

Acts 25: Paul's Trial Before Festus

- Similar to Ch.24: Paul on trial, a weak governor, a vindictive Council, a diabolical plot.
- Festus: Josephus (Historian) described him as wise, fair, agreeable.
 - Festus died after only 2 years in office.
 - He was succeeded by Albinus and Florus; both ruthless men.
 - Their rule led to the Jewish revolt in A.D. 66.
 - Instead Festus talking about the sagging economy, rising crime rate, or perhaps Roman injustices, he is confronted with an unresolved case about an aged tentmaker that Felix left rotting in jail!
 - V.16: but Festus countered that the Romans did not hand over any man without facing his accusers face to face and hear the charges.
 - V.3: Bring him to Jerusalem (they would ambush him).
 - Festus: He will be kept in Caesarea.
 - V.7: "they laid many serious complaints against Paul which they could not prove." (They had no lawyer this time).
 - V.9: Festus asked, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem?"
 - Paul said, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged."
 - Caesar (Augustus): the "majestic, awe inspiring one."
 - V.12: "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go!"
- V.13 thru 21: Festus informs Agrippa of Paul's case.
 - V.19: "but they had questions against him about their religion and about one, Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive."
 - Festus did not have knowledge of The Way like Felix did.
 - V.22: Agrippa said that he would like to hear Paul himself.
 - Dilemma: Festus could not find Paul guilty for fear of Rome and could not find him innocent for fear of the Jews.
 - Politically what was he to do???
 - Paul faced the most powerful man in Palestine and said No!
 - I am not a wrong-doer; have committed nothing worth of death;

- A Roman citizen had the right to appeal to Caesar if he felt like his case was being mishandled.
 - Exception: a murder or thief caught in the act of the crime.
 - The Caesar at this time was Nero; it was several years later that Nero's persecution of the Christians began.
 - At last Paul would be on his way to Rome just like Jesus promised! (23.11).
 - By appealing to Caesar, Paul remained under Roman protection, he later was able to extend the Gospel's influence into Caesar's palace (Phil. 4.22).
- Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and circumstance.
 - Herod Agrippa II (his father was Herod Agrippa I who killed James and tried to kill Peter in Acts 12; His great-grandfather was Herod the Great who tried to kill baby Jesus.
 - He lived in open sin with his sister, Julia Bernice.
 - Agrippa was 32 years old at this time; Bernice was 31.
 - Jesus prophesied of this in Matt.10: 17,18.
- Festus: "...the whole assembly of Jews ...crying out that he was not fit to live any longer."
- V.25: "but I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death...he appealed to Caesar.
- V.27: It seemed unreasonable to me to send a prisoner and not specify the charges against him."

➤ Lessons:

- God protects His saints (**See 1 Cor.10.13**)
 - "Temptation" is also translated "trial"
 - Trials from the Lord are always intended to strengthen our faith, not destroy it.
 - Each temptation (trial) always has a way of escape.
 - All have trials but the Christian can rest assured that God is always in control.
 - "Escape" in the Greek means "the way out."

