### Acts

## Chapter 26

1So at that, Agrippa said to Paul:  
  
 ‘You may now speak on your own behalf.’  
  
Well, Paul stretched his hands out and said this in his defense:  
  
 2‘King Agrippa,  
  
 ‘I’m happy to be here so as to defend myself before you today over all these things that I’ve been accused of by the Jews, 3because you’re an expert on all because you’re an expert on all <span class="placename">Judeanbecause you’re an expert on all <span class="placename">Judean</span> customs and controversies.  
  
 ‘Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.  
  
 4‘This is the way that I’ve lived since I was a boy:  
  
 ‘From long ago, everyone in my nation –all in ‘From long ago, everyone in my nation –all in <span class="placename">JeruSalem ‘From long ago, everyone in my nation –all in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span> and all the ‘From long ago, everyone in my nation –all in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span> and all the <span class="placename">Jews ‘From long ago, everyone in my nation –all in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span> and all the <span class="placename">Jews</span> 5who used to know me– can testify to the fact that I was raised in the strictest sect of our type of worship… I was a Pharisee.  
  
 6‘And now, it’s over the hope of a promise that was made by The God to our ancestors that I’m standing here being judged, 7since it’s concerning the hope of attaining this, that our twelve tribes have been so earnestly serving [God] night and day.  
  
 ‘And it’s over this same hope that I’m being accused by these ‘And it’s over this same hope that I’m being accused by these <span class="placename">Judeans ‘And it’s over this same hope that I’m being accused by these <span class="placename">Judeans</span>, O king... 8For, why is it that they all find it so unbelievable that God can raise the dead?  
  
 9‘For a fact, I once thought that it was right to do whatever I could to oppose the name of Jesus the ‘For a fact, I once thought that it was right to do whatever I could to oppose the name of Jesus the <span class="placename">Nazarene‘For a fact, I once thought that it was right to do whatever I could to oppose the name of Jesus the <span class="placename">Nazarene</span>… 10And I did this in And I did this in <span class="placename">JeruSalemAnd I did this in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span>.  
  
 ‘Back then, I locked up many of the Holy Ones and threw them in jail, because I was authorized to do this by the Chief Priests. And as they were being brought up for execution, I voted against them!  
  
 11‘I often punished them in synagogues and tried to make them commit blasphemy... And since I was so crazy [in my hatred] against them, I even traveled to other cities to persecute them.  
  
 12‘Well, it was while I was doing this that I traveled to Damascus with an authorization and a commission from the Chief Priests...  
  
 13‘Then at noon, as I was [walking along] the road, O king, I saw a light that was brighter than the sun, which flashed from the sky around me and those who were traveling with me! 14Then we all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice say to me in Hebrew [possibly meaning Aramaic]:  
  
 ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?  
  
 ‘And why are you trying so hard to keep kicking against the cattle prod?’  
  
 15‘Then I asked:  
  
 ‘Who are you, Lord?’  
  
 ‘And the Lord replied:  
  
 ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.  
  
 16‘Now, get up and stand on your feet. I’ve made myself visible to you so as to take you ahead of time to be my servant, and you can testify to the fact that you saw me and all the things that I’m going to make you see.  
  
 17‘For I’m selecting you out of the people and out of the nations where I’m going to send you, 18to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and to lead them from the power of the Opposer towards God.  
  
 ‘I’m doing this so that their sins can be forgiven and they can receive an inheritance among those who’ve been made holy by [their] faith in me.’  
  
 19‘As a result, O King Agrippa, I didn’t disobey this vision from the heavens.  
  
 20‘First I went to those in ‘First I went to those in <span class="placename">Damascus‘First I went to those in <span class="placename">Damascus</span>, then to those in ‘First I went to those in <span class="placename">Damascus</span>, then to those in <span class="placename">JeruSalem‘First I went to those in <span class="placename">Damascus</span>, then to those in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span> and the entire countryside around ‘First I went to those in <span class="placename">Damascus</span>, then to those in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span> and the entire countryside around <span class="placename">Judea‘First I went to those in <span class="placename">Damascus</span>, then to those in <span class="placename">JeruSalem</span> and the entire countryside around <span class="placename">Judea</span>… And finally to the gentiles, to whom I carried the message that they should repent and turn to God by doing things that prove their repentance.  
  
 21‘And this is why the ‘And this is why the <span class="placename">Judeans‘And this is why the <span class="placename">Judeans</span> grabbed me in ‘And this is why the <span class="placename">Judeans</span> grabbed me in <span class="placename">the Temple‘And this is why the <span class="placename">Judeans</span> grabbed me in <span class="placename">the Temple</span> and tried to beat me to death!  
  
 22‘However, through the help of God, I’ve kept witnessing to both the least and the greatest down to this day. I haven’t been saying anything other that what the Prophets and Moses told us would happen… 23That the Anointed One was to going to suffer... And then, as the first to be resurrected from the dead, he was going to proclaim light to these gentiles.’  
  
24Now, while he was saying these things in his defense, Festus shouted:  
  
 ‘You’re crazy, Paul!  
  
 ‘All of the writings are driving you mad!’  
  
25But Paul said:  
  
 ‘I’m not going crazy, O mighty Festus... I’m telling you things that are true and make good sense!  
  
 26‘For a fact; the king whom I’m speaking to openly already knows a lot about these things!  
  
 ‘I believe that none of this has escaped his notice, because none of it was done off in some corner!  
  
 27‘King Agrippa,  
  
 ‘Do you believe the Prophets?  
  
 ‘I know that you believe!’  
  
28But Agrippa said to Paul:  
  
 ‘It wouldn’t take long for you to convince me to become a Christian also!’  
  
29And at this, Paul said:  
  
 ‘I wish to God – whether it takes a short time or a long time – that not only you, but also everyone who hears me today would become men just like me… Except for these chains.’  
  
30Then the king got up, as did the governor, Bernice, and the rest of the men who were sitting with them. 31And as they were walking out, they were talking to each other, saying:  
  
 ‘This man hasn’t done anything deserving of death, or even for which he should be locked up!’  
  
32Then Agrippa said to Festus:  
  
 ‘This man could have been released if he hadn’t appealed to Caesar.’