

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 22

Ver. 1. *Men, brethren, and fathers,* etc.] A common form of address used by the Jews; (see ~~410E~~ Acts 7:2) but that the apostle should introduce his speech to these people in this manner, after they had treated him so inhumanly, as to drag him out of the temple, and beat him so unmercifully, is remarkable, and worthy of observation, when they scarcely deserved the name of “men”; and yet he not only gives them this, but calls them “brethren”, they being his countrymen and kinsmen according to the flesh; and fathers, there being some among them, who might be men in years, and even members of the sanhedrim, and elders of the people, that were now got among the crowd: this shows how ready the apostle was to put up with affronts, and to forgive injuries done him:

hear ye my defence, which I make now unto you; in opposition to the charges brought against him, of speaking ill of the people of the Jews, the law of Moses, and of the temple, and in order to clear himself of these imputations, and vindicate his character and conduct.

Ver. 2. *And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them,* etc.] (see Gill on “~~414E~~ Acts 21:40”).

they kept the more silence; it being their mother tongue, and which they best understood; and which the captain and the Roman soldiers might not so well understand; and chiefly because the Hellenistic language was not so agreeable to them, nor the Hellenistic Jews, who spoke the Greek language, and used the Greek version of the Bible; and such an one they took Paul to be, besides his being a Christian; wherefore when they heard him speak in the Hebrew tongue, it conciliated their minds more to him, at least engaged their attention the more to what he was about to say:

and he saith; the Syriac and Ethiopic versions add, “to them”, as follows.

Ver. 3. *I am verily a man which am a Jew,* etc.] By birth, a thorough genuine one; an Hebrew of the Hebrews, both by father and mother side,

both parents being Jews, and so a true descendant from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:

born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia; (see Gill on “^{<4019>}Acts 21:39”).

yet brought up in this city; the city of Jerusalem; though Tarsus was the place of his birth, he had his education at Jerusalem:

at the feet of Gamaliel; of whom (see ^{<4454>}Acts 5:34) it was the custom of scholars among the Jews, to sit at the feet of their masters, when instructed by them; (see ^{<4638>}Deuteronomy 33:3) hence that saying of Jose ben Joezer ^{f1129},

“let thy house be an house of resort for the wise men, and be thou dusting thyself, *μhyl gr rp[b*, “with the dust of their feet”:

which by one of their commentators ^{f1130} is interpreted two ways, either

“as if it was said that thou shouldst walk after them; for he that walks raises the dust with his feet, and he that goes after him is filled with the dust which he raises with his feet; or else that thou shouldst sit at their feet upon the ground, for so it was usual, that the master sat upon a bench, and the scholars sat at his feet upon the floor.”

This latter sense is commonly understood, and adapted to the passage here, as illustrating it; though it may be, that the sense may only be this, that the apostle boarded in Gamaliel’s house, ate at his table, and familiarly conversed with him; which he modestly expresses by being brought up at his feet, who was a man that was had in great reverence with the Jews; and this sense seems the rather to be the sense of the passage, since his learning is expressed in the next clause; and since; till after Gamaliel’s time, it was not usual for scholars to sit when they learned; for the tradition is ^{f1131}, that

“from the times of Moses to Rabban Gamaliel, they (the scholars) did not learn the law but standing; after Rabban Gamaliel died, sickness came into the world, and they learned the law sitting; and hence it is said, that after Rabban Gamaliel died, the glory of the law ceased.”

It follows,

[and] taught according to the perfect law of the fathers; not the law which the Jewish fathers received from Moses, though Paul was instructed in this, but in the oral law, the “Misna”, or traditions of the elders, in which he greatly profited, and exceeded others, (~~ROM~~ Galatians 1:14).

And was zealous towards God; or “a zealot of God”; one of those who were called “Kanaim”, or zealots; who in their great zeal for the glory of God, took away the lives of men, when they found them guilty of what they judged a capital crime; (see ~~ROM~~ Matthew 10:4, ~~ROM~~ John 16:2). The Vulgate Latin version reads, “zealous of the law”; both written and oral, the law of Moses, and the traditions of the fathers:

as ye all are this day; having a zeal for God, and the law, but not according to knowledge.

Ver. 4. *And I persecuted this way unto the death*, etc.] That is, the Christian religion, and the professors of it; whom the apostle breathed out threatenings and slaughter against, haled out of their houses, and committed to prison; consented to their death, as he did to Stephen’s; and whenever it was put to the vote, whether they should die or not, he gave his voice against them; so that he was a most bitter enemy, and an implacable persecutor of them; which shows how very averse he was to this way, and how great his prejudices were against it; wherefore it must be a work of divine power, and there must be the singular hand of God in it, to reconcile him to it, and cause him to embrace and profess it:

binding and delivering into prisons, both men and women: (see ~~ROM~~ Acts 8:3, 9:2).

Ver. 5. *As also the high priest doth bear me witness*, etc.] Either Annas, or Caiaphas, who was at that time high priest; and it should seem by this, that he was still in being; or else that the apostle had preserved his letter, written with his own hand, which he was able to produce at any time, as a testimony of the truth of what he had said, or was about to say; since he speaks of him (as now) bearing him witness, or as one that could:

and all the estate of the elders; the whole Jewish sanhedrim, for this character respects not men in years, but men in office, and such who were members of the high court of judicature in Jerusalem;

from whom also I received letters unto the brethren; some render it “against the brethren”, as if the Christians were meant; whereas the apostle

intends the Jews of the synagogue at Damascus, whom the apostle calls brethren; because they were of the same nation, and his kinsmen according to the flesh; and, at that time, of the same religion and principles with him; and this is put out of doubt, by the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, which render it, “the brethren that were at Damascus”: and these letters were to recommend him to them, and to empower him to persecute the Christians, and to demand and require their assistance in it; the Ethiopic version calls them, “letters of power”; and it seems from hence, that these letters were received from the whole sanhedrim, as well as from the high priest, and were signed by both:

and went to Damascus to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished: with stripes, or with death, as they should be judged worthy; (see ^{<400>}Acts 9:2).

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, that as I made my journey,* etc.] And had almost made an end of it:

and was come nigh unto Damascus; about a mile from it, as some say, *about noon;* this circumstance is omitted in the account in (^{<400>}Acts 9:3) and is mentioned here, not so much to inform what time of day it was, that Saul came to Damascus, as to observe how extraordinary that light must be, which then appeared, as follows:

suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me; and not only about him, but those that were with him, (^{<400>}Acts 26:13). This must be a great light indeed, to be distinguished at noon, and to be above the brightness of the sun, and to have such effect upon the apostle and his company as it had; (^{<400>}Acts 9:3).

Ver. 7. *And I fell unto the ground,* etc.] And so did those that were with him, (^{<400>}Acts 26:14).

And heard a voice, saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (See Gill on “^{<400>}Acts 9:4”).

Ver. 8. *And I answered, who art thou, Lord?* etc.] (See Gill on “^{<400>}Acts 9:5”).

Ver. 9. *And they that were with me saw indeed the light,* etc.] For it shone about them, as well as Saul:

and were afraid; the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, have not this clause; but it stands in the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; the suddenness, greatness, and extraordinariness of the light surprised them, for it was even miraculous:

but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me: they heard the voice of Saul, but not the voice of Christ; at least they did not hear it so as to understand it; (see Gill on “⁴⁰⁰⁷Acts 9:7”).

Ver. 10. *And I said, what shall I do, Lord?* etc.] (See Gill on “⁴⁰⁰⁶Acts 9:6”).

Ver. 11. *And when I could not see for the glory of that light*, etc.] Which was above the brightness of the sun, and so dazzled his eyes, that he could not see his way into the city, some of his company took him by the hand, and led him: and

being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came unto Damascus but not with the same view he set out with: he took his journey thither, and pursued it, in order to persecute the saints there; but now he enters into it, to be informed by one of them what he must do for Christ, whom he had persecuted.

Ver. 12. *And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and Vulgate Latin version, read only, “a man according to the law”; one whose walk, life, and conversation, were agreeable to it: a strict observer of the law of Moses, both moral and ceremonial: he not only lived a holy life and conversation, according to the moral law, but he religiously and devoutly attended to the rituals of the ceremonial law; and this part of his character the apostle chose to mention, as what would recommend him to the notice of the Jews he now addressed: for though he was a disciple, a believer in Christ, yet as many of the believing Jews did, so he strictly observed the rituals of the law. The Ethiopic version adds, “who was of the apostles”; one of that number, and in that office, which is nowhere said that he was; and had he, it would not have been agreeable to the apostle’s design to have mentioned it; and he is said to be one of the seventy disciples, and bishop or pastor of the church at Damascus; (see Gill on “²⁰⁰¹Luke 10:1”). Of this Ananias, his name and character, (see Gill on “⁴⁰¹⁰Acts 9:10”).

Having a good report of all the Jews that dwelt there: that is, at Damascus, as the Ethiopic version reads; and so do the Complutensian

edition, the Alexandrian copy, and several other copies; for though he was a Christian, yet being not only a man of an unblemished life and conversation, but zealous and devout in the observance of the ceremonial law, was very much interested in the affections and esteem of the Jews.

Ver. 13. *Came unto me*, etc.] Being at the house of Judas, in that street of Damascus called Straight, (^{<491>}Acts 9:11) and stood; at the side of him, or by him, putting his hands on him:

and said unto me, brother Saul; (see Gill on ^{<491>}Acts 9:17”).

receive thy sight, “or look up”,

and the same hour I looked up upon him; that is, immediately, directly: for so the phrase, “that same hour”, is frequently used by the Jews: the words in (^{<492>}Numbers 16:21) “that I may consume them in a moment”, are rendered by Onkelos, “that I may consume them in an hour”; for an hour is used for a moment with them.

Ver. 14. *And he said, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee*, etc.] From all eternity, in his everlasting purposes and decrees; or “he hath taken thee into his hand”; in order to form, and fit, and qualify him for his service; and may design both his call by grace, and to apostleship. The apostle represents Ananias as speaking of God, as the God of the Jewish fathers, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to show that the Christian doctrine was not contrary to the faith of the one God of Israel; nor did it introduce any other, or any new deity. The ends of this choice or separation were,

that thou shouldest know his will; his revealed will, concerning the salvation of men by Jesus Christ, which is no other than the Gospel, of which the apostle had been entirely ignorant; for though he knew the will of God, as revealed in the law, or his will of command, yet not spiritually; and he was altogether a stranger, till now, to God’s will, way, and method of saving sinners by Christ, of justifying them by his righteousness, and of pardoning their sins through his blood, and of giving them eternal life by him; and the knowledge of this he came at by the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in consequence of his being chosen and called:

and see that just One: Jesus Christ the righteous, who is both as he is God, and as he is man, and also as he is Mediator, having faithfully discharged his office, and performed his engagements; him the apostle saw, both with the eyes of his body, when he met him in the way, and called unto him, and

with the eyes of his understanding beholding his beauty, fulness, and suitableness as a Saviour; the former of these was what many kings, prophets, and righteous men desired: and the latter is what is inseparably connected with eternal life and salvation.

And shouldest hear the voice of his mouth; both his human voice in articulate sounds, when he spoke to him in the Hebrew tongue, as in (⁴²⁷Acts 22:7) and the voice of his Gospel, of which he appeared to make him a minister; which is a voice of love, grace, and mercy, of peace, pardon, righteousness, and salvation, and is very powerful when accompanied by the Spirit, and is soul charming, alluring, and comforting.

Ver. 15. *For thou shalt be his witness unto all men,* etc.] Gentiles as well as Jews, an eye and an ear witness to them;

of what thou hast seen and heard; as that he saw him personally and alive, and so could witness to the truth of his resurrection; for after he had been seen by all the apostles, he was last of all seen of Paul; and also, that he heard him and received from him the Gospel, and a mission and commission to preach it; for what he preached he did not receive of man, nor was he taught it by any, but he had it by revelation from Jesus Christ.

Ver. 16. *And now why tarriest thou?* etc.] Though it might not be the apostle's case, yet it is often the case of many, to procrastinate and delay obedience to the commands of Christ, and particularly to the ordinance of baptism: the reasons of which delay are, the strength of their corruptions, and the weakness of their graces, which cause them to question whether they have any interest in Christ; as also fears of falling away, and so of dishonouring Christ, his Gospel, and ordinance: and in some the reproaches of men; and sometimes such a delay is made, waiting for more comfortable frames, or for a greater fitness; but no such delay, nor on such accounts, ought to be; for it is a command of Christ, and ought to be forthwith complied with, as soon as a man believes; and to obey it is a following of Christ, in which no time should be lost: and the consequences of a delay are very bad: it is a prevention of the glory of Christ, as well as shows ingratitude to him, and a bereaving of ourselves of that comfort, which might be hoped to be enjoyed; and it often induces a carelessness about the ordinance, and even a losing the sense of the duty:

arise, and be baptized; this shows that Ananias was a Christian, since he directs to an ordinance of Christ, and that he was a preacher of the word,

and had a right to administer baptism; for that it was administered by him, though not in express terms yet seems to be naturally concluded from (~~449B~~ Acts 9:18) as also this passage shows, that baptism was not administered by sprinkling, since Saul might have sat still, and have had some water brought to him, and sprinkled on him; but by immersion, seeing he is called upon to arise, and go to some place proper and convenient for the administration of it, according to the usage of John, and the apostles of Christ. “And wash away thy sins”; or “be washed from thy sins”; not that it is in the power of man to cleanse himself from his sins; the Ethiopian may as soon change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as a creature do this; nor is there any such efficacy in baptism as to remove the filth of sin; persons may submit unto it, and yet be as Simon Magus was, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity; but the ordinance of baptism, may be, and sometimes is, a means of leading the faith of God’s children to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin;

calling on the name of the Lord; the name of the Lord is not only to be used by the administrator of baptism in the performance of it; but it should be called upon by the person who submits to it, both before and at the administration of it, for the presence of Christ in it; and this invocation of the name of the Lord in baptism, signifies an exercise of faith in Christ at this time, a profession of him, and obedience to him.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, that when I was come again to Jerusalem,* etc.] Which was three years after his conversion; for he did not immediately return to Jerusalem, but went into Arabia; and when he returned to Damascus, which was three years after he came to Jerusalem; (see ~~4017~~ Galatians 1:17,18)

even while I prayed in the temple; the temple was an house of prayer; hither persons resorted for that purpose; and as the apostle had been used to it, he continued this custom, and during the time of prayer he fell into an ecstasy:

I was in a trance: and knew not whether he was in the body, or out of the body: whether this was the time he refers to in (~~4712~~ 2 Corinthians 12:2) is not certain, though probable.

Ver. 18. *And I saw him saying unto me,* etc.] That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, that just One, whom he had seen in his way to Damascus, and

whose voice he had heard, and whose name he had called upon at his baptism:

make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: not because his life was in danger, but because Christ had work for him to do elsewhere, which required haste; and that he might not continue here useless and unprofitable, as he would have been, had he staid;

for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me; Christ the omniscient God, and the searcher of the hearts, knew the hardness and unbelief of the Jews; and that they would continue therein, notwithstanding the ministry of the apostle; and that they would give no credit to any testimony of his, that he saw him, as he went to Damascus, and heard words from his mouth. The Ethiopic version renders it without the negative, “for they will receive thee, my witness concerning me”; as if Christ sent the apostle away in all haste from Jerusalem, lest he preaching there, the Jews should believe and be healed; compare with this (⁴⁰³⁴Matthew 13:14,15). Very likely this interpreter might be induced to leave out the negative, as thinking that the apostle’s reasoning in the following words required such a sense and reading.

Ver. 19. *And I said, Lord, they know, that I imprisoned*, etc.] Men and women, that made a profession of the Christian religion, (⁴⁰³⁵Acts 8:3)

and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee; in Jerusalem there were many synagogues, and in these scourging and beating of offenders were used; (see Gill on “⁴⁰⁰⁷Matthew 10:17”).

Ver. 20. *And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed*, etc.]

Stephen was a martyr for Christ, both by confession with his mouth, and by the effusion of his blood; he was the proto-martyr, or “the first martyr” that suffered for Christ; and there are copies, as one of Stephens’s, and the Complutensian edition, which so read in this place; his blood was shed by stoning:

I also was standing by; to see the inhuman action performed; nor was he an idle and indifferent spectator:

and consenting unto his death; being pleased and delighted with it, and rejoicing at it; (see ⁴⁰⁰¹Acts 8:1).

and kept the raiment of them that slew him; the accusers of him, and witnesses against him, whose hands were first on him, and cast the first stones at him, and continued to stone him, until they killed him: these laid their garments at the feet of Saul, who looked after them, that nobody stole them, and run away with them, whilst they were stoning Stephen; which shows how disposed he was to that fact, and how much he approved of it: and these things he mentions to suggest that surely the Jews would receive his testimony, since they knew what a bitter enemy he had been to this way: and therefore might conclude, that he must have some very good and strong reasons, which had prevailed upon him to embrace this religion against all his prejudices, and so might be willing to hear them; and it also shows what an affection the apostle had for the Jews, and how much he desired their spiritual welfare, for which reason he chose to have stayed, and preached among them.

Ver. 21. *And he said unto me, depart,* etc.] At once from Jerusalem, and out of the land of Judea:

for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles; to the nations afar off, even as far as Illyricum, Pannonia, or Hungary, where the apostle went and preached, (619Romans 15:19) and so by a divine mission and commission he became the apostle of the Gentiles, and preached the Gospel among them with great success, to the conversion of many thousands of them, and to the planting of many churches in the midst of them.

Ver. 22. *And they gave him audience unto this word.* etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, “and I heard him so speaking unto me”; as if it was to be understood of the apostle hearing Christ speaking to him concerning his mission to the Gentiles; whereas the words refer to the Jews attending quietly to the apostle, till he came to that part of his oration. They heard him patiently, and did not offer to molest him, or hinder his speaking, and being heard, till he came to mention his mission to the Gentiles: all the rest they either did not understand, or looked upon it as an idle tale, as the effect of madness and enthusiasm, at least as containing things they had nothing to do with; but when he came to speak of the Gentiles, and to pretend to a divine mission to them, this they could not bear; for nothing was more offensive, irritating, and provoking to them, than to hear of the calling of the Gentiles, whom they were for depriving of all blessings, and for engrossing all to themselves; (see 610Romans 10:20).

and then lift up their voices; in a very loud and clamorous manner, as one man:

and said, away with such a fellow from the earth; take away his life from the earth: this they said either to the chief captain, to do it, or as encouraging one another to do it:

for it is not fit that he should live; he does not deserve to live, he is unworthy of life; it is not agreeable to the rules of justice that he should be spared; it is not convenient, and it may be of bad consequence should he be continued any longer; he may do a deal of mischief, and poison the minds of the people with bad notions, and therefore it is not expedient that he should live.

Ver. 23. *And as they cried out*, etc.] In this furious manner:

and cast off their clothes; either like madmen, that knew not what they did, or in order to stone him; (see ^{<4075>}Acts 7:57,58).

and threw dust into the air either with their hands, or by striking the earth, and scraping it with their feet, through indignation and wrath, like persons possessed, or mad.

Ver. 24. *The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle*, etc.] Into the inside of it; for till now he was upon the top of the stairs, or steps, which led up to it; which might be done in order to save him from the rage of the people, and that he might privately examine him, and get the true state of his case, though he took a very wrong and unjustifiable method to do it in, as follows:

and bade that he should be examined by scourging; he gave a centurion, with some soldiers, orders to scourge and whip him, and to lay on stripes more and harder, until he should tell the whole truth of the matter, and confess the crime or crimes he was guilty of, which had so enraged the populace:

that he might know wherefore they cried so against him; for though he had rescued him out of their hands, when they would in all likelihood have beat him to death; and though he took him within the castle to secure him from their violence; yet he concluded he must be a bad man, and must have done something criminal; and therefore he takes this method to extort from him

a confession of his crime, for which the people exclaimed against him with so much virulence.

Ver. 25. *And as they bound him with thongs*, etc.] To a pillar, in order to be scourged, according to the Roman manner ^{f1132}. Nor was the Jewish form of scourging much unlike, and perhaps might be now used, which was this; when they scourge anyone they bind both his hands to a pillar, here and there — and they do not strike him standing nor sitting, but inclining ^{f1133}; for the pillar to which he was bound was fixed in the ground, and so high as for a man to lean upon ^{f1134}; and some say it was two cubits, and others a cubit and a half high ^{f1135}: and the word here used signifies an extension, or distension; perhaps the stretching out of the arms to the pillar, and a bending forward of the whole body, which fitly expresses the stooping inclining posture of the person scourged, and was a very proper one for such a punishment: now as they were thus fastening him with thongs to the pillar, and putting him in this position,

Paul said unto the centurion that stood by; to see the soldiers execute the orders received from the chief captain:

is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

Though the apostle puts this by way of question, yet he knew full well what the Roman laws were in such cases; he did not put this through ignorance, or for information, but to let them know who he was, and to put them in mind of these laws, and of their duty; for, according to the Porcian law, Roman citizens were not to be beaten ^{f1136}. Hence, says ^{f1137} Cicero,

“it is a heinous sin to bind a Roman citizen, it is wickedness to beat him, it is next to parricide to kill him, and what shall I say to crucify him?”

And, according to the Valerian law, it was not lawful for magistrates to condemn a Roman without hearing the cause, and pleading in it; and such condemned persons might appeal to the populace ^{f1138}.

Ver. 26. *When the centurion heard that*, etc.] The question put by Paul, which strongly suggested that he was a Roman:

he went and told the chief captain; what Paul had said: saying, take heed what thou dost; or “art about to do”; lest some bad consequences should follow; lest he should affront the Roman people and senate, and lose his place, if not incur some corporeal punishment:

for this man is a Roman; and it can never be answered to bind and beat a Roman.

Ver. 27. *Then the chief captain came, and said unto him*, etc.] To Paul:

tell me, art thou a Roman? he had told him before that he was a Jew of Tarsus, and which was true, and had said nothing of his being a Roman; wherefore the chief captain desires that he would tell him the whole truth of the matter, whether he was a Roman or not:

he said yea; that he was one.

Ver. 28. *And the chief captain answered, with a great sum obtained I this freedom*, etc.] For, it seems, he was not a Roman born, but very likely a Grecian, or Syrian, by his name Lysias; and as all things were now venal at Rome, the freedom of the city was to be bought with money, though a large sum was insisted on for it: this the chief captain said, as wondering that so mean a person, and who he understood was a Jew by birth, should be able to procure such a privilege, which cost him so much money:

and Paul said, but I was free born; being born at Tarsus; which, as Pliny says^{f1139}, was a free city, and which had its freedom given it by Mark Antony, and which was before the birth of Paul; and therefore his parents being of this city, and free, he was born so.

Ver. 29. *Then straightway they departed from him, which should have examined him*, etc.] By scourging; namely, the soldiers, who under the inspection of the centurion, and by the order of the chief captain, were binding him with thongs to scourge him, and thereby extort from him his crime, which was the cause of all this disturbance; but hearing that he was a Roman, either of their own accord, or rather at the order of their officers, either the centurion or chief captain, or both, left binding him, and went their way:

and the chief captain also was afraid after he knew that he was a Roman; lest he should be called to an account for his conduct, and his commission should be taken from him: chiefly,

and because he had bound him; not only had commanded him to be bound with thongs to a pillar, in order to be scourged, but he had bound him with two chains, when first seized him; and, as before observed, (see Gill on ^{<<4025>}Acts 22:25"); it was a heinous crime to bind a Roman.

Ver. 30. *On the morrow*, etc.] The next day; so that Paul was kept in the castle all night: because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews; which, as yet, he could not come at, some saying one thing, and some another; and which he ought to have known before he had bound him, and ordered him to be scourged:

he loosed him from his bands not from his being bound with thongs to the pillar, that he had been loosed from before, but from the two chains with which he was bound, and held by two soldiers; (see ~~42B~~ Acts 21:33,35).

and commanded the chief priests, and all the council to appear, the whole Jewish sanhedrim, which was now very much under the direction and influence of the Romans: and this he the rather did, because, though he could not come at the certainty of the charge and accusation, he perceived it was a matter of religion, and so belonged to them to examine and judge of:

and brought Paul down; from the Castle of Antonia, into the temple, and to the place where the sanhedrim sat, which formerly was in the chamber Gazith, but of late years it had removed from place to place, and indeed from Jerusalem itself, and was now at Jabneh; only this was the time of Pentecost, and so the chief priests and sanhedrim were at Jerusalem on that account:

and set him before them; or “among them”; in the midst of them, to answer to what charges should be brought against him.