

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

PAUL APPEALS TO CAESAR - VS.1-12

Act 25:1 Now when Festus had come to the province, after three days he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

Act 25:2 Then the high priest and the chief men of the Jews informed him against Paul; and they petitioned him, Act 25:3 asking a favor (charis) against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem—while they lay in ambush along the road to kill him.

Act 25:4 But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there shortly.

Act 25:5 "Therefore," he said, "let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man, to see if there is any fault in him."

Act 25:6 And when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat (bema), he commanded Paul to be brought.

Act 25:7 When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about and laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove, Act 25:8 while he answered for himself, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all."

Act 25:9 But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?"

V.1 Now when Festus was come to the province,.... Of Judea, which was a Roman province, over which he was made governor by Nero, the Roman emperor, in the room of Felix; he now being landed in some part of the province, namely, at Caesarea, and so might be said to have entered upon the government of it, as the phrase will bear to be rendered; *after three days he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem*; he very likely came by sea from Italy to Judea, and landed at Caesarea; for though Joppa was the nearest port to Jerusalem, yet Caesarea was the safest, and most commodious port, being made so by Herod; Festus stayed three days after his landing, to rest himself after the fatigue of the voyage, and then went up to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the province of Judea.

V.2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews appeared against Paul - In so long a time their rage was not cooled. So much louder a call had Paul to the Gentiles.

V.3-4 The enemies of Paul certainly didn't waste any time getting to the new governor to try to get a judgment against Paul. I don't know whether Festus was actually aware of their plan to ambush the party and kill Paul. I think he was, but it doesn't really say that he knew about it. However, he refused to accede to their demands and requested instead that they come to Caesarea to bring charges.

V.5 Paul is again called upon to defend himself against the accusations of the Jews. However it provides an opportunity to present the gospel to Festus.

V.6 Not more than ten days - A short space for a new governor to stay at such a city as Jerusalem. He could not with any convenience have heard and decided the cause of Paul within that time.

V.7 Bringing many accusations - When many accusations are heaped together, frequently not one of them is true.

V.8 While he answered - To a general charge a general answer was sufficient.

V.9 Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem - Festus could have ordered this without asking Paul. But God secretly overruled the whole, that he might have an occasion of appealing to Rome.

ACTS CHAPTER 25

OBSERVATION

Act 25:10 So Paul said, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know.

Act 25:11 For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar."

Act 25:12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!"

PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA – VS 13-27

Act 25:13 And after some days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus.

Act 25:14 When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying: "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix,

Act 25:15 about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him.

Act 25:16 To them I answered, 'It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him.'

Act 25:17 Therefore when they had come together, without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in.

Act 25:18 When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed,

INTERPRETATION

V.10 I am standing at Cesar's judgment seat - For all the courts of the Roman governors were held in the name of the emperor, and by commission from him. No man can give me up - He expresses it modestly: the meaning is, Thou canst not. I appeal to Cesar - Which any Roman citizen might do before sentence was passed.

V.11 A note of impatience here. Rome was noted for its justice, and Paul respected authority. However, Paul is not getting justice, and so he makes a legal appeal. God intended that Paul use his rights as a Roman citizen. It is very interesting for us to observe that God leads some people in one way and leads others in another way. Some of the others could not claim the protection of Roman citizenship.

V.12 Festus is forced to concur with Paul at this point. He cannot prevent Paul from going to Rome to the court of Caesar.

V.13 Festus had just come into office as the new governor; so the king comes over for a visit. It seems these politicians work together. They all belong to the same party.

Vs.14-15 Agrippa and Bernice stayed there quite a long time (many days). Finally they ran out of conversation. Even a king and a governor finally run out of things to talk about. When there was a lull in the conversation, Festus said, "Oh, by the way, I should tell you about a prisoner that we have here. It's a rather odd, unusual case. His name is Paul and he was arrested and brought down here by Felix. Felix left him for me. I'd like you to hear him."

V.16 It is not the custom of the Romans - How excellent a rule, to condemn no one unheard! A rule, which as it is common to all nations, (courts of inquisition only excepted,) so it ought to direct our proceedings in all affairs, not only in public, but private life.

Vs.17-18 The issue is always the same: it is the Resurrection. We see from this that Paul had witnessed to the resurrection of Jesus Christ so that Festus knew about it.

V.18 Such things as I supposed - From their passion and vehemence.

APPLICATION

v. 11 Only certain individuals could appeal to Caesar:
1. Free Roman citizens. 2. People who are facing accusations that cannot be proven on a lower Level. The Caesar he was appealing to was Nero whose reign begins in 54AD and end in 68AD at his death. He has a lot of connections with leaders, including the family of Agrippa. So I believe this was all set up to have a confrontation with Agrippa. Because that contact would immediately spread the word of Paul's name and his case to Nero himself. As we know thru history Nero's own wife and mother-in-law and several relative become Christians and were tortured and killed by Nero for their faith.

v. 13 – Agrippa comes onto the scene...Herod Agrippa II was the son of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:20-24) and the great grandson of Herod the Great. Bernice was his sister. Rumors were rife that their relationship was incestuous. Because he had been only seventeen years old when his father died, he was considered too young to assume the kingdom of Judea, which therefore reverted to rule by procurator. Instead, he was given a tiny and insignificant northern kingdom with what is now Lebanon, and this was later augmented by territory I Galilee. He had committed to him both the care of the temple and the appointment of the high priest. He and Bernice came to Caesarea to pay their respects to the new procurator, and during their stay Festus raised Paul's case, which he had inherited from Felix.

ACTS CHAPTER 25

OBSERVATION

Act 25:19 but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

Act 25:20 And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters.

Act 25:21 But when Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar."

Act 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."

Act 25:23 So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in.

Act 25:24 And Festus said: "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he was not fit to live any longer.

Act 25:25 But when I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death, and that he himself had appealed to Augustus (sebastos –reverend, or revered one), I decided to send him.

INTERPRETATION

V.19 But had some - How coldly does he mention the things of the last importance! And about one Jesus - Thus does Festus speak of Him, to whom every knee shall bow! Whom Paul affirmed to be alive - And was this a doubtful question? But why, O Festus, did you doubt concerning it? Only because you did not search into the evidence of it. Otherwise that evidence might have opened to thee, till it had grown up into full conviction; and thy illustrious prisoner have led thee into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Vs.20-22 Actually, Festus was in a sort of hot seat here. The charge against Paul was sedition and for that he should die, but he had committed no crimes. Now Paul has appealed to Caesar. What are you going to do with a prisoner like that? So he asked Agrippa to help him out. Possibly Agrippa had previously heard about Paul and was actually anxious to hear him. He wanted to know more about the charges and he wanted to hear what Paul would have to say. So they arranged for a meeting. It is interesting to see how this meeting was arranged by a king and a governor. Yet all the while they were actually fulfilling prophecy even though they were unaware of this. Paul is to appear before kings, as the Lord had said.

V.23 What a scene this was! Wherever did a preacher have a greater audience than this man? The setting is dramatic with great pomp and ceremony. Paul appears in chains before this august company of rulers and kings. Festus is asking Agrippa to help him frame a charge against Paul to send him to Caesar.

V.24 King Agrippa: King Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa; who upon the death of his uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, ad 28, succeeded to his dominions, by the favor of the emperor Claudius. Four years afterwards, Claudius removed him from that kingdom to a larger one; giving him the tetrarchy of Philip, that of Lysanias, and the province which Varus governed. Nero afterwards added Julias in Peraea, Tarichaea, and Tiberias. Claudius gave him the power of appointing the high priest among the Jews; and instances of his exercising this power may be seen in Josephus. He was strongly attached to the Romans, and did everything in his power to prevent the Jews from rebelling; and when he could not prevail, he united his troops to those of Titus, and assisted at the siege of Jerusalem. After the ruin of his country, he retired with his sister Berenice to Rome where he died, aged 70, about ad 90.

V.25 But when I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death, Which was a public testimony of the apostle's innocence, to the great mortification of his enemies, some of whom might be present. **And that he himself had appealed to Augustus;** the Emperor Nero; see [Act 25:21](#). **I have determined to send him;** having had the opinion of his council upon it.

APPLICATION

ACTS CHAPTER 25

OBSERVATION

Act 25:26 I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place I may have something to write.

Act 25:27 For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him."

HE LEADETH ME!

He leadeth me, O blessed thought! O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!

Whate'er I do, where'er I be Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

○ Refrain:

He leadeth me, He leadeth me, By His own hand He leadeth me;

His faithful foll'wer I would be, For by His hand He leadeth me.

Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom, Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,

By waters still, o'er troubled sea, Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me.

*Lord, I would place my hand in Thine, Nor ever murmur nor repine;
Content, whatever lot I see, Since 'tis my God that leadeth me.*

And when my task on earth is done, When by Thy grace the vict'ry's won,

E'en death's cold wave I will not flee, Since God through Jordan leadeth me.

INTERPRETATION

Vs.26-27 I have nothing certain — “definite” - **thing to write to my lord** — Nero. “The writer’s accuracy should be remarked here. It would have been ... a mistake to apply this term (“lord”) to the emperor a few years earlier. Neither Augustus nor Tiberius would let himself be so called, as implying the relation of master and slave. But it had now come (rather, “was coming”) into use as one of the imperial titles”.

For it seems to me unreasonable - Festus felt that he was placed in an embarrassing situation. He was about to send a prisoner to Rome who had been tried by himself, and who had appealed from his jurisdiction, and yet he was ignorant of the charges against him, and of the nature of his offences, if any had been committed. When prisoners were thus sent to Rome to be tried before the emperor, it would be proper that the charges should be all specified, and the evidence stated by which they were supported, Yet Festus could do neither, and it is not wonderful that he felt himself perplexed and embarrassed, and that he was glad to avail himself of the desire which Agrippa had expressed to hear Paul, that he might be able to specify **To specify** - or make them know. In the case of Agrippa, we have an instance of the reasons which induce many people to hear the gospel. He had no belief in it; he had no concern for its truth or its promises; but he was led by curiosity to desire to hear a minister of the gospel of Christ. Curiosity thus draws multitudes to the sanctuary. In many instances they remain unaffected and unconcerned.

In Festus we have a specimen of the manner in which the great, and the rich, and the proud usually regard Christianity. They esteem it to be a subject in which they have no interest a question about “one dead Jesus,” whom Christians affirm to be alive. Whether he be alive or not; whether Christianity be true or false, they suppose is a question which does not pertain to them. Strange that it did not occur to Festus that if he was alive, his religion was true; and that it was possible that it might be from God. the charges against him.

In Paul we have the example of a man unlike both Festus and Agrippa. He felt a deep interest in the subject a subject which pertained as much to them as to him. He was willing not only to look at it, but to stake his life, his reputation, his all, on its truth. He was willing to defend it everywhere, and before any class of people. At the same time that he urged his rights as a Roman citizen, yet it was mainly that he might preach the gospel. At the same time that he was anxious to secure justice to himself, yet his chief anxiety was to declare the truth of God. Before any tribunal; before any class of people; in the presence of princes, nobles, and kings, of Romans and of Jews, he was ready to pour forth irresistible eloquence and argument in defense of the truth.

APPLICATION

v. 26 Festus knew he was in big trouble for sending Paul to Caesar. Why? Because he knew it was foolish to send a prisoner to Caesar without any charges. Festus knew according to Roman law, if you send someone to Caesar who was falsely charged they could take your life. So he is going to look at Agrippa to help him out of his problem.

Questions:

- 1.What or who do you think was behind Festus’ refusal to comply with the Jewish leaders request to have Paul sent up from Caesarea to Jerusalem?
2. What does Festus’ convening the court the very next day after returning to Caesarea tell us about him and his rule?
3. In verse 8, Paul responds, “*Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all.*” What does his denial of offending Caesar show us how the Jews’ charges against him have been added to?
4. In verse 11, why did Paul appeal to Caesar?
5. Who had the right to appeal to Caesar?
6. How much of a risk did Paul take in appealing to Caesar?
7. In verse 13, we see Agrippa II come into the picture. What do you think are some of the reasons?
8. What does the way Festus handled the subject of Jesus in verses 91 & 20 tell us about Festus’ knowledge of Christ?
- 9.. In verse 25, we see Caesar referred to as “Augustus”. What does that word mean?
- 10.. In verses 24-27, in what way was Festus’ account of the situation, a mixture of truth and error?