



# CAPITOL COMMISSION<sup>®</sup>

## Securing the Capital

JANUARY 23, 2020

Pastor David Andersen / PO Box 2020, Chesterfield, VA 23832 / David.Andersen@capitolcom.org

**Acts 21:26-36** *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. 27) 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, 28) 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 has brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." 29) (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul has brought into the temple.) 30) 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. 31) Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. 32) He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33) 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. 34) 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. 35) When he reached the stairs, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob. 36) For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, "Away with him!" (NKJV)*

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IN THESE FEW BRIEF DETAILS OF THE JERUSALEM JEWS' FINAL REJECTION OF THE CHRISTIAN GOSPEL, WE SEE THE LAST MAJOR SPIRITUAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL TURNING POINT IN ACTS. NEVER AGAIN WILL PAUL RETURN TO JERUSALEM FOR WORSHIP OR WITNESS. BY SHUTTING OUT THE MESSENGER AND THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION, PAUL'S OPPONENTS HAVE SEALED THE CITY'S DOOM (LK 13:34-35; 21:6, 20). WILLIAM LARKIN

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Is Paul actually doing the opposite of what these deceiving, inveterate liars are accusing him? What city are these "Jews from Asia" probably from? Did they learn this lynching scheme from the Ephesian silversmiths? Is Paul (the Jew) rescued by the enemies of the Jews (Romans) from inevitable death in being beaten to death by the Jews? Why do the soldiers literally have to carry Paul up the stairs? Does the singular unified cry of the Jews against Paul match one against Jesus Christ many years earlier in the same city?

#### FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JANUARY 23: ACTS 21:37-22:5 **PAUL'S PAST AS A PERSECUTOR**
- JANUARY 23: ACTS 22:6-16 **PAUL'S SALVATION EXPERIENCE**

Trophimus had come with Paul from the church he had planted in Ephesus, the capital of Asia Minor. Paul had preached the gospel boldly in the synagogue for three months. When those who refused to believe their Scriptures and receive forgiveness for sin "*spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*" (Acts 19:9-10). After over \$3,000,000 of witchcraft material had been voluntarily burned by those who repented in the capital, the silversmiths staged a riot against Paul with the Jews in attendance (Acts 19:23-34). Now it's repeated in Israel.

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#### BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR ROOM 300B

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR ROOM 300B

# Virginia

## Securing the Capital

CERTAIN JEWS FROM ASIA STARTED THE TROUBLE. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THEY HAD BEEN IN THE THEATRE AT EPHESUS DURING THE DISTURBANCE INSTIGATED AGAINST PAUL (CHAP. 19) AND HAD CHAFED OVER THE FACT THAT HE HAD ELUDED THE MISCHIEF THAT HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR HIM. HAVING COME TO JERUSALEM, PROBABLY FOR THE CELEBRATION OF PENTECOST, THEY SAW THEIR OPPORTUNITY AND SEIZED IT. NO LONGER WERE THEY A MINORITY. PAUL WAS SOON IN THEIR GRASP.

EVERETT F. HARRISON

### I. A DEDICATED LOVE      ACTS 21:26-27A

James and the elders of the Jerusalem church had planned a way for Paul to overcome all the false accusations of the unbelieving Jews against him. They asked him to join four poorer Jews who had taken a Nazarite vow and pay for their expensive sacrifices and offerings in the temple. Paul, in sacrificial love for the believers in the Jewish church and the unbelievers among the Jews, was more than happy to do so. Immediately, “*the next day*,” Paul is fulfilling their request. He has accompanied the four and is in the temple on the final day of their purification and ready to purchase their sacrifices when he is discovered by his enemies.

“(ROMANS 9:1-3) PAUL WAS WILLING TO BE DAMNED IF IT MEANT THAT HIS BRETHREN WOULD BE SAVED ... HE WOULD GLADLY FORFEIT IT ALL IF HIS PEOPLE COULD THUS BE BROUGHT TO CHRIST. WHAT EXEMPLARY LOVE!”

KENT HUGHES

### II. A DECEITFUL LYNCHING      ACTS 21:27B-30A

The Jews from Asia Minor who have been spreading lies about Paul immediately see their opportunity to kill him deceitfully. Why should they assume the guilt of his murder if they can get a zealous mob to kill him? So they

shout for help, screaming the lies they have previously used to accuse Paul: “*Men of Israel help!*” As they repeat their lies, they must have realized that if the people even hesitated for a moment, they would discover what Paul was doing in the temple with the four Nazarites and it would immediately prove their lies untrue! Thus they add an outrageous lie, so that the mob would not think about the previous lies and lynch him quick. There were plenty of signs warning Gentiles of guaranteed death if they entered into the temple past the Court of the Gentiles. The person to be executed would be the Gentile who was foolish enough to pass the warning signs. The Temple Guard would have shut the doors to keep Paul’s blood from defiling the temple as they killed him.

“THAT CHARGE WAS ABSURD. WHILE TAKING PART IN A PURIFICATION RITE, PAUL WOULD HARDLY DEFILE THE TEMPLE BY BRINGING A GENTILE INTO IT ... FALSE OR NOT, THE ACCUSATIONS SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE.”

JOHN MACARTHUR

### III. A DETERMINED LEADER      ACTS 21:31-36

The word for “*commander of the garrison*” includes the number 1000. His job was to keep the peace in the capital with 760 soldiers and 240 mounted police, housed in Fort Antonia, beside the temple. Dispatching at least 200 soldiers with their centurions, he immediately ran down to stop the riot. Fearing arrest for involvement in the riot, they stopped beating Paul when they saw the commander. Likely chained to a soldier on either side, Paul was arrested and the commander tried to investigate his identity and crime. No evidence of crime could be discerned from the shouting mob, becoming so furious over losing their prey, Paul had to be carried away. The mob was only unified in their death chant: “*Away with Him!*” God protected Paul by a leader demanding justice.

#### Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Will you love others enough to care for Christ’s Kingdom, even though it may cost you?
- 2) How committed are you to sharing the gospel with others, enough to endure false accusations?
- 3) Are you one that is committed to justice, even as this commander God used to protect the Apostle Paul?