

Acts 24

Paul's Trial Before Felix

A. The accusations against Paul.

1. (1) The Jews assemble their case against Paul.

(1) Now after five days Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator *named* Tertullus. These gave evidence to the governor against Paul.

Five days was a very short period of time for the Jewish leaders to put their case together, hire an attorney and make the trip to Caesarea. Perhaps they feared Felix would _____ the case against Paul if they did not pursue it rapidly.

The presence of all three (Ananias, the elders, and a skilled lawyer) at the court of Felix reminds us of how _____ the Jewish leadership was about obtaining a conviction against Paul.

2. (2-4) Tertullus introduces his accusation against Paul with flattery towards Felix.

(2) And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: "Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight, (3) we accept it always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. (4) Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us."

Antonius Felix began life as a _____.

Tacitus, the Roman historian, described Felix as "a master of _____ and lust who exercised the powers of a king with the spirit of a slave"

The picture drawn by Tacitus of Felix's public and private life is _____ a pretty one.

In reality he [Felix] had put down several insurrections with such barbarous brutality that he earned for himself the _____, not the thanks, of the Jewish population.

Felix must have wondered, _____ is it that these Jewish leaders are after that they should come all the way from Caesarea and flatter me in this fashion?

3. (5-6) Paul's accusers state their specific charges.

(5) "For we have found this man a _____, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. (6) He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, and wanted to judge him according to our law."

The charges against Paul were essentially that he was politically _____ and that he had profaned the temple.

The reference to Paul being a Nazarene was intended to connect him to a generally _____ and lowly place.

The only really specific charge against Paul was that he tried to _____ the temple; but Tertullus gave no *evidence* for this charge because there *was* no evidence.

4. (7-9) Tertullus concludes his accusation against Paul.

(7) "But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands, (8) commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." (9) And the Jews also assented, maintaining that these things were so.

The Roman _____ Lysias, who rescued Paul, was here put into a bad light.

Tertullus did not even pretend to offer outside _____ of the charges, having said for Felix to examine Paul himself.

The other Jewish accusers present _____ with the charges, but they also offered no supporting *evidence*.

B. Paul's defense.

1. (10-13) Paul exposes the weakness of the case against him.

(10) Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself, (11) because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. (12) And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. (13) Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me."

Paul was _____ to answer for himself, knowing that the facts of the case were in his favor - and notably, Paul used no flattery in his address to Felix.

There was simply no _____ for their accusations.

Even if he had wanted to, Paul had not the _____ to incite a revolt.

2. (14-21) Paul explains his ministry, and why he was arrested.

(14) But this I confess to you, that according to the _____ which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. (15) I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead, both of *the* just and *the* unjust. (16) This *being* so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men. (17) "Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, (18) in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. (19) They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me. (20) Or else let those who are *here* themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, (21) unless *it is* for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the _____ I am being judged by you this day.' "

Paul made it _____ that he had not abandoned the God of my fathers or the Law and the Prophets.

The Law and the Prophets refers to the _____ Testament.

A resurrection of the dead was believed by many or most devout Jews of Paul's day, though _____ by the Sadducees.

And, Paul clearly believed in a resurrection for _____ the righteous and the unrighteous.

Paul came to bring alms and _____ made for Judean Christians among the Gentile churches of the West.

Paul reminded Felix that there was no eyewitness _____ to prove the charges of his accusers.

C. Felix's decision in the case.

1. (22-23) *Felix avoids making a legal decision.*

(22) But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case." (23) So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.

Felix _____ a decision under the pretense of waiting for more evidence through the Roman commander Lysias.

Yet, knowing Paul's innocence, he granted Paul generous _____ even while he was held in custody.

Felix tried to walk a _____ ground. He knew Paul was innocent, yet he did not want to identify himself with Paul's gospel and the Christians.

The Jewish leaders could not _____ Paul guilty of any crime.

2. (24-25) *Felix avoids making a spiritual decision.*

(24) And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. (25) Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."

Felix wanted his wife to _____ Paul's testimony, either as a curiosity or so that she could advise him.

Righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come were the _____ points Paul used when he spoke to Felix and Drusilla.

Hearing Paul's message made Felix _____.

However, Felix was _____ to *declare* his decision *against* Jesus.

3. (26-27) *The motive of Felix's heart is revealed: greed.*

(26) Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him. (27) But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

Though Felix met often with Paul, it was not _____ seeking. He apparently hoped to be paid off with a _____.

Under Roman law, the type of custody Paul was in could only last _____ years.

And, Felix refused to _____ Paul, though he knew that he was innocent.

They both acted out of pure _____ advantage.

Festus, Felix's successor, was a member of Roman _____, unlike the former slave Felix. Little is known about Festus' tenure as governor, but the Jewish historian Josephus described him as _____ than either his predecessor or his successor.