

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Paul's Journey to Rome: In Caesarea Before Felix
Acts 24

Last time...Paul was put before the Council of the Jews where he was given a word of wisdom and the words of the Holy Spirit to say to them
As a result, the Council was divided and in an uproar with themselves vs Paul
Jesus appeared to Paul to encourage him and to give him his next destination – Rome
So Paul's journey to Rome began
1st stop: Caesarea

This time...in Acts 24, Paul and the Council of the Jews appear before the Roman governor, Felix

v1 Five days after Paul arrived in Caesarea and was placed in Herod the Great's palace/judgment hall, the Jews show up
They have been preparing their case against Paul, which is to be adjudicated by Felix

The co-conspirators to commit murder (criminals in positions of authority)

- Anaias – bad actor, corrupt politician, a false high priest
- the elders – a mixture of Sadducees and Pharisees (again)

come with a hired gun, Gentile orator/advocate/intercessor/attorney named Tertullus, more experienced in the halls of Roman government and hopefully more persuasive in presenting the Jews' case to the Roman governor

v2-3 When Felix the governor/judge opens the proceedings, the prosecution goes first.
And the prosecuting attorney begins by flattering the judge
Sounding like a slimy politician, Tertullus butters up the judge and laying it on thick

Because of you...you alone deserve all the credit and all the praise
we enjoy great quietness...peace and prosperity, the blessing of *Pax Romana*
you have done very praise and honor worthy things for this people (the Jews)
by your providence...care and provision for them

We...speaking for my clients
are profoundly grateful and thankful for everything
most noble Felix...honorable governor and all-around good guy

All so disingenuous!

What is reality?

Who is this Felix cat?

Antonius Felix

In Latin, Felix = “happy, lucky”

former slave

appointed governor of Judea by Nero at the behest of Felix’ brother Pallus,
who was one of Nero’s closest friends

1st former slave to be appointed the governor of a Roman province
notoriously wicked, he ruled with brutality, which is why there was
“great quietness”

v4 We know how valuable your time is so I will make this brief.
This is an “open and shut” case, your honor, so we only need a few minutes of your time.

v5 We have found this man (Paul)

- a pestilent man...a plague upon the nation, a cancer to your grateful subjects
- a mover of sedition...an insurrectionist
 - among ALL the Jews...a most difficult people to govern, am I right?
 - throughout the world...Empire-wide, not just here in this province
- a ringleader...champion
 - of the sect of the Nazarenes
 - “Christians”
 - Galilee birthed most of the Jewish rebellions against Rome

The Gentile attorney knows his audience and skillfully uses very inflammatory rhetoric,
highly-charged words designed to perk Roman ears and provoke Roman anger

Rome had Zero Tolerance for insurrection and used its iron fist to smash all
challengers

Caesars did not tolerate and rival “champions” in the Empire

Nothing new under the sun

Slimy politicians, slimy lawyers, slimy media personalities, and slimy celebrities
still use highly-charged and inflammatory words and provocative phrases
against those who disagree with their agenda

- racist
- sexist
- misogynistic
- homophobic
- transphobic
- hate speech

v6-8 This man also profaned/desecrated the (Jewish, Herod's) Temple.
Words to provoke the Jews...which Felix would not tolerate because a Jewish rebellion threatens his career and life

And we were handling this problem ourselves, according to our own Law
Problem: It was against Roman Law for the Jews to exercise capital punishment
Gen 49:10 had been fulfilled
The Jews, in handling this problem according to their Law, were breaking Roman Law, especially since Paul is a Roman citizen!

But the chief captain came and with great violence took him out of our hands
(conveniently not mentioned: and smuggled him out of Jerusalem under the cover of darkness, thwarting our conspiracy to kill him)

The Jews and their Gentile attorney

- would not have heard [Ch 22:24-29](#)
- have not been made privy to [Ch 23:27](#) as Felix had been

Felix may have been muttering to himself, "Bravo, chief captain, bravo!"

And we have been summoned here,
wasting your very valuable time and taxing your kindness for this people,
so you can investigate this matter and see that what we are saying is true.
(aka "leading the witness")

v9 Anaia's and the rest of the Jewish gang chime in with, "Yea verily!"
And the prosecution rested

Their "case" is content-free, they got nothing

- no criminal charges
- no eyewitnesses
- no evidence
- only accusations and rhetoric designed to slander Paul and to enflame the governor against an innocent man

v10 Now the Defense makes its case

No brown-nosing, no buttering up the judge, no slimy flattery...just the facts, ma'am

- I know you have been the judge of Judea for years now
 - no "most noble" or any such thing...because Felix isn't!
- I do more cheerfully defend myself
 - Paul has taken to heart [Acts 23:11](#)
 - Paul knows Jesus, his Advocate/Intercessor, is with him now
 - Paul is reminded of what Jesus said...[Matt 10:16-20, 28](#)

v11 Please understand the timeline of these “charges” against me.
It has been just 12 days since Ch 21:15...and the last 5 have been here in “jail”

v12-13 Paul does a Fact Check on the accusations leveled against him

My accusers say they found me

- pestilent
- mover of sedition
- ringleader

But they in fact did NOT find me

- in the temple making trouble with anyone
- riling up any people anywhere against them or against you/Rome

They have NO proof for any of those charges

Felix, it is all Fake News...hearsay and false accusations...because of what I believe

v14-15 This I confess to you...Matt 10:32-33

I worship the God of my fathers...no problem because there is freedom of religion in the Roman Empire as long as it did not challenge the Empire according to the Way...“Christianity” as it would become known as

- my accusers say it is heresy...again, of no concern to the Roman Empire
- but of which our Law and prophets had so written...and I believe everything in the Law and prophets (the 2 Witnesses of the God of Israel, clearly identified as Jesus of Nazareth without objection in Ch 22:6-16)

And I have hope toward God...a certainty (Biblical) vs wishful thinking (worldly)

Heb 11:1 Now faith is the substance (foundation) of things hoped for (expected because God so said), the evidence of things not seen.

Heb 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

as do my accusers...mixture of Pharisees and Sadducees, and some of them will admit it that there is a resurrection of the dead

- of the just...by believing God – faith/trusting/leaning on Him
- of the unjust...by not believing God – unbelief

The Law

Rom 3:19-20 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

The prophets

Rom 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dan 12:1-2 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation *even* to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame *and* everlasting contempt.

Job 19:25-27 For I know *that* my redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth: And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.

Ps 49:15 But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me.

v16 Paul believes every word God has said, has the hope/certainty of the resurrection of the dead

As a result, he has trained himself (like an athlete) to live with a clear conscience (faithful to what God has said) before God and men

1 Cor 9:24-27 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.

Just as he testified to the Council of the Jews in Ch 23:1...but no punches in the mouth this time, no outburst by those Jews in attendance now sitting before a brutal governor

Now, getting to what happened in Jerusalem that has resulted in these proceedings in Caesarea...

v17 Now after many years...for I was gone from Jerusalem, the center of the Jewish world,
for many years

- Antioch, his “home church”
- 1st Missionary Journey
- 2nd Missionary Journey
- 3rd Missionary Journey

I came peacefully to bring

- alms to my nation...the love offering of the Gentiles churches to the Jewish church in Jerusalem
- offerings...the offerings of the 4 Nazarites completing their vows

v18-19 And while I was in the Temple

- offering the offerings
- performing the Jewish ritual of purification
- with only my 4 fellow worshippers
- minding my own business

certain Jews from Asia...probably Ephesus

- took great issue with my presence there
- made accusations against me
- caused a riot...they were the ones who riled up the people, not me

And it is those Jews from Asia that are not here but should be here to

- accuse me of criminal wrong-doing
- present material evidence of that criminal wrong-doing

because it is my right under Roman Law to face my accusers

The Prosecution

- has not done their due diligence to learn the truth
- is derelict in their legal duty by editing the truth to advance their agenda
- is trying to deceive you, Felix

v20-21 Or if these Jews here today have evidence of any criminal wrong-doing by me,
let them present it

My “crime” in their minds is my belief in the resurrection of the dead, which is spoken
of in the Law and prophets (the Word of God)

I am called into question before you today because of my faith.

Facing these accusers, my wrong-doing is a matter of faith, not of Roman Law

And Paul rests his case

What is missing among the Jews here before Felix that was present before Lysias?

- dissension (Ch 23:7)
- division (Ch 23:7)
- a great cry (Ch 23:9)
- a great dissension (Ch 23:10)

Before the brutal Felix there is “order in the court”

v22 Now the Judge speaks

He did not disclose information he knew

- the Jewish conspiracy to murder an innocent Roman citizen
- his understanding of “Christianity”

He played his cards close to the vest, a sly cat!

I presume with Jewish emotions boiling, Felix says, essentially,

“I will take all this under advisement.

I will wait to hear the testimony of my chief captain to hear all sides of the story before rendering a decision.”

Is Felix a wise judge, or some other kind of a judge?

v23 Until he makes his ruling, Felix gives his instructions to the parties involved

- (Jews: leave my courtroom, go home to Jerusalem...empty-handed and frustrated)
- Paul, Roman citizen: to be guarded by a centurion while “under house arrest” with freedom to move about and to receive visitors (ex Luke, Philip)

v24 After some unknown number of days, Felix comes with his wife Drusilla to hear more about “Christianity” from Paul, to have him elaborate on his faith

Drusilla (Felix’ 3rd wife, each one an “upgrade” from the previous one)

- daughter of Herod Agrippa I (Acts 12:21-23)
- granddaughter of Herod Antipas
 - beheaded John the Baptist
 - “tried” and mocked Jesus the night before His crucifixion
- great granddaughter of Herod the Great, an Edomite tyrant
- brother of Herod Agrippa II (Acts 25-26)
- Jewess...a convert to Judaism?
- would know about Jesus Christ

Interesting...the Jews erupted into a riot before Paul could bear witness of Jesus in Scriptures but these Gentiles are asking to hear it

Are Felix and Drusilla honest seekers of the Truth?

v25 Paul, God's servant, reasoned

Is 1:18 Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

- of righteousness

Gen 15:6

Rom 3:19-26

- of temperance/self-control

Matt 16:24-25 *If any man will come after me, let him deny (not indulge) himself, and take up his cross (a Roman instrument of punishment and terror), and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

- of the judgment of God to come

Matt 13:24-30

Matt 25:30 *cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

Matt 25:41 *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*

Acts 17:24-31

Heb 9:27 it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment

Heb 10:30-31 Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord...*It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

As Paul reasoned, Felix trembled, was fearful

Was he moved to repentance...to a change of mind manifested in a change of living?

Did he "turn and face the Son"?

No, he stumbled at the Truth spoken with love and said, "Later."

He is taking a terrible risk with his eternal soul there at a decision point about

Jesus Christ – Go away and come back at a more convenient time.

God never calls at a convenient time!

Submit now to the witness of the Holy Spirit testifying of Jesus Christ!

Today is the day of Salvation! (2 Cor 6:2)

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near (Is 55:6)

v26 Felix was terrified but he was not moved by repentance...
his hard heart was moved by the love of money

His hope...worldly wishful thinking...in having Paul frequently come to “talk” about
Jesus Christ was to get a bribe from Paul, whereby he would release him

“Sooner or later Paul is going to get the hint and grease my palm so he can go
free.”

Sly cat!

Felix is a corrupt politician like Ananias the high priest that would feel right at
home in the house of Biden

But...Paul never took the bait, never compromised his training to live with a clear
conscience before God and man

Gal 6:7-8 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man
soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall
of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of
the Spirit reap life everlasting.

v27 This “cat and mouse” game went on for two years!

Felix thought he get far more from the Jews than he will from this one man
so he leaves him under house arrest, wrongfully...never rendering his
decision as promised in v22

He was not interested in the Truth, he was interested in worldly gain

Then, came a change of administration

Felix’ bribe-seeking led to increased crime in Judea as justice was perverted
Corrupt and wicked, Felix lived a life of lustful excesses...just like a cat named Hunter
Felix was on the take, selling his influence...just like Hunter
He lived like there was no tomorrow and gave no thought to the consequences of what he
did...just like Hunter

He had no self-control...just like Hunter

Paul preached righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come because that is
precisely what the Holy Spirit knew Felix needed to hear...
if he would repent to gain life everlasting in Christ

Felix, per Josephus, was recalled to Rome and replaced by Festus (not Marshal Dillon)
because of his brutal intervention in a skirmish between Jews and Gentiles in
Caesarea, which resulted in a riot...a Roman No-No

Felix, neither “happy” nor “lucky” saw his career end at the hands of the Jews
complaining to Nero

He did indeed get more from the Jews than he did from that one man!

And Paul?

Left safe in a Roman “jail”, enjoying the freedom of limited movement and the reception/fellowship of friends
Quiet times for a “man of action”

Is God moving?

Has God forgotten Paul, preoccupied with other issues and people elsewhere?
Is Paul's work in Caesarea finished?

What has Paul?

Faith

Jesus

Thoughts regarding our walk with the Lord in these last of the last days

1. Justice

Do we have a hope/expectation of justice?

Yes, it is hard-wired in us, the nature of God placed in all His creatures

“That’s not fair!!”

“Injured? Get even!” billboard

Does justice exist in the governments of man?

Not always, maybe even not many times

“Felix” governs

- in the state of our Ranch
- in this nation
- in all nations

In 1974, my best friend's father, an attorney, told me

“Being an attorney used to be an honorable profession. It no longer is.”

How much less now!!!

Going into politics was once a noble thing to do, to serve others, to serve the public good

Is it now?!

Justice is often corrupted, favoring those who pay for it!

Bribes...money in exchange for favors...plague justice systems world-wide

Ex 23:8 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.

Prov 17:23 A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.

Justice is subject to political agendas of the rulers
He who has the gold makes the rules
There are different rules for different folks

History: Man cannot fairly and justly govern himself
So where can we find justice?
In the kingdom of God, of which we are citizens (our “Roman card”)!

Jesus paid with His blood to satisfy the perfect justice of the Judge of all the earth
By grace thru faith we are saved from eternal death,
justified...just-as-if-our-sins-never-happened

Made new creatures in Christ, we are witnesses and ambassadors of The Way, The Life, and
The Truth in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, shining as lights and holding
forth the word of life

Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus
and be not discouraged or concerned about the injustice that plagues the world

Even though it looks like the wicked prosper and get away with their crimes, they really don't
Unless there is repentance, a GWT awaits them, standing before the God to Whom vengeance
belongs
Now, they need to hear the Gospel

2. Patience

In Caesarea while Felix plays his “cat and mouse game”, knowing he is going to Rome because
Jesus said so, Paul is enduring a trial of patience, waiting on the Sovereign King of all
the earth to move (which He always does in the perfect time)

Paul is a man of action, zealously driven by love for the Lord and for people
But he is no longer in the game, he is on the bench,
laying down his will for the Lord's will and trusting the Lord

And the Lord is working!
On Paul, His servant

James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations (including a trial
of patience); Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let
patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting
nothing. (patience in Paul is being perfected)

2 Peter 1:4-8 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these
ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in
the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith
virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to
temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly

kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wait Training...a trial of patience to work in and work out the Divine nature invested in us

3. Preach in word and in deed

- righteousness
- self-control
- the judgment of God to come

Live above reproach with the integrity of Christ

Don't be a hypocrite

"You are who you say you are."