

Acts 24: PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE FELIX

Introduction

Acts 23 ended with Paul being transferred to Governor Felix who was the officer of the Roman Empire in charge of Judea Province at the time. The high priest and the Sanhedrin hired a lawyer named Tertullus to argue their case against Paul. They accused Paul of being a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews all over the world and being a ringleader of the Nazarene sect.

Paul defended himself before Felix. He denied all the accusations but admitted to worshipping the God of our ancestors as a follower of the Way. Paul was never concerned about the fact that his life was at stake. Rather, he saw the whole scenario as a grand opportunity to preach the gospel to those in power.

Governor Felix, whose wife is Jewish and who was well acquainted with the Christian faith (also known as the Way), decided to adjourn the proceedings. He knew there was no evidence to convict Paul of any crime but decided to keep him in prison anyway. Felix and his wife Drusilla invited Paul for another conversation where he talked about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come. Felix was overcome with fear and asked Paul to leave.

He however continued to have conversations with Paul hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe to be released. After about two years of Paul in prison, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because he wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Acts 24:1-27

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

Think Through the Following Questions

1. What can we learn about this story, seeing that the so-called high priest who is supposed to represent God, is actually leading an opposition team against Him?
2. What can we learn from Paul's handling of false accusations against him and staying calm in the face of wicked opposition?
3. How might Paul's continuous witness to Felix, despite his imprisonment, inspire us in our evangelism efforts today?
4. What does Felix's reaction to the preaching of the gospel tell us about the convicting power of the gospel and human reaction?
5. Would it have been okay for Paul to offer him a bribe and be released?
6. Why and how do you think Paul was able to keep his cool in the midst of false accusation and a wicked judge like Felix who was willing to take advantage of an innocent man?
7. As unfair as this story may seem, how does Paul's situation challenge our understanding of justice and divine timing?

Lessons Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?

Application: How do you think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?