic fulfillment. Paul appears before a Jewish king and queen, a Roman governor, actually two Roman governors. He appears before both Jews and Gentiles. “The Lord moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.” Had Paul not become a prisoner, some of these individuals would never have had such an opportunity to hear the Gospel. The Lord opens doors in very special ways today, also. He guides and leads us, as He did Paul.

The Lord was with Paul, blessing and keeping, protecting and defending him . . . so also He is with us.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Psalm 50:15 - Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me.

Psalm 124:8 - Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

I Peter 5:7 - casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you,

Middle

Matt: 16:24 - If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

Acts 14:22 - We must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God.

I Peter 1:5 - You are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Upper

Romans 8:28 - and we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Romans 10:17 - So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

II Tim. 4:18 - and the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me for His heavenly Kingdom: To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

I Peter 5:6-7 - Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him for He cares for you.

HYMN CHOICES

Awake, Thou Spirit, Who Didst Fire” - TLH #494

There Still Is Room - TLH #509

Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun - TLH #511

Paul the Prisoner

Acts 21:15 - 26:32



Paul suffered much for the sake of the Gospel.



The Story

Scott was walking home from school one day. He was with some boys. They passed by the house of an elderly man. He was having trouble raking the leaves in his yard. When the other boys saw the old man moving slowly, they laughed at him. They made fun of him and kicked more leaves onto his yard. Scott didn't join in or even laugh at the boys. He knew what they were doing was wrong, but was scared to say anything.

Then he remembered what he learned at church. Many times doing the things God wants us to do is hard, but that is a way to tell people about God. So, Scott went up to the boys and told them they should leave the old man alone. He said that God wanted us to help people. He said that they were sinning by doing this. Now, the other boys made fun of Scott and walked away. Scott was hurt, but then he went to help the old man with the raking. The man looked at Scott in surprise. He asked Scott why he hadn't also made fun of him? Scott looked at him and said that as Christians, we are to do what God wants, even if it means we are hurt by others.

Throughout history, many people have been hurt and killed because they stood up for God. Paul was one of them. Paul suffered much as he preached God's Word.

Before Paul left to go to Jerusalem, his friends warned him that he would be in great danger there. They didn't want him to go. Paul said that he was ready to suffer and even die, if he had to. He wanted to tell people about Jesus. His

friends saw that they could not keep him from going. So they said to him, "The will of the Lord be done." Then Paul left.

At Jerusalem, Paul was welcomed by his fellow Christians. Paul told them about all the great things that God had done. When they heard of all these things, they praised God.

One day Paul was worshiping in the Temple. Some Jews, who hated Paul, were there also. They hated him because he preached the Gospel of Jesus. These Jews stirred up the crowd against Paul. The crowd grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the Temple. They wanted to kill him.

Someone told the Roman captain about what was happening. The captain came with soldiers and took Paul away from the angry Jews. The soldiers carried Paul away, up the stairs to the castle prison. The crowd followed shouting, "Away with him!"

Paul asked the captain to let him speak to the crowd before he left. Paul told the people how he used to hate the believers in Jesus, too. He told them how he used to persecute them. He told them about the bright light he'd seen on the way to Damascus. He also told them about the voice from Heaven. He told them how he now believed in Jesus. Finally, he told them that Jesus had sent him to tell people everywhere about the Gospel.

The crowd listened for a little while. Then they would not listen any more. The Jews especially didn't like it when Paul talked about preaching to the Gentiles. They began to shout again. So, the captain had Paul put in prison. He told his soldiers to torture Paul. Paul asked them, "Is

it lawful for you to beat a man who is a Roman citizen who has done nothing wrong?"

The Romans were afraid when they heard this. They were not allowed to hurt a citizen this way. They decided to try to find out why the Jews hated Paul so much.

The next day, Paul was brought before the whole Jewish council. (Sanhedrin) While Paul spoke, the chief captain saw that even the Jewish rulers could not agree about what to do with Paul. Some (Pharisees) wished to set him free. Others (Sadducees) wanted to put him to death. Their arguing began to get violent. To protect Paul, the Roman commander sent his soldiers to rescue Paul again.

That night, the Lord appeared to Paul. He said, "Keep up your courage! As you have told the truth about Me in Jerusalem, so you must also tell it in Rome!"

The enemies of Paul were not content to have him in prison. They wanted to have him killed. To keep Paul safe, the soldiers took Paul secretly at night, to another city called Caesarea. Governor Felix lived and ruled there. The governor had Paul put in prison, but he was kind to Paul. He let friends visit Paul and hoped that they would offer him money to set Paul free. Paul was in prison for two years. Then a new governor, Festus, came to take the place of Felix .

The Jewish leaders came to Festus and made many charges against Paul. They hoped to have Paul killed. None of their charges could be proven. Festus encouraged Paul to go back to Jerusalem to be tried. Paul asked to be given a trial before Caesar in Rome. Festus granted his request.

A little while later, King Agrippa came down to Caesarea to welcome Festus. Festus told King Agrippa about Paul. He told him how the Jews wanted to have Paul put to death and how Paul had requested to have Caesar decide his case. Then King Agrippa wanted to hear Paul's case himself.

The next day, King Agrippa came to the governor's palace. Governor Festus called for Paul. Paul stood before the king and was not afraid. He told how he had lived as a Pharisee, persecuting the Christians. He told about his conversion on the road to Damascus, and how the Lord had told him to tell people everywhere about Jesus. He told King Agrippa the wonderful news that Jesus was the fulfillment of all the writings of Moses and the prophets. Paul also told him that Christ's death and resurrection was for the salvation of all people on the earth.

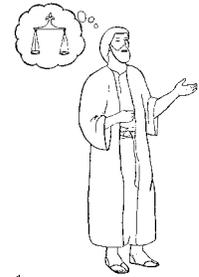
King Agrippa said, "You almost make me want to be a Christian."

Paul answered that he wished that everyone there would become Christians. King Agrippa shook his head and said, "No, I will not become a Christian." Paul was sent back to prison.

All who were present realized that Paul had not done anything for which he deserved to die or be in prison. King Agrippa told Festus, "This man could be free if he had not appealed to Caesar. But he wants to go to Caesar, and you must send him to Caesar."

Activity One - Draw a line to match the picture with the sentence.
Then color the pictures.

1. Paul was taken to prison.



"I APPEAL UNTO CAESAR."

2. Paul preached to the people from the steps.



3. The crowd started to fight over what to do with Paul.



"ALMOST THOU PERSUADEST."

4. Paul asked to go before Caesar.



5. Paul appears before Festus.



6. Paul preaches to King Agrippa.



Activity Two - Answer these questions about the lesson.

1. Where was Paul going at the beginning of the story?
2. Why did his friends not want him to go?
3. Why did Paul go anyway?
4. What happened when they went to the temple?
5. How was Paul rescued?
6. Why was Paul put in prison?
7. How long was Paul in prison at Caesarea?
8. What did God tell Paul while he was in prison?
9. What did Paul say to Agrippa?
10. Why did God have Paul go through all these troubles?(see sentence below)

The Lord used Paul and He uses us to spread His Kingdom.

Passage - Use the words in the box to finish the Bible Passage.

LORD

earth

help

heaven

"Our h _____ is in the name of the L _____, who
made h _____ and e _____." Psalm 124:8

Hymn & Prayer - TLH #511 v. 4

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The pris'ner leaps, unloosed his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest. Amen.

Paul the Prisoner

Acts 21:15 - 26:32



Paul suffered much for the sake of the Gospel.



The Story

Scott was walking home one day with some boys from school. They passed by the house of an elderly man who was having trouble raking the leaves in his yard. When the other boys saw the old man moving slowly they laughed, made fun of him and kicked more leaves onto the grass. Scott didn't laugh or do this. He knew what they were doing was wrong, but was scared to say anything.

Then he remembered what he learned at church. Many times doing the things God wants us to do is hard, but that is a way to tell people about God. So, Scott went up to the boys and told them they should leave the old man alone. He said that God wanted us to help people, and they were sinning by doing this. The other boys made fun of Scott and walked away. Scott was hurt, but then went to help the old man with the raking. The man looked at Scott in surprise. He asked Scott why he hadn't also made fun of him? Scott looked at him and said that as Christians, we are to do what God wants, even if it means we are hurt by others.

Throughout history, many people have been hurt and killed because they stood up for God. Paul was one of them. Paul suffered much as he preached God's Word.

Before Paul left for Jerusalem, his friends warned him that he would be in great danger if he went to Jerusalem. They didn't want him to go. But, Paul told them that he was ready to suffer and even die, if necessary, to tell people about Jesus. His friends saw that they could not keep him from going, so they said, "The will of the Lord be done", and Paul left.

At Jerusalem, Paul was welcomed by his fellow Christians. He told them about all the great things that God had

done through his preaching of the Gospel. When they heard of all these things, they praised God.

One day, as Paul was worshiping in the Temple, some Jews were there who hated him because he preached about Jesus. They stirred up the crowd against Paul. They grabbed him and dragged him out of the Temple. They wanted to kill him.

Someone told the Roman captain about what was happening. The captain came with soldiers and took Paul away from the angry Jews. The soldiers carried Paul away, up the stairs to the castle prison. All the while the crowd followed shouting, "Away with him!"

Paul asked the captain to let him speak to the crowd. Paul stood there on the stairs and spoke to the people. He told the people how he used to hate the believers in Jesus, too. He told them how he used to persecute them. He told them about the bright light he'd seen on the way to Damascus, and how he'd heard the voice from Heaven. He told them how he now believed in Jesus, and that Jesus had sent him to tell people everywhere about the Gospel.

The crowd listened for a little while, but they would not listen any more when he talked about preaching to the Gentiles, and they began to shout again. So, the captain had Paul put in prison. He told his soldiers to torture Paul. But Paul asked them, "Is it lawful for you to beat a man who is a Roman citizen who has done nothing wrong?"

The Romans were afraid when they heard this. They had treated a Roman citizen wrongly and they could get it trouble for doing that. Now they wanted to find out why the Jews hated Paul so much.

The next day, Paul was brought before the whole Jewish council, called

the Sanhedrin. While Paul spoke, the chief captain saw that even the Jewish rulers could not agree about what to do with Paul. Some Pharisees wished to set Paul free. Others Sadducees wanted to put him to death. Their arguing began to get violent, so the Roman commander sent his soldiers to rescue Paul. That night, the Lord appeared to Paul and said, "Keep up your courage! As you have told the truth about Me in Jerusalem, so you must also tell it in Rome!"

The enemies of Paul were not content to have him in prison. They wanted to have him killed. To keep Paul safe, the soldiers took Paul secretly by night to another city, Caesarea, where governor Felix was. The governor had Paul put in prison, but he was kind to Paul. He let friends visit Paul and hoped that they would offer him money to set Paul free. Paul was in prison for two years. Then a new governor, Festus, came to take the place of Felix .

The Jewish leaders came to Festus and made many charges against Paul, secretly hoping to kill him. None of their charges could be proven. Festus encouraged Paul to go back to Jerusalem to be tried. But, Paul asked to be given a trial before Caesar in Rome. Festus granted his request.

A little while later, King Agrippa came down to Caesarea to welcome Festus. Festus told King Agrippa about Paul. He told him how the Jews wanted to have Paul put to death and how Paul had requested to have Caesar decide his case. Then King Agrippa wanted to hear Paul's case himself.

The next day, King Agrippa came to the governor's palace, and governor Festus called for Paul. Paul stood before the king and was not afraid. He told how he had lived as a Pharisee, persecuting the Christians. He told about his conversion on the road to Damascus, and how the Lord had told him to tell people

everywhere about Jesus. He told King Agrippa the wonderful news that Jesus was the fulfillment of all the writings of Moses and the prophets and that his death and resurrection was for the salvation of all people on the earth.

King Agrippa said, "You almost make me want to be a Christian."

Paul answered that he wished that everyone there would become Christians. King Agrippa shook his head and replied that, no, he would not become a Christian. Paul was sent back to prison.

All who were there realized that Paul had not done anything for which he deserved to die or be in prison. King Agrippa told Festus, "This man could be free if he had not appealed to Caesar. But he wants to go to Caesar, and you must send him to Caesar."

The Lord used Paul and uses us to advance His Kingdom.

Activity One - Answer these questions about the lesson.

1. Why didn't Paul's friends want him to go to Jerusalem?
2. Why wasn't Paul afraid to go?
3. What did his friends say when they couldn't keep Paul from going to Jerusalem?
4. Why did Paul's enemies (the Jews) hate him?
5. How was Paul rescued from the crowd of angry Jews?
6. When the Lord appeared to Paul in prison, what did He tell Paul?
7. Why did the soldiers move Paul to a different city (Caesarea)?
8. How long was Paul in prison in Caesarea?
9. What did Paul tell King Agrippa?
10. Why wasn't Paul set free?
11. How was the will of the Lord being accomplished?

Activity Two - Find the underline words from the Bible passage hidden in the WORD SEARCH below.

Psalm 50:15 - CALL UPON ME IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE; I WILL DELIVER YOU, AND YOU SHALL GLORIFY ME."

A	Y	G	Y	O	U	T
D	E	L	I	V	E	R
U	P	O	N	S	K	O
C	C	R	W	H	D	U
A	V	I	D	A	Y	B
L	G	F	F	L	J	L
L	S	Y	X	L	M	E

Passages - Use the words in the box to finish the Bible Passages.

LORD

earth

help

heaven

name

Our _____ is in the _____ of the _____,
who made _____ and _____. Psalm 124:8

all

Casting

you

cares

Him

_____ your care upon
_____, for He _____ for _____. 1 Peter 5:7

Hymn & Prayer - TLH #511 v. 4, 6

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The pris'ner leaps, unloosed his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

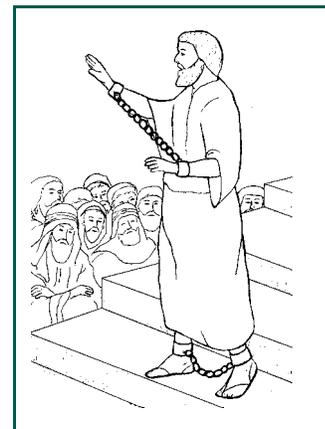
Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen. Amen.

Paul the Prisoner

Acts 21:15 - 26:32

Many people are persecuted for what they believe. Christians were persecuted to the point that they were thrown in jail and even killed.

Paul used to be someone who persecuted Christians but God called him to preach to the Gentiles. Now we read of him being taken to prison where he must defend himself against the Jews.



Prayer - TLH #498 1,5

Rise, thou Light of Gentile nations,
Jesus bright and Morning Star;
Let Thy Word, the gladsome tidings,
Ring out loudly near and far,
Bringing freedom to the captives,
Peace and comfort to the slave,
That the heathen, free from bondage,
May proclaim Thy power to save.

May our zeal to help the heathen
Be increased from day to day
As we plead in true compassion
And for their conversion pray.
For the many faithful heralds,
For the Gospel they proclaim,
Let us all be cheerful givers
To the glory of Thy name. Amen.

The Story - Acts 21-26 (paraphrased)

When Paul had come to Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received him. On the following day Paul went to James and all the elders were present. He told them all about the work God had given him to do with the Gentiles and how the Word of God was spread to them. When they heard it, they glorified the Lord.

Paul went to the temple to bring an offering but some of the Jews stirred up the crowd, dragged him out of the temple and tried to kill him. The commander of the army stopped the beating and took Paul away in chains amid the shouting of the crowd.

Paul asked the commander if he could speak to the crowd and when he said, "Yes," Paul told the people about his former life of persecuting the Christians and also his

conversion on the way to Damascus. He told them about his work of spreading the Gospel to the Gentiles. The Jews did not want to hear this about the Gentiles and became furious. The guards led him away and were going to beat him to find out why the crowd hated him. Paul stopped them by saying he was a Roman citizen.

The next day Paul was brought before the chief priests, Sadducees and Pharisees. They could not agree if Paul was speaking the truth and argued among themselves. Paul was taken away to protect him from these angry men. The following night he was told by the Lord, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

The Jews hated Paul and his message so



much that they made an oath together. They would not eat until they had killed Paul. Forty of the Jews were planning an ambush for the next day but Paul's nephew heard about the plot and told Paul who told one of the centurions.

Paul was escorted to Caesarea early in the morning to Felix, the Roman governor, with 370 soldiers for protection. The Jewish high priest and elders came and gave testimony against Paul, telling lies about him and how he caused problems in the temple and broke Jewish laws.

Paul defended himself before Felix saying he was innocent of the charges brought against him and the charges could not be proven true. He also talked about the Word of God.

When Felix heard these things, having heard about Christianity, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "I will make a decision on your case." So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him. Paul was kept here for two years. Felix often brought Paul to him to hear about faith in Christ. He also hoped Paul would give him money to be released.

After two years Festus succeeded Felix as governor. The high priest and chief men from Jerusalem now pleaded with Festus to hand Paul over to them so they could kill him. But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?"

So Paul said, "I appeal to Caesar."

After some days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus. When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix, about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews are asking for a judgment against him."

Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."

"Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."

So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders

and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in.

Festus said, "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me that he was not fit to live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death and that he himself had appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him."

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself."

So Paul answered for himself and told of his life and his conversion to faith in Jesus Christ. He told of his ministry to the Gentiles teaching repentance and forgiveness of sins through Jesus.

Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!"

But Paul said, "I am not mad, but speak the words of truth. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe."

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."

Paul said, "I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become believers in Christ."

When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them. They talked among themselves, saying, "This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains."

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

After this Paul was taken to Rome.

Outer Aim - Paul suffered much for the sake of the Gospel.

Inner Aim - The Lord used Paul to advance His Kingdom.

What God's Word Tells Us - Look up Romans 8:28, Romans 10:17, and 1 Peter 5:6-7. Fill in the blanks.

- ▶ Romans 8:28 - And we know that _____ work _____ for _____ to those who _____, to those who are the _____ according to His _____.
- ▶ Romans 10:17 - So then _____ comes by _____ and _____ by the _____ of _____.
- ▶ 1 Peter 5:6-7 - Therefore _____ yourselves under the _____ hand of _____, that He may _____ you in due _____, casting _____ your _____ upon Him, for He _____ for you.

Passages

Matthew 16:24 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

Acts 14:22 - "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

1 Peter 1:5 - who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hymn - TLH #511 v. 1, 2, 4, 6

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

For Him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown His head;
His name, like sweet perfume, shall rise
With ev'ry morning sacrifice.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The pris'ner leaps, unloosed his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

What the Story Tells Us - Find the words in the word search. The words may be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, and even backwards.

PAUL	CAESAREA	CONSPIRACY	TARSUS	ROMANS
FELIX	CHRISTIAN	JESUS CHRIST	CAESAR	GENTILES
FESTUS	PERSECUTION	KING AGRIPPA	DAMASCUS	

R E P C O N S P I R A C Y P G E Y
 F P E W O D Y S R M C F G L E A U
 G A R B S U C S A M A D T O H J J
 Y U S F D G J A H P E X C K T E K
 N L E E R S G F P G S Z G A N S I
 J N C L G D M I F M A J H Y A U L
 R H U I T R R J T A R S U S I S O
 O J T X H G S D J H E H Y O T C S
 M U I G A O P I Y T A G D W S H J
 A I O G E N T I L E S H S Y I R K
 N O N G Y T F E S T U S S Y R I I
 S I G H G H E J H S D F J D H S U
 K S F B M K S G R A S E A C C T T

Prayer

You are the Rock of my salvation; You are the strength of my life.
 You are my Hope and my Inspiration, Lord unto You will I cry.
 I believe in You, believe in You, for Your faithful love to me.
 You have been my Help in time of need; Lord unto You I cleave. Amen.

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Acts 21:15 - 26:32

Many people are persecuted for what they believe. Christians were persecuted to the point that they were thrown in jail and even killed.

Paul used to be someone who persecuted Christians, but God called him to preach to the Gentiles.

Now we read of him being taken to prison where he must defend himself against the Jews.



Prayer - TLH #498 1,5

Rise, thou Light of Gentile nations,
Jesus bright and Morning Star;
Let Thy Word, the gladsome tidings,
Ring out loudly near and far,
Bringing freedom to the captives,
Peace and comfort to the slave,
That the heathen, free from bondage,
May proclaim Thy power to save.

May our zeal to help the heathen
Be increased from day to day,
As we plead in true compassion
And for their conversion pray.
For the many faithful heralds,
For the Gospel they proclaim,
Let us all be cheerful givers
To the glory of Thy name. Amen.

The Story - Acts 21-26 (paraphrased)

When Paul had come to Jerusalem, the brethren gladly received him. On the following day, Paul went to James. He told them all about the work God had given him to do with the Gentiles and how the Word of God was spread to them. When they heard it, they glorified the Lord.

Paul went to the temple to bring an offering, but some of the Jews stirred up the crowd, dragged him out of the temple and tried to kill him. The commander of the army stopped the beating and took Paul away in chains amid the shouting of the crowd.

Paul asked the commander if he could

speak to the crowd; and when he said, "Yes," Paul told the people about his former life of persecuting the Christians and also his conversion on the way to Damascus where Jesus Christ appeared to him and asked why he was persecuting Him. He told them about his work of spreading the Gospel to the Gentiles. The Jews did not want to hear this about the Gentiles and became furious. The guards led him away and were going to beat him to find out why the crowd hated him. Paul stopped them by saying he was a Roman citizen.

The next day Paul was brought before



the chief priests, Sadducees and Pharisees. They could not agree if Paul was speaking the truth and argued among themselves. Paul was taken away to protect him from these angry men. The following night he was told by the Lord, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."

The Jews hated Paul and his message so much that they formed a conspiracy and made an oath together. They would not eat until they had killed Paul. Forty of the Jews were planning an ambush for the next day, but Paul's nephew heard about the plot and told Paul who told one of the centurions.

Paul was escorted to Caesarea early in the morning to Felix, the Roman governor, with 370 soldiers for protection. The Jewish high priest and elders came and gave testimony against Paul telling lies about him and how he caused problems in the temple and broke Jewish laws.

Paul defended himself before Felix saying he was innocent of the charges brought against him, and the charges could not be proven true. He also talked about the Word of God.

When Felix heard these things, having heard about Christianity, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "I will make a decision on your case." So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him. Paul was kept here for two years. Felix often brought Paul to him to hear about faith in Christ. He also hoped Paul would give him money to be released.

After two years, Festus succeeded Felix as governor. The high priest and chief men from Jerusalem now pleaded with Festus to hand Paul over to them so they could kill him. But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor,

asked Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?"

So Paul said, "I was born a Roman citizen in Tarsus and therefore appeal to Caesar."

After some days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus. When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix, about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews are asking for a judgment against him."

Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."

"Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."

So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in.

Festus said, "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me that he was not fit to live any longer. But I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death."

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself."

So Paul answered for himself and told of his life and his conversion to faith in Jesus Christ. He told of his ministry to the Gentiles teaching repentance and forgiveness of sins through Jesus.

Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!"

But Paul said, "I am not mad, but speak the words of truth. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe."

Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."

Paul said, "I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become believers in Christ."

When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and

Bernice and those who sat with them. They talked among themselves, saying, "This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains."

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

After this Paul was taken to Rome.

Outer Aim - Paul suffered much for the sake of the Gospel.

What the Story Tells Us - Fill in the blanks and then find those words in the WORD SEARCH. The words may be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, and even backwards.

1. _____ was spared being imprisoned and beaten because he was a _____ citizen.
2. Paul was converted on his way to _____.
3. _____ _____ appeared to Paul in the sky and asked him why he was _____ Him.
4. Paul was told to preach to the _____ the Word of God.
5. Some Jews formed a _____ to kill Paul.
6. Paul was originally from _____.
7. Paul was sent to the governor _____ in _____.
8. Paul was placed before the next governor, _____, when he was granted his appeal to _____.
9. _____ _____ heard Paul's preaching and said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a _____."

PAUL	CAESAREA	CONSPIRACY	TARSUS	ROMAN
FELIX	CHRISTIAN	JESUS CHRIST	CAESAR	GENTILES
FESTUS	PERSECUTION	KING AGRIPPA	DAMASCUS	

R E P C O N S P I R A C Y P G E Y
 F P E W O D Y S R M C F G L E A U
 G A R B S U C S A M A D T O H J J
 Y U S F D G J A H P E X C K T E K
 N L E E R S G F P G S Z G A N S I
 J N C L G D M I F M A J H Y A U L
 R H U I T R R J T A R S U S I S O
 O J T X H G S D J H E H Y O T C S
 M U I G A O P I Y T A G D W S H J
 A I O G E N T I L E S H S Y I R K
 N O N G Y T F E S T U S S Y R I I
 S I G H G H E J H S D F J D H S U
 K S F B M K S G R A S E A C C T T

What God's Word Tells Us - Look up Romans 8:28, Romans 10:17, and 1 Peter 5:6-7. Fill in the blanks then discuss the meaning of these passages.

- ◆ Romans 8:28 - And we know that _____ work _____ for _____ to those who _____, to those who are the _____ according to His _____.
- ◆ Romans 10:17 - So then _____ come by _____ and _____ by the _____ of _____.
- ◆ 1 Peter 5:6-7 - Therefore _____ yourselves under the _____ hand of _____. that He may _____ you in due _____, casting _____ your _____ upon Him, for He _____ for you.

Inner Aim - The Lord used Paul to advance His Kingdom

Your Turn

Paul was persecuted by being thrown in jail and beaten. We are blessed by being in a country that does not persecute Christians in that way. In what ways can Christians still be persecuted today? Have you ever been persecuted? Tell about your experiences.

Passages

Matthew 16:24 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

Acts 14:22 - "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

1 Peter 1:5 - who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hymn - TLH #511 v. 1, 2, 4, 6

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run,
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The pris'ner leaps, unloosed his chains,
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blest.

For Him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown His head;
His name, like sweet perfume, shall rise
With ev'ry morning sacrifice.

Let every creature rise and bring
Peculiar honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud Amen.

Prayer

You are the Rock of my salvation; You are the strength of my life.
You are my Hope and my Inspiration, Lord unto You will I cry.
I believe in You, believe in You, for Your faithful love to me.
You have been my Help in time of need; Lord unto You I cleave. Amen.