

Acts 24: Paul's Defense before Felix

- The last 7 chapters of Acts tell of Paul as a prisoner---
 - Briefly in Jerusalem (22.24)
 - 2 Years in Caesarea (23.33-35; 24.27).
 - At least 2 years in Rome (28.16,30)
 - He had been imprisoned often (2 Cor.11.23)
 - He and Silas were beaten and put in stocks in Philippi (ch.16).
 - Acts 23.11: The Lord appeared to him with a message of assurance.
- After 5 days (after Roman deliverance from the plot to kill Paul), the high priest, Ananias, led the Jews in their attack against Paul as they came to Caesarea to press charges before Felix the Governor.
 - 60 miles plus of travel time from Jerusalem to Caesarea.
- They brought an attorney (rhetor) in Greek from which we get our word rhetoric, which means “persuasive use of language.”
- Felix had put down many rebellions with his ruthlessness and most Jews hated him.
- Tertullus: “We have found this man to be a real pest (plague in Greek). In other words, a first-class troublemaker.
 - Political charge: “he stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.” (Means a follower of Jesus of Nazareth).
 - Sect: Greek word is “haireisis” where we get the English word, heresy.
 - John 1.46: “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”
 - “He even tried to desecrate the temple.”
 - A charge that is vague and hard to prove.
- Paul's Defense (24.10-23).

- No more than 12 days ago that I went up to Jerusalem.
 - Hard to do that much damage in only 12 days!
 - Of the 12 days, this trial was taking place on 5th day after coming to Caesarea; that only left about 7 days for all this “mayhem” that he was charged with to have taken place.
- V.13: “Nor can they prove to you the charges of which they now accuse me.”
- V.15: “having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.”
- V.16: “In view of this, I always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and man.”
- V.21: “...concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged this day.”
- V.22: Felix adjourned the proceedings and allowed Paul to have friends visit him.
- Paul later wrote in Philippians 4.4: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!”
- Felix, wife, Drusilla, was a member of the Herod family; her father killed James the apostle in Acts 12.1.
 - Her great-uncle had John the Baptist killed (Matt. 14.1-12).
 - Her great-grandfather tried to kill the baby Jesus.
 - Her brother was Herod Agrippa II and a sister Bernice who are introduced in Acts 25.
- Applications for you and me:
 - Don’t wait for a convenient time to become a Christian because it may never come. Today is the day of salvation!
 - We have no guarantee of tomorrow. There is no indication in the Bible or secular history, that Felix ever became a Christian.