

## Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

### Third Quarter 2018: *The Book of Acts*

#### Lesson 11 “Arrest in Jerusalem”

#### Read for this week’s study

Acts 21; Romans 2:28, 29; Galatians 5:6; Acts 22; Acts 23:1–30; Matthew 22:23–32.

#### Memory Text

“The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, ‘Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome’ ” (Acts 23:11, NIV).

#### Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Meeting the Jerusalem Leaders
- III. Riot in the Temple
- IV. Before the Crowd
- V. Before the Sanhedrin
- VI. Transfer to Caesarea
- VII. Further Study

#### Questions and Notes for Consideration

##### Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Soon after Paul’s first missionary journey, it became clear that there was fundamental disagreement in the church over how the Gentiles were to be admitted into the faith. Paul suggested that promoting unity could be fostered by the Gentiles raising money to help poorer members in Jerusalem. Could something similar create unity between West and East (or North and South) in the church today? (Sabbath afternoon)?
2. Read Acts 21:15-22. How can you harmonize the glad welcome Paul received from “the brothers in Jerusalem” with the suspicion expressed by the church’s leaders afterward? Read Acts 21:23-26. How was Paul to demonstrate that he still was a faithful Jew? Why do you think Paul agreed with the advice of church leadership? Why do you think he often deferred to James (see also Acts 15:13-19), when he could be fairly rough with Peter (Galatians 2:11-14) and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-39)? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Acts 21:27-36. What happened to Paul at the end of his seven-day period of purification? Part of the problem here was the spreading of false rumors by fellow

believers. Why would leaders be secretive in their actions, knowing that rumors tend to be strengthened when leadership is secretive? (Monday's lesson)

4. Read Acts 21:37-40. Why would the Roman commander agree to let Paul address a hostile crowd? Read Acts 22:1-21. According to Paul's speech, what was it about Paul's ministry that offended people? What can we learn from this today? Why would he use that occasion to tell his conversion story? Read Acts 22:22-29. How did the mob react to Paul's statement that he was an apostle to the Gentiles? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. Read Acts 23:1-11. How did Paul start his defense before the Sanhedrin? How did he ingeniously try to disrupt the proceedings? What is the significance of verse 11? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Acts 23:12-24. What plan did the religious leaders come up with? How was it thwarted? What does this teach us about the potential dangers of religious enthusiasm? Why do you think the religious leaders were so angry? What picture of God does their behavior reveal? Read Acts 23:25-35. What message did commander Lysias send to Governor Felix concerning Paul? God's providence played a major role in Paul's life. Have you experienced similar things? (Thursday's lesson)
7. What were the consequences of Paul losing five years of ministry due to bad advice from church leaders? What does it tell us about God that He did not intervene to deliver Paul as He had earlier with Peter? Was going to Jerusalem a big mistake? Can prophets like Paul make major mistakes? (Friday's lesson)
8. What are the implications of this lesson for church unity? Is one person's act of diplomacy another person's compromise? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

The sealing is mentioned first in Revelation, then the mark of the beast. I think the mark of the beast, really a symbol of loyalty to the opposition, should be compared with the symbol of loyalty to God. **I believe that to receive the seal of God is to be so settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually that one cannot be moved. I believe that to receive the "mark of the beast" is to be settled into the lie. There are Scriptures that talk about the Lie, preferring Satan's lies to the truth—you've substituted his lies for the truth. I believe to receive the mark of the beast is to be so settled into Satan's false picture of God that not even the Spirit of God could move us. We cannot be moved. So in essence, the seal or the mark represents an inner decision and commitment for eternity with respect to God.**

Lou: For those of us who have roots in Seventh-day Adventism, for example, the seal of God has been tied very closely to the Sabbath. In fact, I thought we had referred to the Sabbath as the seal of God in itself. But I hear you making a distinction there.

Graham: Well, one has to stop and realize that the people who crucified Christ kept the seventh-day Sabbath scrupulously; very, very carefully. Did they have the seal of God? They certainly were not settled into the truth about God. When Jesus brought the truth about God, they said he had a devil, and they killed him to silence his witness. On the other hand though, you remember the evening we talked about how the Sabbath sums up the good news about our God? I believe that the knowing, meaningful, intelligent, thoughtful observance of the seventh day—as a reminder of all these great demonstrations of the truth about our God, could be an outward expression of an inward conviction and a “settling into” this truth about our God. The seventh-day Sabbath beautifully fits this mark of identification of those who are committed to the truth about God.

Lou: So it has something to do with very deep understanding and experience.

Graham: Yes. That’s why you can see, when the chips are down, when the issues in the great controversy are clearly seen, it’s conceivable that the preference for a substitute Sabbath could suggest preference for, even faith in, the substitute for the Son of God; the one who said, “I will be like the Most High.” The one who said to Christ, “Worship me.” But not until then. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, Conversations About God, #10 with Lou Venden, “The Reminder of the Evidence” recorded March, 1984, Loma Linda, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct link: <http://pkp.cc/10MMCAG>*

### Further Study with Ellen White

Righteous words and deeds have a more powerful influence for good than all the sermons that can be preached.—ML 114. {VSS 52.1}

“We are laborers together with God.” 1 Corinthians 3:9. He will use you and me and each human being who enters His service, if we will submit to His guidance. Each one is to stand in his watchtower, listening attentively to that which the Spirit has to say to him, remembering that his every word and act makes an impression, not only on his own character, but on the characters of those with whom he is connected.—8T 172. {VSS 50.1}

Christ does not bid His followers strive to shine. He says, Let your light shine. If you have received the grace of God, the light is in you. Remove the obstructions, and the Lord’s glory will be revealed. The light will shine forth to penetrate and dispel the darkness. You cannot help shining within the range of your influence. {COL 420.1}

The closer we keep to Christ, and the more meek and lowly and self-distrustful we are, the firmer will be our hold on Christ, and the greater will be our power, through Christ, to convert sinners; for it is not the human agent that moves the soul. Heavenly intelligences co-operate with the human agent and impress the truth upon the heart. Abiding in Christ we are able to exert an influence over others; but it is because of the presence of Him who says: “Lo, I am with

you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:20. The power we have to overcome Satan is the result of Christ working in us to will and to do of His good pleasure. {6T 399.2}

Every weak, doubting, struggling soul who yields fully to the Lord is placed in direct touch with agencies that enable him to overcome. Heaven is near to him, and he has the support and help of angels of mercy in every time of trial and need. {AA 299.1}

The omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit is the defense of every contrite soul. Not one that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy’s power. The Saviour is by the side of His tempted and tried ones. With Him there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat; we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. When temptations and trials come, do not wait to adjust all the difficulties, but look to Jesus, your helper. {DA 490.5}