



Portion:

## SCRIPTURES

- Romans 15:22-33
- Isaiah 52:15
- Acts 6-28

Title:

## ROME OR BUST!

- Ready for Rome
- Details: Rome Calling
- Narrative: Damascus to Rome

## SEED:

“For **I will show him how many things he must suffer** for My name’s sake.” Acts 9:16 NKJV

“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.” Acts 20:22-24 NKJV

“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

“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

## FRUIT:

“For this reason I also have been **much hindered from coming to you**. But now **no longer having a place in these parts**, and having a great **desire these many years to come to you**,” Romans 15:22-23 NKJV

“But **now I am going to Jerusalem** to minister to the saints.” Romans 15:25 NKJV

“Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, **I shall go by way of you** to Spain.” Romans 15:28 NKJV

“Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you **strive together with me in prayers to God for me**,” Romans 15:30 NKJV

## INTRODUCTION TO TODAY’S MESSAGE:

*Have you ever felt so compelled about a vision from the Lord that it seemed like a memory? It appeared as real to you as the past, but it really had not happened yet! What if you were so convinced about the outcome of that vision that nothing could shake you from pressing towards the destination? And even if you knew the journey would be fraught with persecution, difficulties, roadblocks, and unimaginable complications, would you stay the course—knowing the destination was a guarantee?*

*If we trace Paul's journey the entire way, from when he first appeared as Saul at Stephen's execution to his arrival in Rome, that is precisely what we will discover. We will review every trial and persecution, hear about each false accusation, and expose every false witness against him. We will explore how Paul defended himself and the outcome of each legal battle, and then he will arrive in Rome. And along the way, he had such compelling visions, and they drove him forward—powerful visions plus his unquenchable desire to please the Lord.*

*Prior to his first encounter with Y'shua on the Road to Damascus, Paul was the Church's most evil nemesis. And spanning from shortly after that encounter, to his arrival in Rome, Paul understood from prophecy that he would now be the one to face tribulations and persecution. "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake." Paul was not privy to the magnitude of the coming trials, nor the messy complicated details, but it did not take long for his persecution to begin. Shortly after his conversion, he finds himself on the other side of the "gavel."*

*The ups and downs are extreme. Maybe it's happened to you before, the experience of both applause and retribution, celebration and suffering. Can you imagine the successive occurrence of these polar opposite encounters? One moment you are being extolled, the next you are literally being stoned to within an inch of your life. When you examine these events closely, it's easy to understand why, in those who are willing to endure perseverance in the midst of persecution, it is such an admirable quality.*

*Nevertheless Paul pressed on. Even when his best friends tried to protect him, to hold him back, he was clear about his destination and nothing was going to dissuade him. "Now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the specific things that will happen to me there. What I do know is that the Holy Spirit has shown me that in every city chains and tribulations await. But, knowing these things in advance does not even tempt me to change course; I do not consider my life dear to myself. In my mind, I already died with Christ on that cross and I've already been resurrected as a new man, and no threat of suffering even comes close in comparison to the appreciation and gratitude I have for that experience. So, if persecution or even torture and death are the cost, I am thrilled God would count me worthy of such things. I am going to finish this race with joy, the ministry which I've been assigned from the Lord Y'shua, to testify to the gospel of God's grace."*

*The Lord informed Paul that the persecution he had and will face is all by grand design. The ultimate destination is for him to bring his testimony to Rome! "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome." Paul is going to Rome; it's his destiny no matter what level of persecution it takes along the way and no matter what horrible persecution awaits. To Rome or Bust! "Or bust" means you will do or say anything to get where you are going or to achieve what you are called to achieve. Do you have the same convictions for where the Lord is leading you?*

## READY FOR ROME

### 1. I'm Done Here; Time to Move On!

#### A. Paul's longstanding desire to visit Rome

(1) God will Make it Happen

(a) The ministry at his current location is complete; there is no work left for him to do.

1. **"For this reason** I also have been much **hindered from coming to you**. But **now no longer having a place** in these parts, and **having a great desire these many years** to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to **see you on my journey**, and to be **helped on my way** there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while." Romans 15:22-24 NKJV
2. **"Delight yourself also in the Lord**, And He shall **give you the desires of your heart**. **Commit** your way to the Lord, **Trust** also in Him, And **He shall bring it to pass**." Psalms 37:4-5 NKJV
3. "And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, but as it is written: **"To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand."**" Romans 15:20-21 NKJV
4. {a} So shall **He sprinkle many nations**. **Kings shall shut their mouths at Him** [will have no way to argue against Him]; {b} For what had not been told them they shall see, And what they had not heard they shall consider." Isaiah 52:15 NKJV
5. "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
6. "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." Acts 20:22-24 NKJV
7. "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

#### B. Where God Guides God Provides

(1) First to Jerusalem, then to Rome

(a) Paul is heading to Rome by way of Jerusalem

1. "But **now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints**. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints

who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. **For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.** Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, **I shall go by way of you to Spain. But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.**" Romans 15:25-29 NKJV

2. "A man's heart **plans his way**, But **the Lord directs his steps.**" Proverbs 16:9 NKJV
3. "**So shall My word be that goes forth** from My mouth; **It shall not return to Me void**, But **it shall accomplish** what I please, And **it shall prosper** in the thing for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11 NKJV

### C. Fervent Prayer

(1) Strive together with me in prayers...

(a) Prayer Changes Things!

1. "Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, **that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me**, that I may be **delivered from those in Judea who do not believe**, and that **my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints**, that I may **come to you with joy by the will of God**, and may **be refreshed together with you**. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." Romans 15:30-33 NKJV
2. "I will speak of Your testimonies also **before kings**, And will not be ashamed. And **I will delight myself in Your commandments**, Which I love. My hands also **I will lift up to Your commandments**, Which I love, And I will meditate on Your statutes. **Remember the word to Your servant, Upon which You have caused me to hope.**" Psalms 119:46-49 NKJV
3. "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.**" Acts 20:22-23 NKJV
4. "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. **The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.**" James 5:16 NKJV
5. "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
6. Man does indeed make his own plans, but Yahweh must ordain each step (Proverbs 16:9).

## DETAILS: ROME CALLING

### 2. A detailed view of Paul's journey to Rome

#### A. Integrated with scriptures references

- (1) In contrast, **Part Three** is written as a narrative.
  - (a) Before heading to Rome on his way to Spain, Paul was going to make his third stop in Jerusalem since his miraculous conversion, and he already knew in the Spirit that it would be very risky.
    1. "And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, **"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.'**" Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For **I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die** at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, **"The will of the Lord be done."**" Acts 21:10-14 NKJV
    2. "Nevertheless, **please pray for my deliverance** from those in Judea who do not believe." (Romans 15:30-31)
  - (b) After his second visit to Jerusalem (Acts 15), Paul had a vision that he must go to Macedonia and preach the gospel.
    1. **Vision:** "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, **"Come over to Macedonia and help us."** Now after he had seen the vision, **immediately we sought to go to Macedonia**, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them." Acts 16:9-10 NKJV
    2. "When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, **when he had passed through Macedonia** and Achaia, **to go to Jerusalem [a third time]**, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."" Acts 19:21 NKJV
    3. **Arrival:** "After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and **departed to go to Macedonia**. Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to **return through Macedonia.**" Acts 20:1-3 NKJV
    4. "And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. **They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem.**" Acts 21:4 NKJV
    5. **Prophecy:** "And as we stayed many days, a certain **prophet named Agabus** came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and

feet, and said, "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 21:10-11 NKJV

**B. It began with his zealotry to preserve his cemented-in-stone understanding of Judaism.**

(1) Paul became the early Church's worst nightmare.

(a) He is first named at Stephen's execution. He oversees the brutality against Stephen, who was illegally stoned to death after false testimony against him.

1. "And **Stephen**, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. And **they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke**. Then they **secretly induced men to say**, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council. They also **set up false witnesses** who said, "**This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law**; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us." And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel." Acts 6:8-15 NKJV

2. "When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. But he, **being full of the Holy Spirit**, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" Then they cried out with a loud voice, **stopped their ears**, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city **and stoned him**. **And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul**. **And they stoned Stephen** as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "**Lord, do not charge them with this sin**." And when he had said this, he fell asleep." Acts 7:54-60 NKJV

3. "When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, "**This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law**.'" Acts 18:12-13 NKJV

(b) However, before Paul's journey to Rome would begin, and immediately after Stephen's death, Paul (Saul) went on a rampage against the Church, determined to champion his Jewish religion.

1. "Now **Saul was consenting to his death**. At that time **a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem**; and they were all scattered throughout the regions

of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for **Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.**"

Acts 8:1-3 NKJV

2. "Then **Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord**, went to the high priest and asked **letters from him to the synagogues** of Damascus, so that **if he found any who were of the Way**, whether men or women, **he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.**" Acts 9:1-2 NKJV

(2) Stephen's stoning and Saul's brutal persecution of the Church were the very inspiration for Y'shua's intervention in his life.

(a) Saul's "knocked off his feet" experience:

1. "As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly **a light shone** around him from heaven. Then **he fell to the ground**, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "**Who are You, Lord?**" Then the Lord said, "**I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.** It is **hard for you to kick against the goads.**" So he, trembling and astonished, said, "**Lord, what do You want me to do?**" Then the Lord said to him, "**Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.**"" Acts 9:3-6 NKJV

(b) At his conversion, Paul is blinded (by the light), and is then led into Damascus.

1. "And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. **But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.** And he was **three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.**" Acts 9:7-9 NKJV

(c) God set in motion the encounter that would then open Paul's eyes (remove the "scales" that blinded him from the truth about Y'shua). And that is also where Paul will discover that his new assignment will be wrought with dangers and suffering.

1. "Now there was a certain **disciple at Damascus named Ananias**; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called **Saul of Tarsus**, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so **that he might receive his sight.**" Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." 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.**" And

Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, **“Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”** Immediately there **fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight** at once; and he arose and was baptized. So when he had received food, he was strengthened. **Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.”** Acts 9:10-19 NKJV

- (d) Paul jumps into ministry immediately and instead of persecuting Jews who became Christians in Damascus, he informs them all that he’s become one of them. Understandably this confused many, nevertheless his reasoning could not be refuted!
1. **“Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues,** that He is the Son of God. Then all who heard were amazed, and said, “Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?” But Saul increased all the more in strength, **and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ.”** Acts 9:20-22 NKJV
- (e) As such, he was treated just the way he had treated others who came to believe— with death threats and evil schemes against him.
1. “Now after many days were past, **the Jews plotted to kill him.** But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.” Acts 9:23-25 NKJV
- (f) He ultimately makes his way to Jerusalem where Barnabas helps him get in front of the apostles to declare his conversion (first of three post-conversion visits to Jerusalem; it’s now three years after conversion. There is an attempt on his life in Jerusalem, as well, and he doesn’t stay long.
1. “And when Saul **had come to Jerusalem,** he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and **brought him to the apostles.** And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, **but they attempted to kill him.** When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.” Acts 9:26-30 NKJV
  2. **“Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James,** the Lord’s brother.



(Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.)”

Galatians 1:18-20 NKJV

3. **“Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem** with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain. Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. **And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus,** that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. But from those who seemed to be something—whatever they were, it makes no difference to me; God shows personal favoritism to no man—for those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), and **when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship,** that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do.” Galatians 2:1-10 NKJV
- (g) Now, ponder Paul’s involvement in Stephen’s death when he turned a blind eye to false accusations against Stephen, as he recounts the events to a Jewish mob in his own defense, after being arrested in Jerusalem.
  1. “And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, **I also was standing by consenting to his death,** and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.” Acts 22:20 NKJV
  2. “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever **a man sows, that he will also reap.**” Galatians 6:7 NKJV
- (h) Each place he turned, Paul was accused of teaching that faith in Jesus replaced the Law of Moses.
  1. “And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, “You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; **but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.**” Acts 21:20-21 NKJV

- (i) But was he teaching such? Acts 21 records his defining moment on the subject during his third trip to Jerusalem.
1. **“What then? The assembly must certainly meet**, for they will hear that you have come. Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. **Take them and be purified with them**, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and **that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law.** **But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written** and decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.” Acts 21:22-25 NKJV
- (j) What does Paul do? He’s accused of teaching against the Laws of Moses and everyone is watching. If he is promoting such doctrine and also personally no longer walking orderly according to the law, then this is his opportunity, his defining moment to say so. If not, he’s asked to include himself in a vow that four other men have taken, and to take it a step further and pay their expenses, as well as his own. It’s a Nazarite Vow straight from the Law of Moses in Numbers 6. So, if Paul is teaching against the Law, this is the moment to stand up and say, “Yes, it’s true!” But he doesn’t... Instead, he takes the vow!
1. “Then Paul took the men, **and the next day, having been purified with them**, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.” Acts 21:26 NKJV
  2. “Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me [FALSE ACCUSATIONS]. But this I confess to you, **that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers**, BELIEVING ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAW AND IN THE PROPHETS.” Acts 24:13-14 NKJV
  3. **“NEITHER AGAINST THE LAW OF THE JEWS**, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all.” Acts 25:8 NKJV
- (k) But the troublemakers in Jerusalem didn’t care. Even after Paul’s participation in the vow and his open declaration, they continued to falsely accuse him and to stir up controversy.
1. “Now when the seven days were almost ended, **the Jews** from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, crying out, “Men of Israel, help! **This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place**; and furthermore he **also brought Greeks into the temple** and has defiled this holy place.” (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)” Acts 21:27-29 NKJV

(l) Such an uproar ensues after seven days that they seize Paul and beat him. When the commander of the local garrison (named Lysias, Acts 24:6-7) caught wind of the uproar, he shows up, stops the beating and binds Paul.

1. "And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, **seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple;** and immediately the doors were shut. Now as they **were seeking to kill him**, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. **Then the commander came near and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains;** and he asked who he was and what he had done. And some among the multitude cried one thing and some another. So when he could not ascertain the truth because of the tumult, he **commanded him to be taken into the barracks.** When he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, "Away with him!" Acts 21:30-36 NKJV

(m) After he is rescued from the beating, Paul gets Lysias to let him give his testimony to the entire mob (Acts 21:37-22:21). But, even after his testimony, the ruckus crowd moves Lysias to "beat the truth out of him," which surprisingly he is willing to do. It's just about to happen when Paul tells the centurion assigned to beat him that he is a Roman citizen by birth. Before he lays a hand on Paul, the centurion informs Lysias of this crucial development. Of course, the commander is alarmed by this new information as, according to Roman law, you were NOT PERMITTED to bind and punish a prisoner without a trial

1. "And they listened to him until this word, and then they raised their voices and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for he is not fit to live!" Then, as they cried out and tore off their clothes and threw dust into the air, **the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging,** so that he might know why they shouted so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, **"Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?"** When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman." Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen." Then **immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.**" Acts 22:22-29 NKJV

2. "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
3. "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
  - (n) Paul's moment of confirmation from the Lord that he is right where he is supposed to be:
    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
- (3) Next there is yet another plot to kill Paul and he needs to be secretly moved outside of Jerusalem to Caesarea (Acts 23:12-22). This is where Paul will meet Governor Felix (Acts 23:23-35) and where he is kept locked up until trial.
  - (a) Five days later, the High Priest Ananias and some elders bring their "evidence" (false accusations) against Paul in front of Felix.
    1. "But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "**Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?**" 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." Acts 25:9-10 NKJV
    2. "When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed, but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a

certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. **But when Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar.”**

Acts 25:18-21 NKJV

(b) In the end this is Agrippa's ruling:

1. “When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; and when they had gone aside, 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.”**” Acts 26:30-32 NKJV
2. **““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.” Romans 1:11-13 NKJV
3. “For this reason I also **have been much hindered from coming to you. But now no longer** having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years **to come to you,**” Romans 15:22-23 NKJV

(c) Paul arrives in Rome (Acts 28:11) after a harrowing trip (Acts 27:1-28:10). And he begins his ministry:

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 [THERE IS THAT TESTIMONY AGAIN]**, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans,” Acts 28:17 NKJV
2. “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.” Acts 28:23 NKJV
3. “Through Him we have received grace and apostleship **for obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,” Romans 1:5 NKJV
4. “First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that **your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.**” Romans 1:8 NKJV
5. **“For your obedience has become known to all.** Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.” Romans 16:19 NKJV