

## Acts 24

Paul was confronted five days later by the high priest (Ananias) some elders of the Jewish Temple and a lawyer (Tertullus). Tertullus praised Felix highly and then proceeded with the charges. Paul was charged with: 1. being a troublemaker, 2. stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world, 3. being a ringleader of the Nazarene (Jesus was a Nazarene) sect and 4. tried to desecrate the temple.

Paul then was given a chance to speak. He testified that for the past 12 days he had been in Jerusalem and that his accusers would not be able to find one witness of any of the charges he had been accused of. Paul argued that Christianity was part of the Jewish religion (serving the same God and believing in the same hope) and not a new religion or group (which would be in violation of Roman law). Paul recounted the events leading up to his arrest and how there was no basis for it.

Felix was acquainted with "the Way" (the Christians) and understood how it could be part of an already existing religion. He kept Paul under guard, but gave him great freedom during the time. Felix hoped the Lysias (the commander in Jerusalem) would be able to come and clarify the matter.

Felix and his wife, Drusilla (sister of King Agrippa) allowed Paul to teach them more about faith in Christ and the coming judgement. When Paul touched on the coming judgement, Felix had him stop. Felix hoped that Paul might offer him a bribe for his freedom, but over the next two years, Paul never did; though Felix talked with him often.

Finally, Felix was relieved by Porcius Festus. Wanting to do the Jews one last favor, he left Paul in prison.

## Acts 25

vs. 1-12

Within 3 days of assuming his duties as Governor, Festus went to Jerusalem. There, he was asked by the Jewish religious leaders to bring Paul back to Jerusalem for trial (they would have Paul ambushed and killed). Festus insisted on some of them returning to Caesarea and have the charges presented there.

After 8-10 days with them, he returned and convened the court the following day. Paul was brought out and many unproven charges were presented. Paul denied any wrongdoing. Festus, wanting to start out on good terms with the Jews, sought to do them a favor and asked Paul if he would go to Jerusalem to be tried. Paul then appealed, as a Roman citizen, to have his court heard before Caesar, because he was innocent.

Festus agreed to send Paul to Rome, to have the case tried there.

vs. 13-22

King Agrippa (of the Herod line and over the Province on the northeast border of Palestine) was married to his sister Bernice (she had already been married to 2 other kings and would later be the mistress to two of the Roman Emperor's). They came to pay their respects to the new ruler in the area. Festus asked King Agrippa to help him with Paul's case.

Festus presented it as though he had constantly defended the rights of this Roman citizen. He explained how it all seemed contingent on the teachings about Jesus and how Paul had ultimately appealed to be sent to Caesar. The problem was-- Festus did not have a charge against Paul that he could send to Rome.

King Agrippa agreed to help and it was decided that the case would be heard the next day.

vs. 23-27

All the high ranking people were gathered when King Agrippa and Bernice entered the room. Festus then had Paul brought out and explained that Paul had been accused of many things, but nothing deserving of death; yet, Paul had asked for Caesar to try the case and Festus did not know what to charge Paul with. He further explained, that the purpose of the hearing was to determine what charge would be made against Paul.

Acts 26

Paul again recited how he had been a highly regarded Jew and how he had always maintained the hope that God had given his people. Paul further explained that he had become convinced that Jesus was the fulfillment of this hope and testified how he had become a believer.

Paul then informed them of how he had obeyed God's decree and had preached about Jesus all over the world to the Jews and Gentiles. The message was nothing other than what the Jewish prophets had proclaimed through the years.

Festus accused Paul of insanity, to which Paul responded that King Agrippa knew the truth of what he was saying. King Agrippa then asked if Paul really thought that he could convince him to become a Christian (some would suggest that Paul had nearly convinced the King). Paul stated that he hoped that all those present would come to accept Christ.

The officials then left. King Agrippa then told Festus that Paul was innocent and should be set free; except he had already appealed to Caesar and now Caesar had to hear his case!

STUDY GUIDE

ACTS 24

1. Who all came to present charges before Felix against Paul?
2. How did Tertulus try to "butter up" the governor?
3. What charges were made against Paul?
4. How did Paul respond?
5. In what ways were Paul and the Jews beliefs similar?
6. What was Felix's decision?
7. When Felix called for Paul later, what did Paul talk about that caused Felix to become upset?
8. Who replaced Felix and what did he immediately do and why?

**BONUS:**

1. How many of the charges made against Paul were accurate?
2. Paul expressed similarities between himself and the Jews, you do the same with all Christians.
3. What teachings from God'd Word bother people today and what should we do about it?

STUDY GUIDE

ACTS 25

1. How long was Festus in the province before he went to Jerusalem?
2. Why did the High Priest want Festus to have Paul brought to Jerusalem?
3. Summarize how the hearing went.
4. To prevent himself from being handed over to his accusers, what did Paul appeal to and what did this mean?
5. Why had Festus not handed Paul over to the Jews to be condemned?
6. What charges or questions did the Jews have regarding Paul?
7. What difficult position was Festus in concerning sending Paul to Rome?
8. What did Festus hope to accomplish with the investigation with King Agrippa present?

BONUS:

1. What lessons can you find in this chapter for Christians today?

## STUDY GUIDE

### ACTS 26

1. Why was Paul pleased to be able to present his case before King Agrippa?
2. Why did Paul feel he was being judged or on trial for?
3. What part does Paul say he played in the persecution of the Church?
4. In verse 17 and following what did Jesus have in mind for Paul to do?
5. On the basis is Paul able to say that he was not disobedient to the vision?
6. What was Paul's wish for those who were there?
7. What was the conclusion that was reached by King Agrippa and Festus?

### BONUS

1. Is the resurrection believed by the majority of people today? Explain.
2. What has God asked of you and have you been obedient?
3. Do you feel Christians have the same intensity for evangelism as the early Christians? Why or why not?