

## 22. Paul - the prisoner on trial (Acts 24:1-26:32)

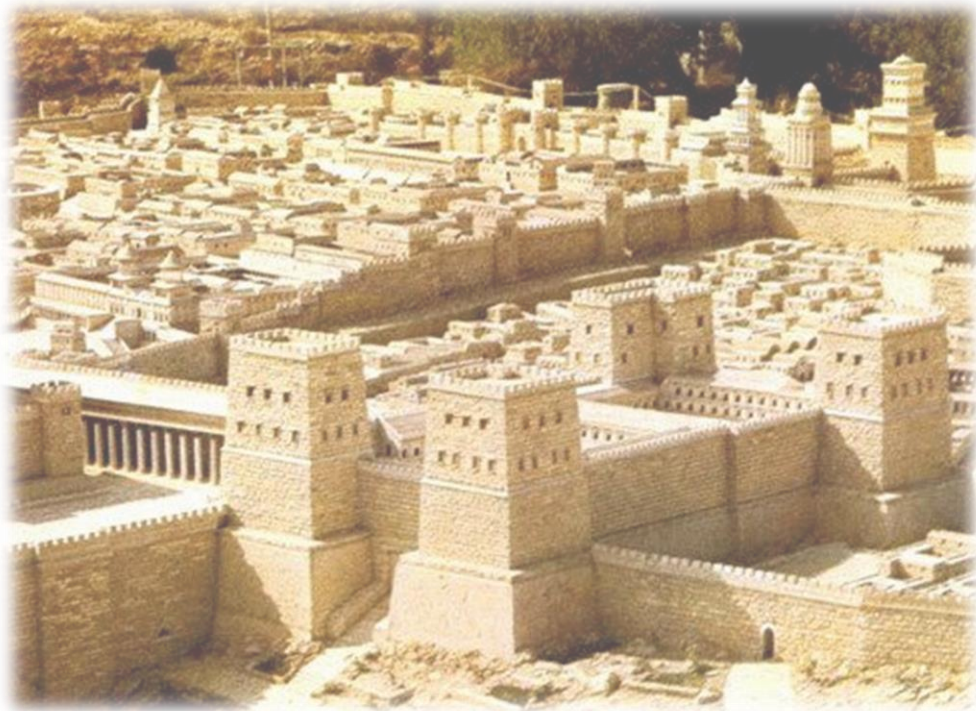






## Before the Jewish Council...

When the dissension became violent, the commander, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him away from among them by force and bring him into the barracks.



*Take courage Paul,  
for as you have testified for me in Jerusalem,  
so **you must testify also in Rome.***

The following night the Lord stood by him...

(Acts 23:10-11)

We have bound ourselves  
under a great oath  
that **we will eat nothing  
until we have killed Paul....**

**40 men!**

Now the son of Paul's sister  
heard of their ambush...

(Acts 23:16)



Prepare 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen  
to go to **Caesarea** at **the third hour of the night**;  
and provide mounts to set **Paul** on,  
and bring him safely to **Felix the governor**.

**The Roman  
commander,  
Lysias**

(See Acts 23:12-24)



**Marcus Antonius Felix**  
Governor of Judaea (AD 52-59)

I will hear you  
when your accusers  
have also come.

Caesarea

And he commanded him to be kept in **Herod's Praetorium**.

(Acts 23:35)



# What happens now?

## Acts 24

- Paul appears before Felix and is accused by the Jewish leaders
- Felix does nothing, hoping for a bribe. Two years pass.

## Acts 25

- Porcius Festus replaces Felix - Paul is left in prison
- Festus hears Paul's defence in Caesarea. Paul appeals to Caesar
- King Agrippa visits Festus and is told about Paul

## Acts 26

- King Agrippa hears Paul's defence in Caesarea

## Acts 27

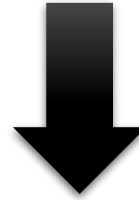
- Paul's voyage to Rome as a prisoner begins

## Acts 24

- Paul appears before Felix and is accused by the Jewish leaders
- Felix does nothing, hoping for a bribe. Two years pass.



**Marcus Antonius Felix** - Governor of Judaea (AD 52-59)



**Tacitus** and **Josephus** both wrote of Felix's cruelty, lust and openness to bribes, all of which led to a great increase disturbances that he put down with considerable severity. He had a former patron, the high priest Jonathan, murdered. According to Tacitus, Felix "*wielded the power of a king with the mind of a slave.*"

He was recalled to Rome by **Nero** because of a dispute between Jewish and Syrian citizens of Caesarea – but his influential and wealthy brother Pallas enabled him to escape any punishment.

His third wife, **Drusilla**, divorced her husband to marry Felix. Her son, and possibly Drusilla also, perished in the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79.

## Acts 24

- Paul appears before Felix and is accused by the Jewish leaders
- Felix does nothing, hoping for a bribe.

Now after five days **Ananias** the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator named **Tertullus**.

These gave evidence to the governor against Paul.

(Acts 24:1)



**Ananias**, high priest from c. AD 47 to 59, was described as a violent, proud, gluttonous and greedy man. He was sent to Rome for trial in AD 52 but was acquitted by the emperor Claudius. He continued as high priest until AD 58.



## Tertullus:

Since through you we enjoy much peace,  
and since by your foresight, most excellent Felix,  
reforms are being made for this nation,  
in every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude.  
But, to detain you no further,  
I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly.

Empty flattery  
and lies!

For we have found this man a plague,  
one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world  
and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

1. Causes riots

2. Not Jewish

He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him.

3. Profaned  
the temple

By examining him yourself you will be able to find out from him  
about everything of which we accuse him.

(Acts 24:2-8)

## Paul:

Knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation, I cheerfully make my defense.

You can verify that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem, and they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd....

**Neither can they prove** to you what they now bring up against me.

But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, **I worship the God of our fathers**, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that **there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.**

**So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.**

(Acts 24:10-16)

1. Causes riots?

Roman law

2. Not Jewish?

## Paul:

Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings.

While I was doing this, they found me purified in the temple, without any crowd or tumult.

But some Jews from Asia— they ought to be here before you and to make an accusation, should they have anything against me.

Or else let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council, other than this one thing that I cried out while standing among them:

“It is with respect to **the resurrection of the dead** that I am on trial before you this day.”

3. Profaned the temple?

Roman law

Paul's desire to change the focus

(Acts 24:10-21)



Then he [Felix] gave orders to the centurion that he should be **kept in custody but have some liberty...**

And after some days, when Felix came with his wife **Drusilla**, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.



And as he [Paul] reasoned about

- **righteousness** and
- **self-control** and
- **the coming judgment**

Felix was alarmed and said,

*“Go away for the present.*

*When I get an opportunity I will summon you.”*

(Acts 24:23-25)

But after **two years Porcius Festus** succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favour, left Paul bound.

(Acts 24:27)

## Acts 25

- **Porcius Festus** replaces Felix - Paul is left in prison
- Festus hears Paul's defence in Caesarea. Paul appeals to Caesar
- King Agrippa visits Festus and is told about Paul

Now three days after **Festus** had arrived in the province, he went up to **Jerusalem** from **Caesarea**.

(Acts 25:2-3)



**Porcius Festus** was the fifth procurator of Judea from about AD 59 to 62, succeeding Antonius Felix. During his administration, Jewish hostility to Rome was greatly increased by disputes that arose in which the Jews felt that they had been unjustly treated.



And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews  
... urged him ... that he summon him [Paul] to Jerusalem —  
because **they were planning an ambush to kill him on the way.**

(Acts 25:2-3)

Paul is being kept  
at Caesarea...

So, let the men of authority among  
you go down with me, and  
if there is anything wrong about the man,  
let them bring charges against him.





After Festus had stayed not more than 8 or 10 days among them, he went down to **Caesarea**, and the next day he sat on the judgment seat and ordered Paul to be brought.

When he arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many serious charges **that they were not able to prove.**

Roman law

Neither against  
• **Jewish law,**  
• **the temple,** or  
• **Caesar**  
have I offended  
**in anything at all.**

(See Acts 25:6-8)

Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and be tried before me there on these charges?



I stand at Caesar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged. I have done nothing wrong to the Jews...

If I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them.

**I appeal to Caesar!**

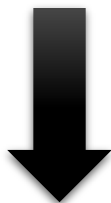
**You have appealed to Caesar;  
to Caesar you will go!**

Nero...

(See Acts 25:9-12)

And after some days **King Agrippa** and **Bernice** came to Caesarea to greet Festus.

(Acts 25:13)



*He is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, **kings**, and the children of Israel.*

(Acts 9:15)

King Agrippa was **Herod Agrippa II** (AD 27 to 92/93), the son of Herod Agrippa I (who killed **the apostle James** - Acts 12:1). He ruled over parts of Palestine from AD 53 until his death.

King Agrippa was a trusted adviser, known to be very loyal to Rome (as a vassal king) and an educated Jew.

His sister **Bernice** was widowed when her second husband died in AD 48. From then she lived with her brother and, according to **Josephus**, their relationship became the gossip of Rome.

**Drusilla**, the wife of Festus' predecessor Felix, was her sister.



There is a certain man  
left a prisoner by Felix...

It is not the custom of the Romans  
to deliver any man to destruction before  
the **accused meets the accusers** face to face,  
and has opportunity to answer for himself  
concerning the charge against him.

...some questions against him about their own religion  
and about **a certain Jesus, who had died,  
whom Paul affirmed to be alive.**

So the next day **Agrippa and Bernice** came with great pomp...

(See Acts 25:14-23)

## Acts 26

- King Agrippa hears Paul's defence in Caesarea



### The King

- Seated – a king
- In royal robes
- Knowing Jewish law
- Bound in sin
- For his amusement
- Resisting Christ

### The Apostle

- Standing – a prisoner
- In chains
- Knowing its fulfilment
- Set free through faith
- For the gospel
- Serving Christ



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, especially because **you are familiar with all the customs and controversies of the Jews.**

**Therefore I beg you to listen to me patiently.**

To this the rabbis agree...



My manner of life from my youth... in Jerusalem,  
is known by all the Jews. ... I have lived as a Pharisee.

And now I stand here on trial because of my hope  
in **the promise made by God to our fathers**,  
to which our **twelve tribes** hope to attain,  
as they earnestly worship night and day.

**And for this hope I am accused by Jews, O king!**





**Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?**

I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth.

And I did so in Jerusalem.

I not only locked up many of the saints...  
I punished them often in all the synagogues  
and tried to make them blaspheme....



In this connection I journeyed to Damascus...

At midday, O king, I saw on the way  
a light from heaven, brighter than the sun...

**‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’**

And I said, ‘Who are you, Lord?’

And the Lord said,

**‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting...’**



Therefore, O King Agrippa,

**I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,**

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, and
- do works befitting their repentance.



For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.

To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, **saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come—**

- that **the Christ would suffer,**
- that He would be **the first** to rise from the dead, and
- that He would **proclaim light** to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.





As Paul was saying  
these things in his defense,  
**Festus exclaimed loudly**

You have lost  
your mind, Paul!  
Your great learning  
is driving you insane!

I am not out of my mind,  
most excellent Festus,  
but I am speaking  
true and rational words.



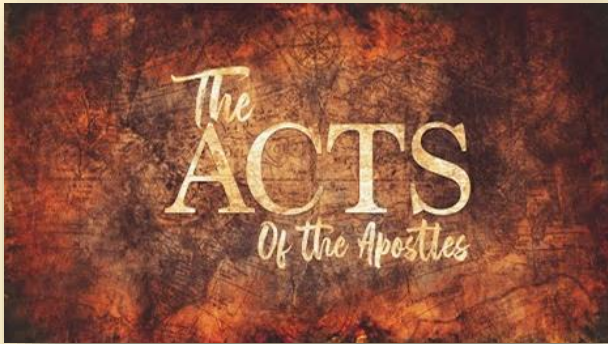
In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?

King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets?

I know that you do believe.

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.

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This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.



# Next: The voyage to Rome

