

“Unavoidable Conclusions” | Rev. Josh Keller | 08/29/21

Isaiah 42:6-10

6 “I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,
7 to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.
8 I am the Lord; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.
9 Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth I tell you of them.”
10 Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise from the end of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants.

Acts 25 and 26

So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.
26 So Agrippa said to Paul, “You have permission to speak for yourself.” Then Paul stretched out his hand and made his defense:
2 “I consider myself fortunate that it is before you, King Agrippa, I am going to make my defense today against all the accusations of the Jews, 3 especially because you are familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews. Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently. 13 At midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. 14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, [a] ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ 15 And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But rise and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a servant and witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. 19 “Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance. 21 For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: 23 that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles.” 24 And as he was saying these things in his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind.” 25 But Paul said, “I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking true and rational words. 26 For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.” 28 And Agrippa said to Paul, “In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?” [b] 29 And Paul said, “Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains.

Luke 24:45-53

Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 46 and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, 47 and that repentance for [c] the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high. 50 And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. 51 While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Introduction

Throughout the book of Acts, there are trials of both Peter and Paul defending their faith. In 25 and 26, we reach the unavoidable conclusion of these trials in the biggest one to date where Paul defends the claim that Jesus resurrected.

Background

After Paul was warned off in Acts 21 from returning to Jerusalem, he still believes he is called there so he returns. The story of Acts 25 and 26 is his trial in front of Roman governor Festus and King Agrippa.

Discuss

1) CONFLICT:

- The conflict here comes from the ascension. Jesus is King over all the world and every tribe/nation/person. It comes into conflict with any other king who thinks he is in charge.
- If you're not in conflict with current political powers, are you giving allegiance to a lesser king than Jesus?

2) CONFIDENCE:

- Confidence in Resurrection as historic fact.
 - v. 23 resurrection was for Paul the defining moment in history.
 - v. 26 resurrection was a public event for Paul not hidden mystery
- Confidence in Resurrection as personal fact.
 - v. 29 Paul wishes a conversion like his for everyone
 - Do you know Jesus as not just King over all but King of your life?

3) NEW SONG

- Ephesians 5: sing spiritual songs to one another.
- Isaiah 42 reminds us of Paul's story from Saul to Paul and that the response is to sing a new song.

Conclusion/Application

For many, the song of the last year and a half has been fear. Are you singing a song of despair or redemption for your life and your family? In Luke 24:52 after the ascension, disciples went to worship/ bless him (singing a new song.) We should follow their example.