



Lesson 36 – The Trial at Caesarea

Based on Acts 24

Paul had just been arrested in Jerusalem. Many of the Jews there wanted to kill him. He was assaulted and scourged. Paul asked why a Roman Citizen would be scourged and the tone changed. The Roman Guard had him sent for trial in Caesarea before Felix.

1) How did his trial there begin?

Acts 24:1-3 And after five days _____ the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to _____ him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very _____ deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

Tertullus here descended to barefaced falsehood; for the character of Felix was base and contemptible. It was said of him, that “in the practice of all kinds of lust and cruelty, he exercised the power of a king with the temper of a slave.” —Tacitus, History, ch. 5, par. 9. Those who heard Tertullus knew that his flattering words were untrue, but their desire to secure the condemnation of Paul was stronger than their love of truth.

2) What accusation did they make against Paul?

Acts 24:5-6 For we have found this man a _____ fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a _____ of the sect of the Nazarenes: Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.

3) What did they accuse the Roman Guard of?

Acts 24:7-8 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great _____ took him away out of our hands, Commanding his accusers to _____ unto _____: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.

Tertullus then stated that Lysias, the commandant of the garrison at Jerusalem, had violently taken Paul from the Jews when they were about to judge him by their ecclesiastical law, and had thus forced them to bring the matter before Felix. These statements were made with the design of inducing the procurator to deliver Paul over to the Jewish court. All the charges were vehemently supported by the Jews present, who made no effort to conceal their hatred of the prisoner.

Felix had sufficient penetration to read the disposition and character of Paul’s accusers. He knew from what motive they had flattered him, and he saw also that they had failed to substantiate their charges against Paul.

4) What did Felix do for Paul?

Acts 24:10 Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to _____, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself:



5) What did Paul say before everyone?

Acts 24:11-12 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to _____. And they neither found me in the temple _____ with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:

Acts 24:13 Neither can they _____ the things whereof they now accuse me.

6) What did Paul admit to?

Acts 24:14-15 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call _____, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a _____ of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

7) What was Paul's desire?

Acts 24:16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a _____ void of offence toward God, and toward men.

In a candid, straightforward manner he stated the object of his visit to Jerusalem, and the circumstances of his arrest and trial.

8) Why did he go to Jerusalem?

Acts 24:17-18 Now after many years I came to bring _____ to my nation, and offerings. Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me _____ in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.

9) What one thing could they only accuse him of?

Acts 24:21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the _____ of the _____ I am called in question by you this day.

The apostle spoke with earnestness and evident sincerity, and his words carried with them a weight of conviction. Claudius Lysias, in his letter to Felix, had borne a similar testimony in regard to Paul's conduct. Moreover, Felix himself had a better knowledge of the Jewish religion than many supposed. Paul's plain statement of the facts in the case enabled Felix to understand still more clearly the motives by which the Jews were governed in attempting to convict the apostle of sedition and treasonable conduct.

10) What did Felix do?

Acts 24:22-23 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect _____ of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have _____, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

The governor would not gratify the Jews by unjustly condemning a Roman citizen, neither would he give him up to them to be put to death without a fair trial. Yet Felix knew no higher motive than self-interest, and he was controlled by love of praise and a desire for promotion. Fear of offending the Jews held him back from doing full justice to a man whom he knew to be innocent. He therefore decided to suspend the trial until Lysias should be present.

11) What happened while they waited?

Acts 24:24 And after certain days, when _____ came with his wife _____, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.



12) What did they discuss?

Acts 24:25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and _____ to come, Felix _____, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

Paul regarded this as a God-given opportunity, and faithfully he improved it. He knew that he stood in the presence of one who had power to put him to death or to set him free; yet he did not address Felix and Drusilla with praise or flattery. He knew that his words would be to them a savor of life or of death, and, forgetting all selfish considerations, he sought to arouse them to a sense of their peril.

13) What Words of Christ were marked on Paul?

Matthew 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never _____ you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

He knew that he must meet every one of his hearers before the tribunal of heaven and must render an account there, not only for all that he had said and done, but for the motive and spirit of his words and deeds.

So violent and cruel had been the course of Felix that few had ever before dared even to intimate to him that his character and conduct were not faultless. But Paul had no fear of man. He plainly declared his faith in Christ, and the reasons for that faith, and was thus led to speak particularly of those virtues essential to Christian character, but of which the haughty pair before him were so strikingly destitute.

The Jewish princess well understood the sacred character of that law which she had so shamelessly transgressed, but her prejudice against the Man of Calvary steeled her heart against the word of life. But Felix had never before listened to the truth, and as the Spirit of God sent conviction to his soul, he became deeply agitated. Conscience, now aroused, made her voice heard, and Felix felt that Paul's words were true.

14) What was Felix's reaction to the burden of Truth Paul laid upon him?

Acts 24:25 ... _____ thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.

Never before had his soul been so filled with terror. The thought that all the secrets of his career of crime were open before the eye of God, and that he must be judged according to his deeds, caused him to tremble with dread.

15) How much different were things from the Philippian Jailer?

Acts 16:31-33 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be _____, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to _____ that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was _____, he and all his, straightway.

The jailer joyfully welcomed the Spirit of God to his heart and to his home; Felix bade the divine Messenger depart. The one chose to become a child of God and an heir of heaven; the other cast his lot with the workers of iniquity.



16) Felix visited Paul occasionally, why?

Acts 24:26 He hoped also that _____ should have been given him of Paul, that he might _____ him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

The apostle, however, was of too noble a nature to free himself by a bribe. He was not guilty of any crime, and he would not stoop to commit a wrong in order to gain freedom. Furthermore, he was himself too poor to pay such a ransom, had he been disposed to do so, and he would not, in his own behalf, appeal to the sympathy and generosity of his converts. He also felt that he was in the hands of God, and he would not interfere with the divine purposes respecting himself.

17) Why was Paul left in prison?

Acts 24:27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the _____ a _____, left Paul bound.

Felix was finally summoned to Rome because of gross wrongs committed against the Jews. Before leaving Caesarea in answer to this summons, he thought to **“show the Jews a pleasure”** by allowing Paul to remain in prison. But Felix was not successful in his attempt to regain the confidence of the Jews. He was removed from office in disgrace, and Porcius Festus was appointed to succeed him, with headquarters at Caesarea.

18) How did Felix respond to his last call from the Holy Spirit?

Acts 24:25 ...Go thy way for this time; when I have a _____ season, I will call for thee.

A ray of light from heaven had been permitted to shine upon Felix, when Paul reasoned with him concerning righteousness, temperance, and a judgment to come. That was his heaven-sent opportunity to see and to forsake his sins. He had slighted his last offer of mercy. Never was he to receive another call from God.

Can you see Paul did what he could?

**Would you know if today is the last time God asks
you to follow Him?**

When is the time to do the right thing?