

PAUL BEFORE GOVERNOR FELIX
Acts 24:1-21

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Paul has been brought from Jerusalem to Caesarea
 - 1) Forty men had sworn to kill him
 - 2) His nephew had overheard the plot
 - 3) The Chief Captain had protected him
- B. Paul is set before Felix
 - 1) He is arraigned
 - 2) There is a letter from the arresting officer
- C. The accusers must come
 - 1) Annanias is 70 years old
 - 2) He travels the long distance - 60 miles

I. The Accusation of Paul vs. 1-9

- A. The Jews had hired an attorney vs. 1
 - 1) They were Jews, this was a Roman court
 - 2) "orator" = retor = "a speaker", "advocate"
 - 3) "inform" = emphanizo = "to show forth", "manifest", "to make clear or plain"
 - 4) "accuse" = kategoreo = "to speak against; before judges", "to set forth charges"
- B. The application of flattery vs. 2-4
 - 1) By thee we enjoy great "peace"
 - 2) He does "worthy deeds" for the Jews
 - 3) He is "noble" and we are "thankful"
 - 4) "clemency" = epieikeia = "a yielding disposition", "a tempering of strict justice", "correcting its inaccuracies and supplying its defects with the gentleness and firmness of equity; "sweet reasonableness" vs. 25-26
 - 5) The real character of these people.

At the time of Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea tremendous political changes were going on inside the Roman Empire. Claudius was emperor of Rome at the time. He started out as a successful leader but became reckless and lost the trust and respect of the Senate. He only trusted certain slaves and he exalted these to places of leadership. One was Narcissus, the next was Pallus, and the third was Felix. These three former slaves were running the empire under the permission of Claudius. Pallus and Felix were brothers. Pallus was the lover of one of the wives of Claudius. One of the wives of Claudius had a son by another marriage and his name was Nero. When Claudius was poisoned, Nero became emperor. Pallus and Felix were on the "in group list" of Nero but Felix began to steal so much from the empire that they sent him off to be the Procurator of Judaea. Felix realized that there was lots of wealth in Judaea, so he took the assignment and

that is why he was in Caesarea right at the time when Paul arrived there. Herod Agrippa had three daughters. One was Drusilla. She was one of three daughter of Herod Agrippa I (Drusilla, Mariamne, Bernice). Her father murdered James, her great-uncle Herod Antipas slew John the Baptist, her great-grandfather (Herod the Great) killed the babes of Bethlehem. These are the principle people before whom Paul will appear. Felix, Festus, Drusilla, Herod Agrippa II, and Bernice.

C. The charges listed by Tertullus vs. 5-6

- 1) "pestilent" = loimos = "plague", "any deadly infectious disorder". Paul was a serious threat to political order. This was presented as more than a religious squabble.
- 2) "mover of sedition" = kineo = "to set in motion" + stasis = "a setting up", "an uproar" = This man started an insurrection!
- 3) "ringleader" = protostates = "one who stands first", "sect" = airesis = "a choice", "an opinion", Hence a party. An illicit religious party of Nazarenes. These were political charges. If they could be proven Paul could be put to death.
- 4) "profane the temple" = bebeloo = "to cross the threshold (of what is holy)", "to pollute", "to violate". This is the old charge that Paul had brought a Gentile into the Temple. vs. 21:29

D. The Jews were prevented Justice

- 1) "and would have judged according to our law"
- 2) Lysias interfered, "great violence" vs. 7
- 3) He sent Paul to you and now you should "examine" him = "to separate", "to divide up"
- 4) All of the Jews "assented" = sunttheemi = "to place or put together", "join in setting upon" vs. 9

II. Paul's Defense Before Felix vs. 10-13

A. Paul waited respectively for his time to speak.

- 1) "beckoned" = neuo = "to nod or beckon as a sign"
- 2) This would have been ever so slight
- 3) He did not rail at injustice

B. Paul acknowledged his tenure in office

- 1) "a judge" = krites = "he who decides"
- 2) "cheerfully" = euthumos = "with courage"
- 3) "It is with confidence that I make my own defense"
- 4) "For you can easily verify the fact that it was only twelve days ago that I was in Jerusalem to worship"

C. They have no eyewitness vs. 12

- 1) "disputing" = dialegomai = "dialogue"
- 2) "raising up" = episustasis = "a concourse", "a tumultuous gathering"

- D. There is no evidence vs. 13
- 1) "prove" = paristemi = "to place or set before anyone",
"to place along side"
 - 2) "accuse" = kategoreo = "to speak against"

III. Paul Affirms His Faith vs. 14-16

- A. Paul was a Christian
- 1) "confess" = homologeo = "to concede", "admit"
 - 2) "the way" = hodos = metaph = "manner of action"
 - 3) "heresy" = airesis = "a taking", esp. a town; then, a taking, as of a choice, option, a preference, later, a philosophic principle.
- B. Paul worshipped God
- 1) "so worship I the God of my fathers"
 - 2) "believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets"
- C. Paul had a spiritual hope vs. 15
- 1) "hope" = elpis = "expectation of something future", "the expected good for which we hope", "a firmly held prospect of something future good"
 - 2) This hope is held by the Pharisees
 - 3) "allow" = prosdechomai = "to accept", "to receive", "to expect, wait for"
 - 4) "both of the just and the unjust" = dikaios = "fulfilling all claims which are right and becoming"
adikos = "not in conformity with right". This is what the resurrection of Jesus guaranteed, a "standing up" of every son of Adam, some to eternal life and some to eternal destruction.
- D. Paul avoided offending others if at all possible vs. 16
- 1) "exercise" = askeo = "to work with skill", "to endeavor", "to strike" (raw material). To take raw material and make something from it.
 - 2) "conscience" = suneidesis = "the being of one's own witness"
 - 3) "void" of offence" = aproskoptos = "not stumbling, not causing to stumble". In the papyri it is used to refer to a rigid maintenance of an unspoiled record in one's own self judgment.
 - 4) "toward God and men"
 - 5) Paul strove to never have inner-conflict with himself because of the way he had behaved toward God or toward man.

IV. Paul's Side of the Story

vs. 17-21

- A. Paul came to Jerusalem on a mission worthy of respect
an honour vs. 17
 - 1) "alms" = eleemosune = "pity", "compassion", "a work of mercy", "money given to poor"
 - 2) "offerings" = prosphora = "an offering", "oblation"
 - 3) "nation" = ethnos = "people living common"

- B. Paul was fulfilling the last half of his mission when he was identified
 - 1) "certain Jews from Asia.....found me"
 - 2) "neither with multitude or tumult"

- C. Those who saw him in the Temple should be here at this trial vs. 19
 - 1) "who ought to have been here before thee"
 - 2) "if they had ought against me"

- D. Those who are here have no proof of evil doing
 - 1) verse 20
 - 2) What evil did the council find?

- E. They discovered only one thing vs. 21
 - 1) "touching the resurrection of the dead"
 - 2) Paul's problem with the rulers of Judaea were all theological. He had done nothing of a political nature whereby he should be put to death.
 - 3) Acts 25:11