



KINGDOM EMBASSY MINISTRIES

Remembering our Roots. Restoring Authority. Maturing Disciples. Advancing the Kingdom.

Portion:

Title:

SCRIPTURES

GREAT PURPOSE

- Acts 23
- Romans 1:7-15; 8:28-39

- Let the Trial Begin
- If God is For Us...

"Be of good cheer." Has anyone ever said that to you? Well, maybe not using that specific wording, which is more biblical in nature. But, perhaps something more like, "Look up; look on the bright side; think positive; put your chin up; it will all work out; this too shall pass; cheer up, it's not that bad, etc." You all know what that feels like, as there is not one of you who has not been at rock bottom when some chipper person, with all the best intentions, comes along and looses one or more of those affirmations in your presence. And you all thought the same thing. "It's easy for you to say; you're not the one with the problem." Or, possibly you pondered something not quite as nice as that, a thought that would be completely inappropriate to record here! Either way, you know the feeling.

But, what if it was the Lord speaking and you were altogether confident it was true; you could, should, "Be of good cheer!" He does tell us precisely that you know. "You will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." He makes this promise so we can experience supernatural peace in the midst of dreadful circumstances. And sometimes we receive this word even before we are in such circumstances, as preparation for the inevitable.

You are called to a great purpose in the Lord and undoubtedly that calling will be fraught with dangers and difficulties. But along with that calling He says, "Be of good cheer!" Sure, the Holy Spirit may say to you one day, "In every city chains and tribulations await." But His calling always comes with a promise, "All things work together for good to those who love God and are the called according to His purpose," and a guarantee, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" Now, if God promises that when you love Him and follow His purpose for you as one of "the called" it will always work out in your favor, and He guarantees to be on your side every time, then certainly you can "Be of good cheer!" even when chains and tribulations await.

PROPHETIC SEED:

"But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."" Acts 23:11 NKJV

PROPHETIC FRUIT:

"So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also." Romans 1:15 NKJV

"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 8:28 NKJV

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31 NKJV

LET THE TRIAL BEGIN

1. Protected by Rome!?

A. Covered by the blood Roman Law

(1) Sitting before the Sanhedrin (**Acts 22:30**)

(a) Face-to-Face with his Accusers (*backwards one verse*)

1. “The next day, because he wanted to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he released him from his bonds, and commanded **the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down and set him before them.**” Acts 22:30 NKJV

(2) Paul Testifies before the Jewish Courts (**Acts 23:1-10**)

(a) Like Y’shua in Matthew 26, and the Apostles in Acts 4-5, and Stephen in Acts 6-7, Paul stands before the Jewish Religious council to testify.

1. “Then Paul, **looking earnestly at the council**, said, “Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” And the high priest **Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.** Then Paul said to him, “**God will strike you, you whitewashed wall!** For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?” And those who stood by said, “**Do you revile God’s high priest?**” Then Paul said, “**I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, ‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’**” But when Paul perceived that **one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees**, he cried out in the council, “Men and brethren, **I am a Pharisee**, the son of a Pharisee; **concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!**” And when he had said this, **a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees**; and the **assembly was divided**. For **Sadducees say that there is no resurrection**—and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the **Pharisees’** party arose and protested, saying, “**We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God.**” Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.” Acts 23:1-10 NKJV
2. **Paul:** “**God will strike you, you whitewashed wall!** For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?” Acts 23:3 NKJV
3. **Y’shua:** ““Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you **cleanse the outside** of the cup and dish, **but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.** Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like **whitewashed tombs** which indeed **appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.** Even so you also **outwardly appear righteous** to men, but **inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.**” Matthew 23:25-28 NKJV
4. “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.” Exodus 22:28 NKJV
5. “...If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; **concerning the law, a Pharisee;**

concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

Philippians 3:4-6 NKJV

B. The Plot Against Paul

(1) The Conspiracy to Kill (Acts 23:11-22)

(a) Not every conspiracy is a theory, some are facts!

1. “But the following night **the Lord** stood by him and said, **“Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.”** And when it was day, some of the **Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath**, saying that **they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul**. Now there were more than **forty** who had **formed this conspiracy**. They came to the **chief priests and elders**, and said, “We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul. Now you, therefore, together with the council, **suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near.**” So when **Paul’s sister’s son** heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, **“Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him.”** So he took him and brought him to the commander and said, “Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you.” Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside, and asked privately, “What is it that you have to tell me?” And he said, “The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him. **But do not yield to them**, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you.” So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded him, **“Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me.”**” Acts 23:11-22 NKJV
2. “So Paul said, **“I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged.** To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. **I appeal to Caesar.**” Then Felix, when he had conferred with the council, answered, **“You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!”**” Acts 25:10-12 NKJV
3. “Then Agrippa said to Festus, **“This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”**” Acts 26:32 NKJV

C. Sent to Felix

(1) Claudius Lysias is now determined to adhere to Roman legal protocols. (Acts 23:23-35)

(a) A large entourage is prepared to protect and deliver Paul to the Felix, the Roman governing authority over the region, who governs from Caesarea (by the sea).

1. “And he called for two centurions, saying, **“Prepare two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night; and provide mounts to set Paul on, and bring him safely to Felix the governor.”** He wrote a letter in the following manner: **Claudius Lysias**, To the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings. **This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by**

them. Coming with the troops I rescued him, **having learned that he was a Roman**. And **when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council**. I found out that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. And when it was told me that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him. Farewell. Then the soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. The next day they left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks. When they came to Caesarea and had delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. And when the governor had read it, he asked what province he was from. And when he understood that he was from Cilicia, he said, **"I will hear you when your accusers also have come."** And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium." Acts 23:23-35 NKJV

IF GOD IS FOR US...

2. Whatever is necessary to fulfill his purpose in you your life!

A. The Progression of a Great Calling

(1) Let's follow Paul, starting soon after he was called...

(a) Paul was informed, by Ananias via prophecy from the Lord, **to whom** he would go and **how much** it would cost!

1. "But the Lord said to him, "Go, for **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 NKJV

(b) Paul had planted in his heart to get to Rome somehow!

1. **"To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that **without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers**, making request if, **by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you**. For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that **I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now)**, that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise. So, as much as is in me, **I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also."** Romans 1:7-15 NKJV

(c) Paul is headed to Jerusalem one final time!

1. **"And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem**, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that **the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me**. But **none of these things move me**; nor do I count my life dear to myself, **so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel** of the grace of God. "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom **I have gone preaching the kingdom of God**, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men." Acts 20:22-26 NKJV

(d) For sure Jerusalem is not the last stop!

1. **Right before Paul gets to Jerusalem...** "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and **deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.**' "" Acts 21:11 NKJV
 2. **Right before Paul leaves Jerusalem...** "But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; **for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.**"" Acts 23:11 NKJV
- (e) Paul was arrested in Jerusalem as prophesied, but it does not end there!
1. "So Paul said, **"I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged.** To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. **I appeal to Caesar.**"" Acts 25:10-11 NKJV
 2. "Then Agrippa said to Festus, **"This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.**"" Acts 26:32
 3. **As Paul desired...** *"making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you."* *"So, as much as is in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are in Rome also."* Romans 1:10, 15 NKJV
 4. **And as the Lord said...** *"for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."* Acts 23:11
 5. "Now when **we came to Rome**, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was **permitted to dwell by himself** with the soldier who guarded him." Acts 28:16 NKJV
- (f) Paul finally gets to testify in Rome!
1. "And it came to pass after three days that **Paul called the leaders of the Jews together.** So when they had come together, he said to them: **"Men and brethren, though I have 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, who, when they had **examined me, wanted to let me go,** because there was no cause for putting me to death. But **when the Jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar,** not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see you and speak with you, **because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.**"" Acts 28:17-20 NKJV
- (g) The Jews in Rome want to hear what Paul has to say...
1. "Then they said to him, **"We neither** received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. But **we desire to hear** from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere." So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, **to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets,** from morning till evening. And **some were persuaded** by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved." Acts 28:21-24 NKJV
 2. *"Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!"* Acts 28:28 NKJV
- (h) Two years under house arrest...

1. "Then Paul dwelt **two whole years** in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, **preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ** with all confidence, no one forbidding him." Acts 28:30-31 NKJV
2. **Paul was ready to die for the cause...** ...*"I am ready not only to be bound, but **also to die** at Jerusalem **for the name of the Lord Jesus.**"* Acts 21:13 NKJV
3. **And even death is good when you are called for a purpose...** *"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 8:28 NKJV

B. Is Paul's story your story?

(1) Be of Good Cheer!

(a) Paul's Story: be of good cheer!

1. "But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "**Be of good cheer**, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome."'" Acts 23:11 NKJV
2. *"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 8:28

(b) Your Story: be of good cheer!

1. "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may **have peace**. In the world you will have tribulation; but **be of good cheer**, I have overcome the world." John 16:33 NKJV
2. *"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 8:28

(2) Your Story?

(a) You will stand before governors and kings...

1. "But **beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you** in their synagogues. **You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.** But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. **"Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.** But he who endures to the end will be saved." Matthew 10:17-22 NKJV
2. *"**all things work together for good** to those who **love God**, to those who are the **called according to His purpose.**"* Romans 8:28

(b) Of course you will be hated!

1. *"**"If the world hates you**, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. **Yet because you are not of the world**, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' **If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."* John 15:18-20 NKJV
2. *"**all things work together for good** to those who **love God**, to those who are the **called according to His purpose.**"* Romans 8:28

C. All things work together for good...

(1) When do all things work together for good?

(a) Love God and live according to His purpose.

1. "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 8:28 NKJV
2. "If you love Me, **keep My commandments**." John 14:15 NKJV
3. "**He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me**. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."" John 14:21 NKJV
4. "Jesus answered and said to him, "**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word**; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. **He who does not love Me does not keep My words**; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." John 14:23-24 NKJV
5. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when **we love God and keep His commandments**. For **this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments**. And His commandments are not burdensome. For **whatever is born of God overcomes the world**. And this is **the victory that has overcome the world—our faith**. Who is he **who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**" I John 5:2-5 NKJV

(2) What does that victory look like?

(a) God is always on your side!

1. "What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?**" Romans 8:31 NKJV

(b) No charge against you can stand!

1. "**Who shall bring a charge against God's elect?** It is God who justifies." Romans 8:33 NKJV

(c) Nothing can separate you from the love of Christ!

1. "**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" Romans 8:35 NKJV
2. "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, **nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus** our Lord." Romans 8:38-39 NKJV

(3) So... if **all things work together for good** to those who **love God**, to those who are the **called according to His purpose...**

(a) Be anxious for nothing and have peace!

1. "**Be anxious for nothing**, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; **and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding**, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV
2. "**Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you**; not as the world gives do I give to you. **Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**." John 14:27 NKJ