

The
ACTS
of the Apostles



God provides us with
opportunities even in the
midst of opposition.”

Acts 22-23

Introduction

- Opposition from the religious Jews and those who hate Christianity has been building.
- It has now erupted into a persistent drive to convict Paul before every court and ruler.
- The next several chapters record multiple opportunities Paul is given to defend himself against the Jews' unfounded accusations.

God provides us with opportunities
to boldly represent Him

Acts 22:1-29

Paul's Testimony

- When the crowd realizes that Paul is speaking to them in their local dialect, they grow quieter.
- Paul then highlights his biography as a proud citizen of the well-known city (Tarsus) who moved to Jerusalem.
- As an adolescent he began to study with one of the most prominent teachers of the time, the rabbi Gamaliel.

Paul's Testimony

- Next, Paul shares an account of his dramatic encounter with Jesus and subsequent conversion to Christianity.
- He emphasizes God's hand in the matter and the unexpected heart transformation he experienced.
- No one but God could accomplish this. He is now called to be "a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard."

Paul's Testimony

- Luke records the last portion of Paul's defense that the crowd allows before turning on him again.
- Here, Paul impresses upon them his desire to stay and continue ministering to his fellow Jews.
- God has a different, greater plan, however, and wants to use Paul to initiate the sending of the Gospel beyond Jerusalem and Judaism to the Gentile nations.

Paul's Testimony

- Paul's continual references to Stephen, as well as his commitment to the Gentiles, prove to be too much for the crowd to handle.
- As soon as the word "Gentile" is spoken, the people erupt with vicious threats, no longer open to hearing the story of God's work in his life.
- Amidst all the noise, the tribune orders Paul to be bound and flogged for questioning.

Paul and the Roman Tribune

- Immediately Paul knows “it was illegal to submit a Roman citizen to this method of examination.”
- When the tribune is told about Paul’s citizenship, he responds that anyone is able to buy their citizenship.
- He is taken aback, however, when Paul states that his citizenship is one of birth, which outranks the tribune’s in value.

Paul and the Roman Tribune

- This immediately quiets the tribune and causes him to fear the potential repercussions of illegally prosecuting a full-fledged Roman citizen.
- Though Paul uses most of his platform to speak as an opportunity to share the Gospel, we also see him respond to the circumstances with discernment and wise timing.

Christians should live in a way that
honors God and loves others

Acts 22:30-23:35

Paul Before the Council

- The tribune brings Paul before the council of religious leaders to learn why they've levied charges against him with such intensity.
- The first thing Paul declares is the innocence of his conscience before God.
- Luke has provided an account so that the reader can agree with Paul. His words and actions thus far have been in obedience to God's commands.

Paul Before the Council

- His statement, however, brings an immediate act of violence from the high priest, who commands people to strike him on the mouth, reminiscent of the rebuke flung at Jesus despite his innocence.
- Paul is experiencing firsthand the persecution Jesus promised would happen to those who follow Him and proclaim the Gospel (John 15:18–21).

Paul Before the Council

- Paul responds with a rebuke, referencing God's pronouncement against false prophets in Ezekiel 13:10.
- The directness of his statement feels surprising, but not out of character with the tone he uses in his letters, especially when the Gospel is at stake (Philippians 3:2).
- The high priest has accused Paul of lying, while Paul's response is that the very people who claim to know God's Word have not submitted to obeying His will.

Paul Before the Council

- The questioning quickly escalates into another shouting match, this time over the differing opinions of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the two major religious groups present at the council.
- When it becomes clear that Paul's safety is again in danger due to the crazed behavior of the group, the tribune has him removed and returned to prison (where Jesus once again appears before him).

Plot to Kill Paul

- The hatred of the Jews grows in intensity, and they make a religious vow to kill Paul.
- The jealousy and hatred in their hearts against the truth Paul is teaching has twisted their character into a distorted guardian of religion.
- Paul's nephew learns of the plot and informs him, and Paul sends him to notify the tribune.

Paul Sent to Felix the Governor

- The tribune makes plans for Paul to travel to Caesarea, accompanied by soldiers to protect him from murder.
- He pens a letter to send with Paul that explains the accusations and judicial proceedings to Felix, the Roman governor.
- He speaks of his discovery of Paul's Roman citizenship as the reason he stepped in to rescue Paul from the mob.

Paul Sent to Felix the Governor

- Paul arrives safely in Caesarea and is held under guard until his hearing.
- Though Felix learns Paul is from Cilicia, giving him the right to send Paul away for trial in his home province.
- Instead, he decides to keep Paul in Caesarea, perhaps because to send him away would anger the Jewish leaders with a longer trip to court.
- He is taken to and guarded at Herod's praetorium.

Herod's Audience Hall



Herod's Praetorium



Latin-speaking guard in charge



Frumentarius was a prison official

Application:

Jerusalem and Caesarea

Jerusalem



Jerusalem - Temple



Jerusalem - Temple



Caesarea



Caesarea



Caesarea



Caesarea



Caesarea



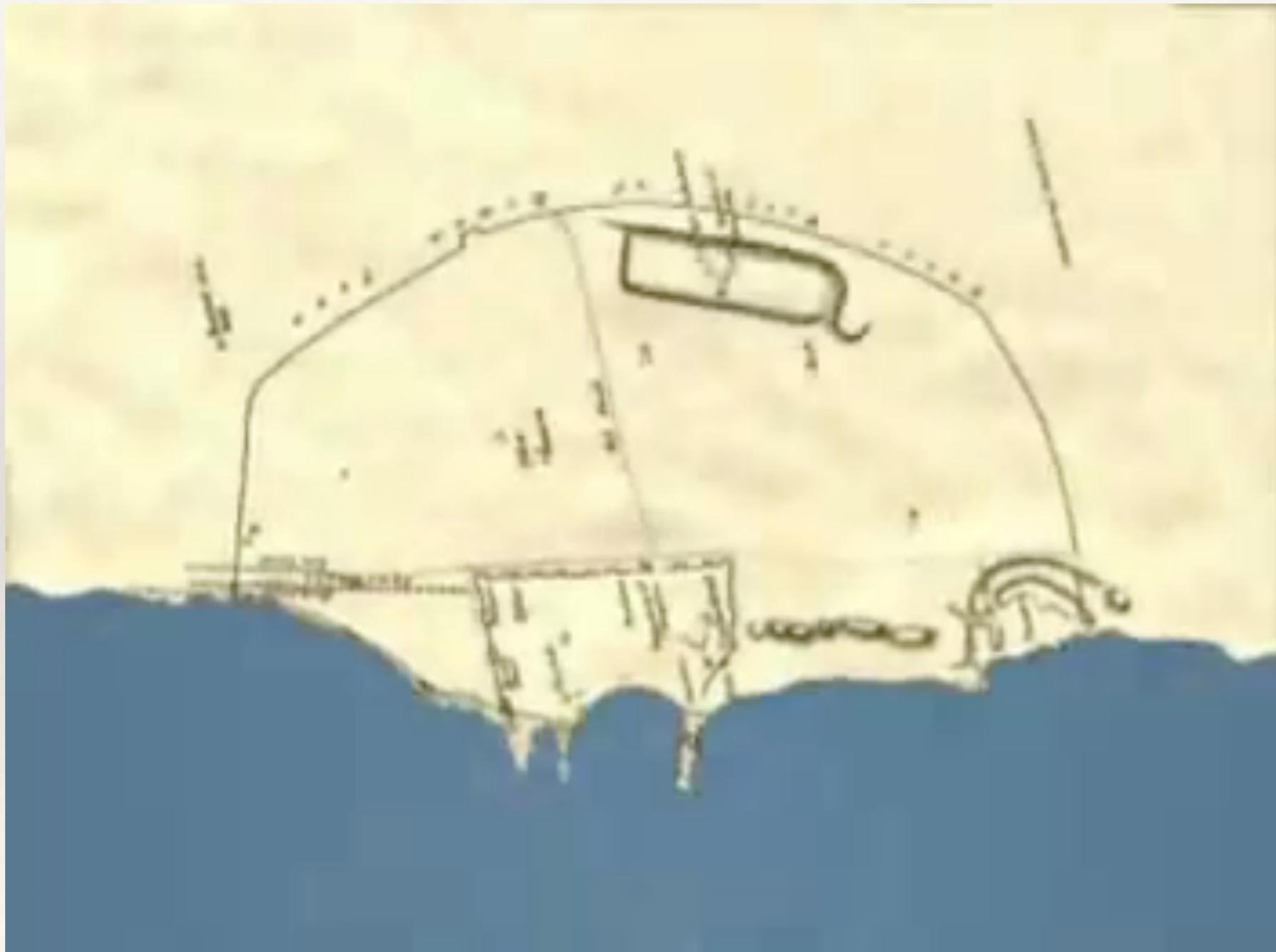
Caesarea



Caesarea



Caesarea



Caesarea - Hippodrome



Caesarea



Caesarea - Aquaduct



Caesarea - Pilate



Caesarea

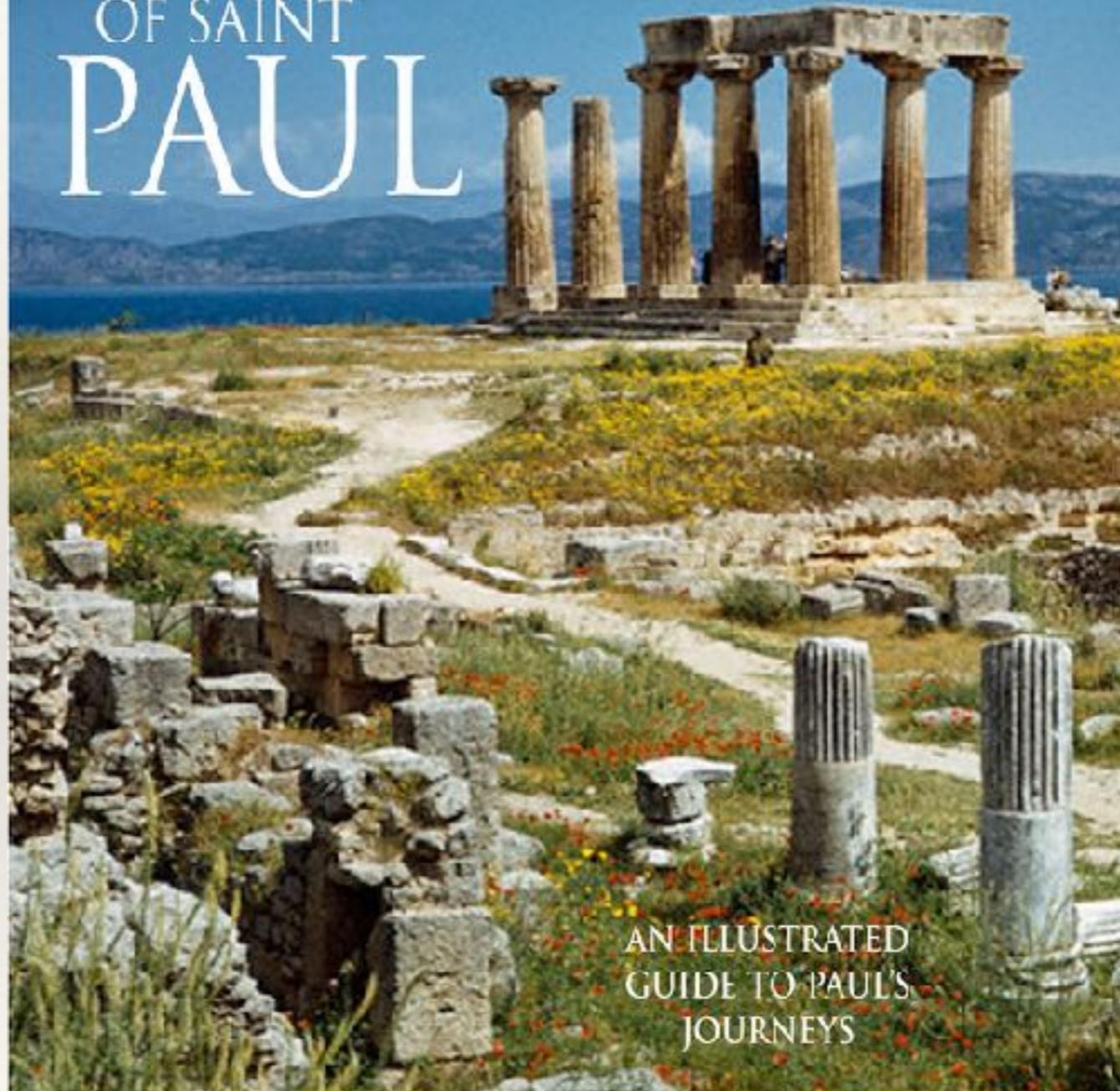


Caesarea



PETER WALKER

IN THE STEPS OF SAINT PAUL



AN ILLUSTRATED
GUIDE TO PAUL'S
JOURNEYS