

Acts 24:1-27

“And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and *with* a certain orator *named* Tertulus, who informed the governor against Paul. 2 And when he was called forth, Tertulus began to accuse *him*, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, 3 we accept *it* always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. 4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words. 5 For we have found this man *a* pestilent *fellow*, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: 6 who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. 7 But the chief captain [Tribune] Lysias came *upon us*, and with great violence took *him* away out of our hands, 8 commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him. 9 And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so. 10 Then Paul, after that the governor beckoned unto him to speak, 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: 11 because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. 12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: 13 neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. 14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: 15 and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense towards God, and *toward* men. 17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. 18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. 19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and

object, if they had ought against me. 20 Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, 21 except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day. 22 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of *that* way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain [Tribune] shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. 23 And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him. 24 And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith of Christ. 25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. 26 He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. 27 But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews pleasure, left Paul bound."

*Introduction: The High Priest Is Forced To Go Down To
Caesarea To Accuse Paul Before Felix*

Audio version:

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“And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and *with a certain orator named Tertulus, who informed the governor against Paul.*” (verse 1) Now, when you read anywhere in the New Testament, you always go up to Jerusalem, even if you're going down to Jerusalem, and you always come down from Jerusalem. But in this particular scene, Jerusalem's 2,500 feet above sea level and they're coming down to Caesarea which was on the coast, to sea level, so they're literally coming down, they descended it says, **“with the elders, and *with a certain orator named Tertulus,*”** ‘*rector*’ which is a professional attorney, and they would be trained in rhetoric too, they would be trained, that's why

it's called an orator here, **“named Tertulus, who informed the governor against Paul.”** They hire a professional, they want to get this conviction. Now, he doesn't have any truth, but that never stops an orator. **“And when he was called forth, Tertulus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.” (verses 2-3)** now there's a long word for this introduction, I forget it all the time, but in Roman courts you paid respect to the person you're appealing to, and you buttered him up in your opening statement, and that was understood, and there was no genuineness in it at all. It's such a lie, they hated Felix, and he knows it too, he's sitting there thinking *'ok there, come on.'* **“Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious”** Felix is probably thinking *'Oh thank God, this guy's not going to be tedious any longer,'* **“that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words. For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:” (verses 4-5)** *'a pestilent fellow'* your translation may say *'trouble maker.'* The Greek word is actually **“this man's a plague,”** it was an idiom used for somebody that you didn't want to be around. **“this man is a pestilent”** that's why it uses that word for plague. **“and a mover of sedition”** *“stosis”* a very serious crime amongst the Romans, they didn't want to hear anything about sedition, they didn't want to hear anything about revolution or uprising. If there was a sedition, uprising in your jurisdiction and you didn't put that down with an iron fist, that was big trouble in Rome, so this was a very serious charge, **“this man is causing sedition among all the Jews throughout all the world,”** **“and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:”** This is the only time in the New Testament you're called a Nazarene, so enjoy it, you're a Nazarene, and Paul's your ringleader. [Comment: In the early part of this first era of God's Church, when it was in Jerusalem and Judea, they were called, especially by their detractors, *“the Sect of the Nazarenes,”* right up to around 135AD, when the Romans finally drove most of the Jews, during the 2nd Jewish-Roman Wars, out of Judea and most of the Middle East. A good historic study of them can be found in Ray Pritz's *“Nazarene Jewish Christianity.”* After 70AD, and especially after 135AD, most of the Jewish believers ended up in the Ephesus church and the other churches of God throughout Asia Minor, it just

wasn't safe for them anywhere else. Wars move people and populations, those who want to survive. Just before 70AD the apostle John, along with Jesus' mother Mary, ended up in Ephesus, effectively moving the Headquarters of the various churches of God to Ephesus in Asia Minor.] He was a ringleader of the sect, *herosia* the word heresy. Now look, today in the Church, heresy has a very negative, and should, connotation, usually heresy is in the context of false teaching, bad doctrine [see <https://unityinchrist.com/misc/whyorthodoxy.html>] But the word was used in the New Testament to describe the heresy of the Sadducees, the heresy of the Herodians, they were just sects of Judaism. So he says ***'that this man is a ringleader 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. But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands,'*** (verses 6-7) ***'took him out of our hands, police brutality, this guy came and he roughed us up and beat us up.'*** Now he's gotta be careful, because he's accusing a Tribune, he may be the highest ranking officer in Jerusalem, and Felix doesn't want to hear any of that. ***'Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him. And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.'*** (verse 8-9) they're all there going ***'ya, that's right, that's true.'***

Paul, In His Own Defense, Gives His Testimony

'Then Paul after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, 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.' (verse 10) So Felix listens to Tertulus, probably *'ooh,'* and then he signals Paul, ***'Let's hear what you have to say.'*** Now Paul is going to use the same technical introduction, but there's no bologna in his, he's being very straight forward. ***'Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.'*** (verse 11) ***'I've only been here for 12 days, and***

they're accusing me of being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, I started all these seditions, how could all this happen, I've only been here for 12 days?' "And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me." (verses 12-13) And that's taken very seriously before Felix. **"But this I confess"** *'They want a confession, let me give you a confession.'* **"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, 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 resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (verses 15-16)** he calls it "the Way," early Christianity was [also] called *The Way*. And look, what we believe, what we practice, should be a way, there should be a way about the way we relate to immorality, there should be a way, the way we relate to revenge and anger, there should be a way in which we raise our children, there should be a way, God's way should be about us. **"that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers,"** *'I worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and I'm part of this way.'* Notice, **"believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:"** so Paul is a fundamentalist, believing all things, not some things, he said ***'I believe everything that is written in the law'*** notice this, ***'and the prophets.'*** If he just believed in the Law he could have been a Sadducee, but he believes in the law and the prophets, he's a Pharisee, and there's no law against being a Pharisee. So Paul's a fundi, take note of that, I think it's important. And he says **"and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (verse 15)** he says ***'I believe what they believe, they teach the same thing, I believe there's going to be a resurrection of the just and the unjust.'*** Felix is going to get to hear more of that than he wants to, as time goes on. Now look, the New Testament talks about the first and second resurrection, they are not, they are categories, they are not chronological events perfectly etched out, part of the first resurrection is unto life, that would be Jesus Christ, the Firstfruits of those who slept, we don't know what to do with those who came out of their graves after his resurrection, so when you see Matthew you can say *"Thanks for that one,"* and he never explained it. Then certainly then there are those

who will be raised at the Rapture of the Church, there will be the Old Testament saints raised into the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, there is a first resurrection, all of those members of that, of the two prophets outside of Jerusalem, Revelation chapter 11, all part of the first resurrection, the resurrection unto life. The second resurrection, a resurrection unto damnation, unto judgment, all those who will be raised to stand at the Great White Throne, judgment of Christ. [Comment: the greater Body of Christ has various beliefs about heaven & hell and the various resurrections, which differ from each other, sometimes in significant ways. For some of these, for the 1st Resurrection, see <https://unityinchrist.com/corinthians/cor15-16.htm> (which was taken from a Calvary Chapel pastor) and for some other beliefs about heaven and hell, and what the 2nd resurrection may be about, see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm>. Belief one way or another in these events dealing with the 2nd resurrection, far off in the prophetic time-frame, is secondary, not effecting one's salvation one way or the other, there's freedom to believe what you honestly believe on these matters.] Now the Jews believe this was one event, they believed in the resurrection of the just and the unjust (happening simultaneously). [Why? because they had very few prophecied passages in the Old Testament describing these resurrections, in Daniel chapter 12:1-3 it lumps both these resurrections into one event. Ezekiel 37:1-14 prophecies a massive resurrection back to physical life, and the Jews believe this points to their ultimate salvation, but it only gives them a glimpse into a huge resurrection back to physical life. There is only one major resurrection prophecied in the New Testament back to physical life, and that is the 2nd Resurrection, prophecied in Revelation 20:5, 11-13, the Great White Throne Judgment resurrection. So you can see why both Jews and us Gentiles find these passages confusing, gray areas of interpretation, which allows for beliefs of believers to differ somewhat without effecting their salvation when it comes to this 2nd resurrection. If you're a Holy Spirit indwelt believer though, you'll be in the resurrection to immortality Paul spoke of in 1st Corinthians 15, and so you don't have to worry about what the 2nd resurrection may entail, and we'll learn more about what that one entails at the Wedding Feast of the Lamb (cf. Revelation 19:7-9), when many secondary doctrinal disputes will be put to rest by Jesus himself.] Daniel chapter 12 and other places. So he says ***'I'm being called into question about this stuff, and I believe what they believe, they allow this, I have hope that there's going to be***

resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust.’
“And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.” (verse 16) because there’s the Great Judge, much greater than Felix, that we’ll stand before someday, *‘I exercise myself so that I might have a conscience void of offense towards God and towards men.’*

Paul Continues His Defense Before Felix

“Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.” (verse 17) now that’s for the poor, alms, it was part of the great offering he brought from the Gentile churches for the poorer church in Jerusalem. “and offerings,” now he had gone into the Temple to offer offerings, they were not sin offerings and so forth, he came to offer offerings required to end a vow. He had taken a vow, and he was offering the offerings with several other men, relative to ending that vow. **“Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.” (verse 18)** Now look what he says, *‘they found me purified,’* the idea is *‘I was ceremonially clean, in the temple,’* **“neither with multitude, nor with tumult.”** *‘I was there alone, I was in perfect keeping with the Law, I was ceremonially clean, these Jews from Asia, that’s how they found me, I wasn’t causing trouble, there was no tumult, no problem.’* Look what he says in **verse 19, “Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.”** Now what is blowing the case out the window for Tertulus and Ananias and the Jews is, the Romans had a very strict law about accusers being present at the trial. And if they weren’t, the case was most often ordered to be dropped, and not only that, there were charges sometimes brought against you. If you brought charges against someone else, and had brought it to a Roman court, if you were not there then to make your charges public, that was taken so seriously that often you were charged with a crime. So Paul, knowing Roman law, says to Felix **‘Hey, this all started with these Jews from Asia, they’re the ones that made this accusation about a tumult and all,’** **“who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.” (verse 19)** and Felix knows what he is saying is right. **“Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, except it be**

for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.” (verses 20-21) ‘the only thing that half the council, the Sadducees didn’t like was this, that I cried standing among them, touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day. Because of my belief in the resurrection of the dead,’ central to what we believe, wonderful thing. I talked to someone Wednesday night, I talked to someone this morning, the loss of a loved one, and it’s always wonderful to talk about the resurrection, because we don’t believe in just ethereal existence in the spiritual realm. We believe this is getting up again [as he smacks his chest], this space-suit that I live in, this is not who I am. I’m in it, but it’s wearing out, this carcass. And it’s not who I am. It will be raised, incorruptible, active, 30 years old again, can’t wait [I think 20 years old again, we’ll see], and the new model, able to travel at the speed of thought, finally I’m going to be able to go as fast as I’d like to go [faster than the SpaceX Dragon rocket, which got up to 6,000 mph in 2.5 minutes of flight, which in itself was impressive]. And when I see my dad he’ll be 30, and I’ll feel this, hug him again, Robie and loved ones, what great reunions will take place around his throne. We believe in resurrection, spirit, soul, body reunited eternally in the presence of the Lord, glorified, our bodies shall be fashioned **“like unto his glorious body,”** appearing, disappearing, how wonderful [see <https://unityinchrist.com/corinthians/cor15-16.htm>]. At the end of World War II, Billy Graham stood with Chancellor Konrad Adenauer [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Konrad_Adenauer], who was to take over powers in Germany, looking out the window at destroyed cities in rubble and the destruction, the remainder of the war, and he asked him, Billy Graham, “*Why do you preach what you preach?*” and he said “*Because I believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of the dead.*” And Adenauer without turning around, quietly said, “*Without the resurrection, Mr. Graham, I don’t believe there is any hope for mankind, with a clear picture of our inability to govern ourselves in front of his face.*” Larry King years ago, when he was coming to notoriety, was asked “*If you could interview anybody, who would it be?*” Without thinking **snap!** he said “*Jesus Christ.*” The interviewer said “*really?*” and he said “*What would you ask him?*” he said “*I’d ask him if he was really born of a virgin.*” and he said “*Why would you ask him that?*” he says, “*Because the answer to that question answers all the other questions I would ask him.*” The resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Firstfruits

of those who slept, our hope, how wonderful. He said *'I'm called into question in regards to this, the resurrection,'* that's the question, that's central. **"And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter." (verse 22)** Been in the area long enough, he knew of Christianity, he had Cornelius, he had Christians in Caesarea, they were not famous for insurrection, they weren't trouble makers. It says **"he deferred them,"** put off this hearing, **"and said, When Lysias the Tribune shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter."** So he puts it off. Look, Felix is famous for the great danger of procrastination, he constantly puts off hearing what he needs to hear, very interesting.

Jesus Gives Paul A Two-Year Vacation In Caesarea -- What Was Felix Really Like?

And it says in **verse 23, "And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let *him* have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him."** Look down in **verse 27**, after two years. So Paul is now two years in Club Med, Caesarea's on the coast, it is spectacular, it is beautiful. Again, after the construction of the Aswan Dam on the Nile River, the silt slowed down in its moving up the Mediterranean coast, and from a helicopter the Israelis saw a large horseshoe in the sand, they began to excavate, and they found the city of Caesarea. And the University of Pennsylvania in the last ten years has been involved in a major excavation there, and they found particularly this palace we're talking about tonight. And the Romans had skin divers, scuba divers there, pouring underwater concrete [the Romans were the first to invent hydraulic cement and use it in major underwater construction projects], they had figured out a way to mix a concrete that would heat, that would cure in salt water, and they poured these peers, Caesarea was incredible, it was the major [manmade] port in that part of the world, and just incredible construction and things that are there. So, Paul has freedom, which means bathing, food, he's able to collect records, he's able to study, he's able to exercise, he's able to have friends, it says nobody was prohibited from coming to him, which would have been Luke, Aristarchus,

Gaius, Titus, Timothy, no doubt Cornelius who was a Centurion in Caesarea, was able to come and see him. [And don't forget Philip and his four daughters who lived in Caesarea.] This was a very interesting two-year period. No doubt during this two years, Luke often made trips back to Jerusalem, and when we read the introduction to his Gospel he says it was from talking to so many eye-witnesses, that he constructed his Gospel, no doubt much of that took place during this two years. No doubt Luke during this two years gathered together the things he would put together as the Book of Acts, as the Holy Spirit inspired him. So, this ends up to be an interesting time. Some feel that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Philippians from Caesarea. There are those who feel, and it's just to be a troublemaker I'll put it up there, that if Paul wrote the Book of Hebrews [which I firmly believe he did], that he wrote it at Caesarea during this two year period, so stirred with the Jews and his experience that he had there and so forth, and still so much in that arena. But he is there, he is kept in this incredible beautiful area. If you compare this two years to the two years before, there's no comparison, he had been beaten, stoned and just gone through, he talks in Corinthians, how many times he had been shipwrecked, beaten with rods and all of this stuff. Now he's got two years on the Mediterranean coast. And I believe God gives that to him, and I believe great things are formulated during this time, in Paul's heart, Paul's mind, Luke is with him, I believe the Gospel's constructed. So he's there for about two years, and look what it says in **verse 24, "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ."** He wanted to hear from Paul about Christianity, and look what it says in **verse 25, "And as he"** Paul **"reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."** That convenient season never comes. Look, he had good reason to tremble. Felix, again, accused of being cruel, he was a cruel man. He had Special Ops throughout the area of Judea, hunting down what they called the Secari, the Daggersmen, and as soon as they found them they would crucify them on the spot and kill them, and a lot of innocent people were crucified in that pursuit. Ah, during Paul's two years in Caesarea, there was an uprising between the Jews and the Greeks, some of them from the area of Asia [Minor] in Caesarea, and Felix just sent his troops in and slaughtered thousands of Jews. He was a cruel man. It says he's there with his

wife Drusilla. Drusilla is the daughter of Agrippa I, who killed James, remember, he had James beheaded [James the brother of John, both sons of Zebedee]. And one day he stood [Agrippa I] and made a speech in his glittering silver armour, and they said '*This is the voice of a god,*' they said it, he let them do that, it said he was smitten, an angel smote him, he was smitten with worms, and he fell down dead. Drusilla was 4-years-old when that happened. Her great uncle is the one who had taken the head of John the Baptist, and her great grandpa was the one, Herod the Great, who had slaughtered the innocents. She had a sister named Bernice, who we will meet in the next chapter, and another sister named Mamery. But Drusilla had an interesting gift and curse, Josephus tells us of all women in Judea, Drusilla exceeded them all in beauty. She was the most beautiful woman in the land. She had married a Syrian prince, Hesus when she was 14-years-old, her brother did that, married her off to this guy for money. When Felix saw her, he had already been through two wives, he was so amazed with her, that he sent a good friend pretending to be a sorcerer, and said he would cast spells if she would leave this Syrian prince to marry and to go and be with Felix, that she would always be blessed. And she didn't like the first husband, she was Jewish, she was not supposed to leave, she left him and moved in with Felix when she was 16-years-old, she's probably somewhere about 19 at this point in time, and moved in and lived with Felix before she had ended the marriage with the other prince, so they're living in adultery. And as they come before Paul, Paul begins to reason with him, he says '***We want to hear about The Faith.***' She must have told Felix, being Jewish and having inroads to that family that had been from the time the Wise Men [Magi, Parthian Magi] came and the order had been given to kill the innocents. From the time John the Baptist had preached, it was her great uncle that ordered his death. Her father had ordered the death of the brother of the apostle John [son of Zebedee]. But as this went on, she had great insight into Christianity. So they asked Paul to come before them and explain "*The Faith.*" Well the first thing he starts to talk about is righteousness, without which no man will see God. And no doubt he begins to describe righteousness by faith, and what it meant to experience the new birth, and start to reason with them about how man needed to be born-again, that man could never stand before God in his own righteousness. And then he started to reason with them about self-control, the word that Plato had used, it meant to be able to control yourself. And certainly we're a new creation in Christ Jesus, that's one of the things that

should change in our lives when we get saved, old things pass away, all things become new. One of the things that should mark us as Christians is there should be a level of self-control we never experienced when we were in darkness, when we were heathen. Now first of all they're not righteous at all, their situation, they're not showing any self-control, and then when Paul gets to the third subject, he starts to be very clear about the judgment that shall come, everybody's going to stand before God one day, and if you want to stand there on your own righteousness go on, but there needs to be righteousness by faith or you're going to be cast into outer darkness. And whatever he's saying, it says Felix is trembling, and he says ***'That's enough for today, ah, some day when it's convenient we'll meet again.'*** He didn't want to hear anymore, because we're told that the Holy Spirit would come, John chapter 16, verse 8, and convict the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment. And no doubt the Holy Spirit was fast at work as Paul is speaking to Felix and Drusilla, because I have no doubt that Jesus Christ loved Felix and Drusilla, and would have had their hearts turned to him. The sad thing was, that it was not long after this, that Felix was banished, he was called back to Rome for cruelty, and banished, and we don't know about the end of his life. But Drusilla, who was the most beautiful woman in all of the land, takes her son, Agrippa she named him, and ends up in Pompei, and is there with her son who was 20-years-old by that time, in 79AD when Vesuvius erupts and they're incinerated. And of course that was only the beginning of the heat of the fire she would experience. They had stood before the great apostle, had listened to him talk about faith, of the resurrection of the dead, of Jesus Christ, how he can change our lives, and impute righteousness to us we could never have in and of ourselves, of self-control coming into our lives, of the judgment to come, and Felix trembled under the pressure, sent Paul away. We have no record that either one of them ever turned to the Lord in faith, how sad. **"Go thy way"** he said, **"for this time"** for now, **"and when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."** **(verse 25b)** it never came. Certainly a great lesson there. **"He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him."** **(verse 26)** some things never change, do they. He heard Paul brought a great offering to Jerusalem, he wondered if he still had access to some of that. So he hoped that he might get a payoff here, he hoped that he'd get some money of Paul, that he might loose him, that he might get bribed to release him,

“wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.” (verse 26b) ‘ah, what did you do with that offering in Jerusalem, got any of that left? Would you really like to get out of here?’ Isn’t it interesting, I wonder how many times he sat and talked with him, how many times God left the door open in front of him, to hear of genuine faith. How sad, as it were, to look at this. **“But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix’ room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound.” (verse 27)** I’m going to call him Porshious Festus, because if I call him Porcius Festus, my mind goes to a cartoon. **‘Two years after that, Porcius Festus came into Felix’ place,’** Felix was called back to Rome, and Felix was banished. **“and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound”** because Felix was going to be called to Rome, the Jews were complaining about his cruelty, so he was hoping by leaving Paul in bondage, that he then in fact would experience more favour before his accusers when he got to Rome, which he didn’t, he was banished. But God had Paul at Caesarea, it wasn’t Felix that had him there. And it wasn’t Felix that had him bound, Paul said that he was the prisoner of the Lord. He writes to the Philippians and tells them that. He never sees himself as the prisoner of Rome, he was the prisoner of the Lord, and in his perspective, Rome was chained to him and couldn’t get away. Ah, he had soldiers to witness to all the time, all the way to the end of his life, he was the prisoner of the Lord. So, Porshius, we’ll talk about Porcius next week, if you’ll read ahead. He comes in, and he takes over the Procuratorship in Caesarea, becomes the authority in the land, we see Drusilla cast off the scene again, the most beautiful woman in the land, ends up encrusted in lava at Pompei twenty years after this, and her son dies with her [so this is 59AD now]. She’ll never be able to say that the Lord wasn’t fair. Listen, if you’re here this evening, you’ll never be able to say *‘I didn’t hear,’* I want you to understand clearly, you can come to Jesus Christ this evening, righteousness, you have to have righteousness, but you can never produce that on your own, you can by faith repent of your sins, turn away from your sins, as part of your response to a Holy God, repentance, turn away from your sins, and turn to him in faith, and then he imputes the righteousness that you could never ever earn, deserve or work up on your own. It comes, it’s the very righteousness of Jesus Christ, **‘he who knew no sin was made sin that you might be the very righteousness of God.’** And that’s life transforming, it’s not theology, it’s not just a precept, it is a subjective experience, a new-birth, and borne out of that, is a self-

control that you've never known, the power of sin broken in your life, the spiritual man enlivened, and empowered. Because of that, we fear not the judgment to come. Paul, when he writes to Titus, will say **'the grace of God hath appeared, bringing us to salvation,'** that's the first thing grace does, **'teaching us to deny ungodly lusts in this present world,'** self-control, **'and looking forward to the coming of our Great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ.'** Only grace could cause us to look forward to the end of the Age and the coming of Jesus Christ. You can do that this evening, or you can procrastinate, and hopefully not to your own destruction. If you want to pray that prayer tonight, if you want to make claim to Christ tonight in faith, as your Saviour and your Lord, when we finish singing make your way up here. You don't want to wait, if you wait some guy named Porkious may end up in your place, and you could be the most beautiful woman in the world, and what does all that mean? It all ends up to be vanity, ends up to be history, ends up to be damnation, no life. So, read ahead, we come to Paul's testimony next week, incredible before Festus and Bernice, Drusilla's sister, and great, great, great clear testimony there as he testifies against them. So, let's stand, let's pray...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 24:1-27, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

Audio

version:

<https://resources.ccphilly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=44>

What about those two resurrections the Bible prophecies about that Paul spoke of? The first one is about our salvation, see <https://unityinchrist.com/corinthians/cor15-16.htm>

The second resurrection is the one in which believers have various conflicting beliefs about. To view some of these, see <https://unityinchrist.com/plaintruth/battle.htm>

Caesarea by the Sea, Roman Capital of Judea:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caesarea_Maritima#Sebastos_harbour

Procurator Felix: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonius_Felix