

Lesson Book:

Falsely Accused

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INTRODUCTION

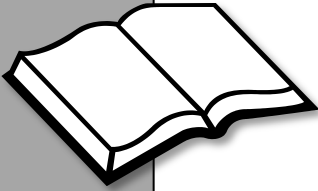
The purpose of this text is to aid the reader in a better understanding of various truths found in the Holy Scriptures and discovering for themselves how the Scriptures apply to their lives. It is the desire of this work that through this study of the Scriptures each learner will be brought closer in their relationship to their Creator as a result of these lessons.

Presented on the following pages is a series of one page lessons associated with the topic of “*Falsely Accused*”. Each lesson has been optimized to work best for use in a small group, but is also appropriate for individual review. In fact, if you plan to meet with others to work through this lesson book, it is highly recommend that you work through the lessons ahead of time to find answers in Scripture, as most lessons welcome discussion. When prompted for discussion, *opinions* should be heard and discussed, of course. However, a Scripture verse or passage should accompany discussions as the foundation for what the belief or opinion is based on. Study tools, such as a printed concordance or searchable Bible software to help you find the location of a Scripture that you may be having a hard time remembering, are encouraged for use with these lessons. Please remember always to study the Scriptures in context of the full passage to ensure that it properly accompanies the topic being discussed.

Concerning the source used for these lessons, please note that all Scripture quotations in this book are taken from the King James Version of the Bible. The purpose in using this particular English translation is simply because of its wide acceptance and the fact that it is public domain in the United States, allowing the text to be freely quoted without copyright restriction. From the start, readers are encouraged to have his or her preferred translation of their Bible alongside for reference while reading along.

In addition, traditional Christian terms and names are *intentionally* used throughout this lesson book to reach a larger scope of readers and help those who may be beginners in this knowledge learn with ease. Occasionally, the need to employ the use of a Hebrew term or phrase may present itself for a clearer understanding of Scripture; when this occurs, the corresponding English meaning is always supplied.

Paul was Falsely Accused



Scripture Highlights

Acts 21:27-29 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

Acts 24:14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

17-18 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

Hebraic Background

The letters of Paul contain many verses that seemingly contradict The Law, known as The Torah, in Hebrew. That contradiction, however is entirely in the misunderstanding of Hebraic terms, idioms, culture, and the people to whom he addressed. This has caused many to turn away. Even Peter expressed how Paul's teachings to the Gentiles were being twisted. These were the Gentiles without the Hebraic background and understanding he was addressing. Please don't reject His Torah, His Law, by your false understanding of Grace.

2 Peter 3:15-16 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Group Study and Discussion

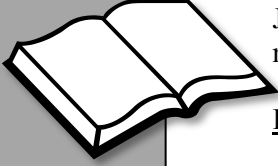
Please read Acts chapters 21-24. This passage of Scripture shows Paul teaching his disciples. He then arrives in Jerusalem and is confronted by some Jews who stir up the crowd in anger with false accusations based on a perception. They falsely accuse him of teaching everyone against The Law and he is arrested. See Acts 21:27-29 listed above.

The original false accusation dealt with bringing a man from Ephesus into the Temple, but it was actually four other men from Israel that were purified in the Temple with Paul (See Acts 21:23-24). They soon expand their anger to include his teaching everyone against The Law. Paul begs for an opportunity to speak. He begins with his history of persecuting the followers of Jesus then gives testimony of his conversion to "The Way". After his appeal to the Jews themselves, he is released, but subsequent evil plots begin all over again.

- 1) In Acts 24:14 listed above, Who is calling "The Way" heresy? Paul says he follows "The Way".
- 2) What does Paul say he believes about The Law and The Prophets?
- 3) In Acts 24:17-18, Why did Paul go to the Temple? Was he with a crowd causing a riot as they accuse him? He did indeed take four men from Jerusalem with him who were also followers of "The Way", but their false accusations are with a man from Ephesus (located in present day Turkey). Gentiles are not allowed into the Temple.

Jesus was Falsely Accused

Scripture Highlights



Matthew 26:59-60 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

Psalms 119:142 Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.

Malachi 2:6 The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.

2 Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

John 5:44-47 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Review

We have just seen Paul say “I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and in the Prophets.” Does this sound like Paul is saying the Law is done away with or has been replaced simply with a “Law of Love?” The confusion comes from a misunderstanding of what Paul is speaking of and to whom he speaks. The Law is known as The Torah in Hebrew. A more proper translation of Law is the word: Instructions. The Torah is His Instructions in righteousness. **Matthew 5:19** Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. **Mark 7:13** Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

Group Discussion

We will now take a look at the false accusations against Jesus

- 1) What does Matthew 26:59-60 tell us? Does there appear to be a personal or political motivation to accuse Jesus and have Him put to death? Read this full passage in Matthew 26:57-68.

Exerting control over people is nothing new. It is important to point out that attacks against Jesus, Paul, and all the disciples are not coming from all of the Jews, but only a segment of them. That point is frequently misunderstood as “The Jews killed Jesus”. This is not true.

- 2) In Psalms 119:142, what does it say about “Your Law”?
Then in Malachi 2:6, we see a prophecy of Jesus. What does it say?
Do we see this “Law of Truth” in Jesus’ mouth? According to those who wanted him put to death, he spoke blasphemy. Did Jesus speak blasphemy or did they falsely accuse Him? Refer back to Matthew 26:57-68.
- 3) You just read that God’s Law is the truth and this “Law of Truth” is in Jesus’ mouth. Now read the passage from John 5:44-47. Here we see Jesus say if you do not believe Moses’ writings, you won’t believe My words. Do you see the connection? Here it is: We see God’s Law (Instructions) is The Truth. This Law of Truth or “These Instructions of Truth” are in Jesus’ mouth. Now, Jesus speaks of The Torah of Moses and says if you can’t or won’t accept those words of Moses (which were spoken by God, The Father, for Moses to record as “The Law” or “The Torah”), then how can you say you believe what He (Jesus) speaks? What does 2 Timothy 2:15 tell you to do?

Stephen was Falsely Accused

Scripture Highlights

Acts 6:8-10 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake.

Acts 6:11-15 Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

1Peter 3:16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

Forwarding Thoughts

Stephen is the first follower of Jesus who was martyred for his faith. We see the exact same persecution come upon Stephen as Jesus and Paul encountered. You can read more about Stephen in Acts chapters 6-8.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

We also see in this next verse, the death of Stephen prompted many of the followers of Jesus to flee to other nations:

Acts 11:19 Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

It was Paul who persecuted and ordered the death of Stephen. He then had a personal encounter from Jesus himself and this resulted in a great transformation. He began preaching "The Way" and worked with the other original 12 disciples.

Acts 22:20 And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

Acts 22:7-15 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. ... The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

The disciples were sent to "The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel" as was Jesus himself. See Matthew 10:6 and Matthew 15:24. These are the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom. NOT the Gentiles. Paul, however, was sent to "all men" as we see in this prior verse.

People will come against you for following Jesus, our Messiah. You will be falsely accused just as Jesus, Paul, Stephen, the original disciples, and all the others who chose to follow after The Truth. Look up!

Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: