

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 17

Acts 24-26

In our last lesson, we saw that at end of Paul's third missionary journey he returned to Jerusalem, was arrested; and a plot to assassinate him developed. Learning of the plot, the Roman guards snuck Paul out of Jerusalem at night and took him to Caesarea for trial.

This lesson picks up with Paul living under house arrest in the governor's official residence. Located on the west coast of the Mediterranean, Caesarea is a beautiful location for Paul's house arrest and coming trial.

Read Acts Chapters 24 through 26 and consider the following:

1. Refer to Acts 24:1-5. Who actually brought charges against Paul to the Governor? Who should have been there to bring charges? (See also Acts 21:27-28)
2. Tertullus the attorney is now addressing the governor, Felix (see Acts 24:2-3). Check your Bible Handbook or Dictionary and see what you can find out about Felix, i.e., what kind of a man is Tertullus addressing? Does Felix have any insight into the Jewish faith or this new following called the Nazarenes?
3. What is the charge that they bring against Paul? (see Acts 24:4-6)
4. Refer to Acts 24:7-9. Why would Felix, a Greek non-believer, care about issues that the Jews were having with Paul? Why is it mentioned that Lysias, the commander, interfered with their plans to judge him according to their law?
5. Using Paul's own words, list the points of Paul's defense, noting that he clearly understood the laws of the land and the charges being brought against him. (see Acts 24:10-21)
6. Refer to Acts 24:22. Who is Lysias the commander? What would his military responsibilities have included?

7. What jail or prison was Paul held in, pending another hearing? What were the conditions of his imprisonment, and how long was he held there?
8. Did Paul have any friends in Caesarea? (see Acts 21:8-16)
9. In Acts 24:24-25, why do think that Felix was afraid, or frightened, when Paul spoke?
10. Why did Felix keep bringing Paul in to discuss issues with Paul over the two years that Paul was held at the Governor's house? (see Acts 24:26-27)
11. Felix retires and is replaced by Porcius Festus (see Acts 24:27). In Acts 25:1-5, we see that two years later, the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem still want to kill Paul. What does Festus tell them while he is visiting Jerusalem?
12. In Acts 25:6-8, the Jews continued to accuse Paul of many serious charges, none of which they could prove. What was Paul's response? What three codes of law does he argue that he is innocent from breaking.
13. Festus again tries to get Paul to go back to Jerusalem to stand trial, but Paul refuses. Instead, what does Paul do that ties Festus' hands? (see Acts 25:10-12)
14. A few days after the hearing, King Agrippa and Bernice arrive in Caesarea to pay their respects to the new Governor, Festus. Who is King Agrippa, and what influence does he have over the Jews? Who is Bernice?
15. Since Agrippa is familiar with the Jewish faith—he is a converted Jew as well—Paul appeals to him by sharing his testimony. See Acts 25:1-23. We know this testimony today as what?
16. As Paul was relaying his Road to Damascus Experience and his belief in Jesus as the Christ, what was the response from Festus, who was there with Agrippa and Bernice? (see Act 26:24)
17. Paul responded that he was speaking the truth. What else did Paul assert about King Agrippa regarding his testimony and the events of Christ's death and resurrection? (see Acts 26:26)
18. What was Agrippa's response? (see Acts 26:28)
19. What was the consensus of Festus and Agrippa after hearing Paul's testimony? (see Acts 26:31-32)

What no one at the time understood was that Paul's appeal to Rome would open the door for him to preach the gospel in the capital of the Roman Empire, so that the gospel could be heard by both Jew and Gentile in the most influential city in the world.

In our next lesson, we conclude our study in Acts, with a look ahead at Paul's trip to Rome and his ministry there.

Have a great week everyone!

In Christ,

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