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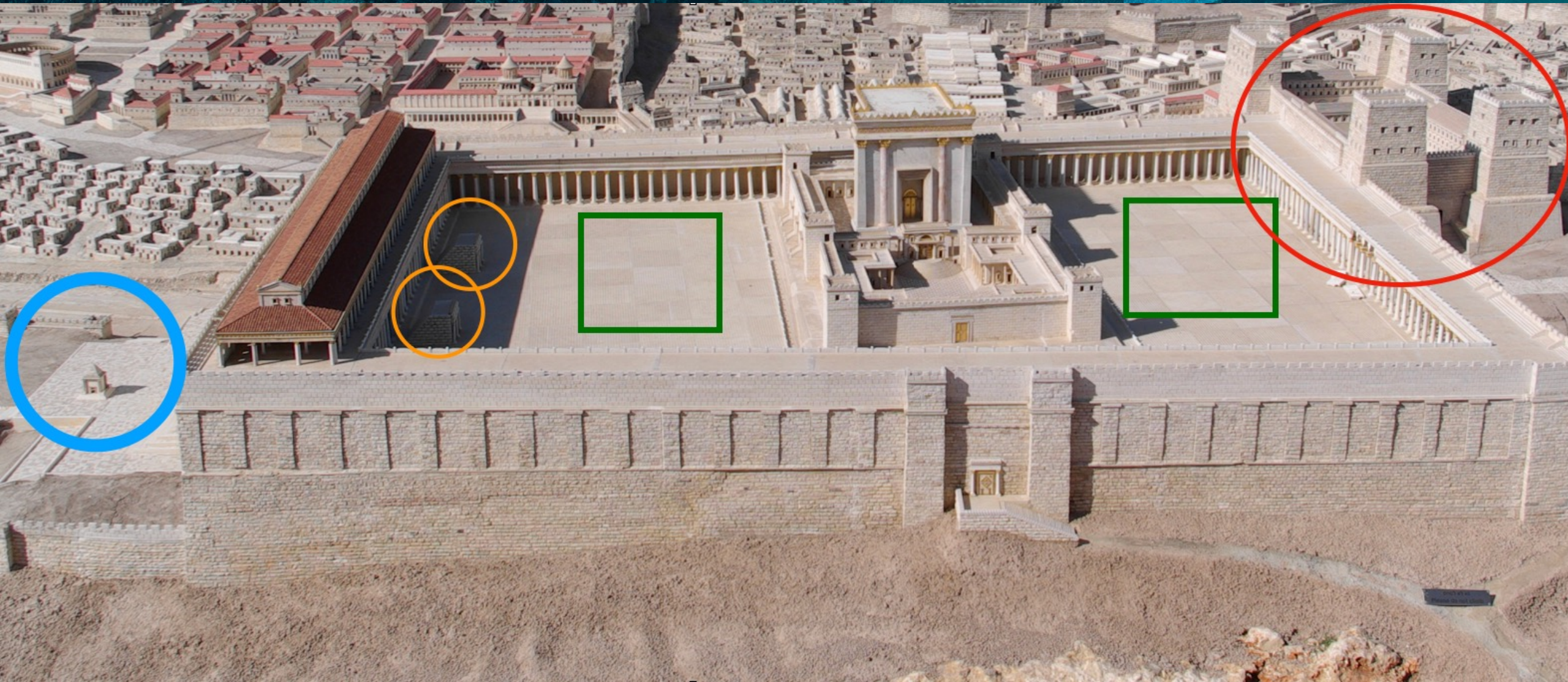
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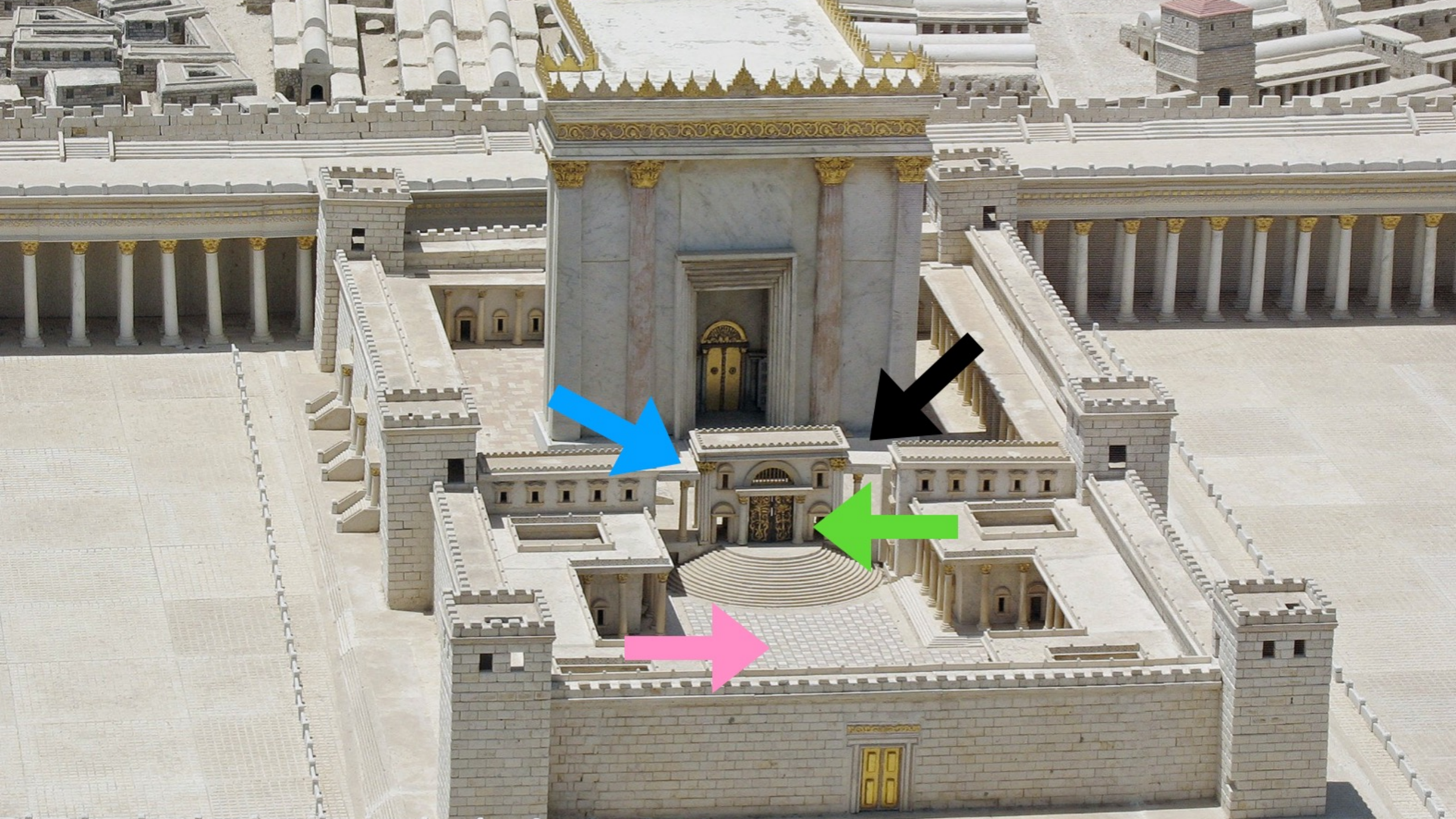
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4. Crop Dusting - God meets us in our obedience

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Acts 21:1-36

THE RIOT IN THE TEMPLE COMPLEX

²⁶So the next day, Paul took the men, having purified himself along with them, and entered the temple, announcing the completion of the purification days when the offering would be made for each of them. ²⁷When the seven days were nearly over, some Jews from the province of Asia saw him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd, and seized him, ²⁸shouting, "Fellow Israelites, help! This is the man who teaches everyone everywhere against our people, our law, and this place. What's more, he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." ²⁹For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian in the city with him, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple.

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³⁰The whole city was stirred up, and the people rushed together. They seized Paul, dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut.

³¹As they were trying to kill him, word went up to the commander of the regiment that all Jerusalem was in chaos. ³²Taking along soldiers and centurions, he immediately ran down to them. Seeing the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. ³³Then the commander approached, took him into custody, and ordered him to be bound with two chains. He asked who he was and what he had done.

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³⁴Some in the crowd were shouting one thing and some another. Since he was not able to get reliable information because of the uproar, he ordered him to be taken into the barracks. ³⁵When Paul got to the steps, he had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd, ³⁶for the mass of people followed, yelling, "Get rid of him!"

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Acts 21:37-22:29

PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE JERUSALEM MOB

³⁷As he was about to be brought into the barracks, Paul said to the commander, "Am I allowed to say something to you?"

He replied, "You know how to speak Greek? ³⁸Aren't you the Egyptian who started a revolt some time ago and led four thousand men of the Assassins into the wilderness?"

³⁹Paul said, "I am a Jewish man from Tarsus of Cilicia, a citizen of an important city. Now I ask you, let me speak to the people."

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Acts 21:37-22:29

⁴⁰After he had given permission, Paul stood on the steps and motioned with his hand to the people. When there was a great hush, he addressed them in Aramaic: ¹“Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense before you.” ²When they heard that he was addressing them in Aramaic, they became even quieter. ³He continued, “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strictness of our ancestral law.

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Acts 21:37-22:29

I was zealous for God, just as all of you are today. ⁴I persecuted this Way to the death, arresting and putting both men and women in jail, ⁵as both the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me. After I received letters from them to the brothers, I traveled to Damascus to arrest those who were there and bring them to Jerusalem to be punished.

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PAUL'S TESTIMONY

⁶“As I was traveling and approaching Damascus, about noon an intense light from heaven suddenly flashed around me. ⁷I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’

⁸“I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

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PAUL'S TESTIMONY

“He said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are persecuting.’⁹ Now those who were with me saw the light, but they did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me.

¹⁰“I said, ‘What should I do, Lord?’

“The Lord told me, ‘Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told everything that you have been assigned to do.’

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Acts 21:37-22:29

¹¹“Since I couldn’t see because of the brightness of the light, I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and went into Damascus. ¹²Someone named Ananias, a devout man according to the law, who had a good reputation with all the Jews living there, ¹³came and stood by me and said, ‘Brother Saul, regain your sight.’ And in that very hour I looked up and saw him.

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Acts 21:37-22:29

¹⁴And he said, 'The God of our ancestors has appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One, and to hear the words from his mouth, ¹⁵since you will be a witness for him to all people of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶And now, why are you delaying? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.'

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¹⁷“After I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance ¹⁸and saw him telling me, ‘**Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.**’

¹⁹“But I said, ‘Lord, they know that in synagogue after synagogue I had those who believed in you imprisoned and beaten. ²⁰and when the blood of your witness Stephen was being shed, I stood there giving approval and guarding the clothes of those who killed him.’

²¹“He said to me, ‘**Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles.**’ ”

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Acts 21:37-22:29

PAUL'S ROMAN PROTECTION

²²They listened to him up to this point. Then they raised their voices, shouting, "Wipe this man off the face of the earth! He should not be allowed to live!"

²³As they were yelling and flinging aside their garments and throwing dust into the air,

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PAUL'S ROMAN PROTECTION

²⁴the commander ordered him to be brought into the barracks, directing that he be interrogated with the scourge to discover the reason they were shouting against him like this. ²⁵As they stretched him out for the lash, Paul said to the centurion standing by, "Is it legal for you to scourge a man who is a Roman citizen and is uncondemned?"

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²⁶When the centurion heard this, he went and reported to the commander, saying, "What are you going to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."

²⁷The commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes," he said.

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²⁸The commander replied, "I bought this citizenship for a large amount of money."

"But I was born a citizen," Paul said.

²⁹So those who were about to examine him withdrew from him immediately. The commander too was alarmed when he realized Paul was a Roman citizen and he had bound him.

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