

ACTS 24:1-27 PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE GOVERNOR FELIX

We left Paul sleeping in Herod's palace in Caesarea as Chapter 23 closed. As a prisoner, his quarters there were probably short-lived; it took five days before his accusers arrived from Jerusalem. **THE SETTING:** Claudius Lysias, the Roman military commander of the garrison in Jerusalem had sent Paul under armed guard to be tried before the Roman Governor (Felix), but since the government had no charge against Paul, the Governor had to wait for the arrival of his Jewish accusers. Governor Felix held the same position as that earlier occupied by Pontius Pilate only with a larger geographical jurisdiction.

24:1-9 The Accusations of the Sanhedrin Through Their Lawyer

v. 1 THE ACCUSING PARTY:

- Ananias: unscrupulous, greedy, crooked High Priest from 47-59 AD.
- The Elders: selected members of the Sanhedrin
- Tertullus: a _____ name (Was he even a Jew?)
 - an _____ (ρητωρ/hretor), skilled in forensics, probably a lawyer
 - hired to present the Sanhedrin's case

v. 2-9 THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PAUL BY TERTULLUS

v. 2, 3 His Introduction: lavish flattery and half-truths

- “By Thee we enjoy great quietness” (lit. “_____”). The Romans created desolation then by military forced called it “peace.”
- “By thee...worthy deeds are done unto this nation.”
_____ and _____ both record the ferocity and ruthlessness of Felix's actions among the Jews.

Tertullus is obviously resorting to flattery; his approach is in contrast to Paul's. Luke must have been an eyewitness.

v. 4-6a His Three Major Charges Against Paul

1. _____: “He is a pestilent man (“a trouble-maker”), guilty of seditious revolt among _____ in all the inhabited world.”

NOTE: A SERIOUS CHARGE WITH NO CORROBORATING EVIDENCE.

2. _____: “He is a ringleader of a sect of Nazarenes.”

NOTE: NO OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE OF VIOLATION OF ROMAN LAW.

3. _____: “He _____ to profane the temple (at Jerusalem).”

This is a charge based on a false assumption: the mob at the temple thought he took a Gentile into the Court of the Jews (21:28).

NOTE: AGAIN, NO OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE OF VIOLATION OF ROMAN LAW.

v. 6b-8 More Half-truths By Tertullus (v. 6b-8a are not in the critical texts)

- “Whom we took” – THE TRUTH: The Jewish mob took Paul, not the temple police or authorities.
- “Whom we would have judged...” – THE TRUTH: The mob would have killed Paul had not the Romans intervened (21:30-32).
- “Whom Captian Lysias took with great violence,” that is, “Lysias interfered with our carrying out of justice.” THE TRUTH: Lysias actually rescued Paul from the violent mob that would have killed him based upon a false assumption.

NOTE: TERTULLUS JUST BLEW HIS CASE; Captain Lysias, the Roman Commander, was not present to defend his actions which he had already explained to Governor Felix in a letter, unbeknown to Tertullus (23:26-30)! **(OVER)**

v. 9 The Jewish religious leaders religiously agree that Tertullus' half-truths and lies are 100% true!

24:10-21 Paul's Defense Before Governor Felix

- v. 10 Contrast Paul's opening words with those of Tertullus: no flattery, modest, solid, with no agenda.
"many years judge of this nation" = at least _____
"I gladly make my own defense:" i.e., "I do not need to hire a lawyer; I gladly offer my own defense."
- v. 11 "only 12 days ago, I went to Jerusalem (after being gone for some time) to worship."
- v. 12 To the SEDITION CHARGE: "I engaged there in no _____."
To the Profanation Charge: "I caused no _____ either in the temple, synagogues or Jerusalem itself."
- v. 13 "My accusers have NO _____ of their charges."
- v. 14-16 "Here's what I have done; here are my religious convictions:"
- v. 14a "I worship God in accord with _____, which they (the Jews) call _____.
 - v. 14b "My beliefs are substantiated in the _____ and the _____:
i.e., the _____.
 - v. 15 "My hope/confidence is in God who assures us of a resurrection with which all these (Jews) agree."
 - v. 16 "Moreover, I exercise myself, to have a blameless conscience before God and men."
 - v. 17, 18 "In a legal act of worship, I was accosted though I had caused no uproar."
 - v. 19 "Some Jews from Asia were my initial accusers; WHY ARE THEY NOT HERE IN COURT?" Answer: because the Sanhedrin knew he had committed no crime!
 - v. 20, 21 "Moreover, these Sanhedrin members who are here are disturbed that I witnessed to their Council of the resurrection of the dead; in reality, this is their only accurate charge." By inference: How does this violate Roman Law?

24:22-23 Governor Felix Postpones the Trial

- v. 22 Two things motivate Felix to delay the trial.
- He was more knowledgeable about The Way (than the Sanhedrists knew).
 - He would have to hear Lysias' account in direct examination.
- v. 23 Paul is kept in security, but granted much liberty: he is under house arrest.

24:24-26 Paul Witnesses to Felix and Drusilla

- v. 24 Drusilla = a _____; i.e., she adhered to the Jewish faith
- She was a beautiful daughter of Agrippa I (Acts 12:24ff).
 - She was inveigled by Felix to divorce her husband in favor of him.
 - She as a Jewess would be desirous of meeting the famous Paul.
- v. 25 Paul's reasonable message focused on:
- _____ : i.e., how sinful man can be righteous before God.
 - _____ or _____ : Felix was an absolute libertarian.
 - Judgement to come: the appointment of every unsaved person.
- In fear, Felix dismissed Paul. Had he made a decision?
- v. 26 Felix's deep motivation for holding Paul: bribery (money)!
Parenthetically: Who supported Paul these two years?
- v. 27 Felix is replaced by Governor Festus, but leaves Paul chained to appease the Jews.

THE TRUTH IS THAT UNDER ROMAN LAW, NO ONE HAD A CASE AGAINST PAUL, BUT IN ALL, HE IS UNDER HOUSE ARREST FOR 4 YEARS! WHY? WHAT WAS GOD DOING?