

Acts Chapter 24

2. Trial before Felix, 24:1-23

a. Tertullus the lawyer, 24:1-9

Acts 24:1 After five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders, with an attorney named Tertullus, and they brought charges to the governor against Paul.

As we have seen in the past any charges will be false. Paul has done nothing wrong. Matter are now serious and Ananias is accompanied by a lawyer.

Acts 24:2 After Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying to the governor, "Since we have through you attained much peace, and since by your providence reforms are being carried out for this nation,

Acts 24:3 we acknowledge this in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.

Acts 24:4 "But, that I may not weary you any further, I beg you to grant us, by your kindness, a brief hearing.

We see here how Tertullus is trying to get on the good side of Felix with exaggerated flattery

Acts 24:5 "For we have found this man a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

Acts 24:6 "And he even tried to desecrate the temple; and then we arrested him. [We wanted to judge him according to our own Law.

Tertullus levels four accusations against Paul.

1. He was a Pest
2. Stirs up dissension
3. Ringleader of the Nazarene
4. Desecrated the temple

All of these except number three are very general. Tertullus has no proof of any of them.

As for judging according to their own Law, the reaction of the crowd showed they believed he was already guilty. There wasn't going to be any trial, Acts 21:30,31

Acts 24:7 "But Lysias the commander came along, and with much violence took him out of our hands,

Acts 24:8 ordering his accusers to come before you.] By examining him yourself concerning all these matters you will be able to ascertain the things of which we accuse him."

Acts 24:9 The Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were so.

Again we see the accusations but no proof of what was said.

b. Paul's defense, 24:10-23

Acts 24:10 When the governor had nodded for him to speak, Paul responded: "Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my defense,

Paul's approach with Felix is much different than Tertullus. He does not try flattery but simple fact. Felix had been governor for about six years up to this point. Paul knowing he had done nothing wrong and that the Jews had no evidence for their accusations is able to make a defense cheerfully.

This is the only real concern of Felix. Paul being a pest or follower of the Nazarene or desecrating the temple was no concern of Felix's

Acts 24:11 since you can take note of the fact that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship.

First Paul notes he would not have had time to bring a group together. Of the twelve days in Jerusalem five were in prison. His reason for going was to worship.

Acts 24:12 "Neither in the temple, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city itself did they find me carrying on a discussion with anyone or causing a riot.

Secondly Paul notes that he never once did anything that caused a riot. As a matter of fact it was the Jews that started these riots, Acts 21:27

Acts 24:13 "Nor can they prove to you the charges of which they now accuse me.

Paul puts an end to their accusations by saying they cannot prove any of their charges.

This might have been a good place to stop, if he wasn't looking for an opportunity to preach Christ.

Acts 24:14 "But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets;

Paul makes his defense to the only accusation that is true. He is a follower of the Nazarene or Way

Paul does not call the church a sect. This is what Tertullus called it. The word Sect means a division and a divergence, also mean "heresy." Tertullus was claiming that Christianity was an offshoot of the Jewish faith. But as we will see Paul makes the claim that Christianity is the real, whole of Judaism and not a sect of it. He does this by making three points.

I do serve the God of our fathers,

1. Paul says he serves the same God the Jews serve. He is saying that Christianity is from God.

believing everything that is in accordance with the Law, and that is written in the Prophets;

2. Paul believed the scriptures and what they said about the coming of a Messiah, as did the Jews.

Acts 24:15 having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

3. Paul had hope in God as did the Jews. The problem was the Jews were still looking for a Messiah but Paul had accepted Jesus as the Messiah.

Acts 24:16 "In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.

Paul has a clear conscience before God because he was a believer and follower of what the Law and Scriptures said. Because of this he lived a life faithful to God. He maintained a blameless life.

Acts 24:17 "Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings;

Paul makes this point to show his intentions were purely good. He was not doing evil as the Sadducees had said.

Acts 24:18 in which they found me occupied in the temple, having been purified, without any crowd or uproar. But there were some Jews from Asia—

Here Paul is referring back to when he first came to Jerusalem, Acts 21:23-26. He had done what was right, purified himself, and there was no riot taking place.

But there were some Jews from Asia—

Acts 24:19 who ought to have been present before you and to make accusation, if they should have anything against me.

Paul now notes that the ones bringing accusations were not even present in the temple while he was doing what he did. The ones who were present and would know the truth are not to be found at his present hearing. They originally accused him, they should be there to testify to the wrong doing they witnessed.

Acts 24:20 "Or else let these men themselves tell what misdeed they found when I stood before the Council,

Those present at this time heard the arguments in the Sanhedrian court and found nothing to count against him.

Acts 24:21 other than for this one statement which I shouted out while standing among them, 'For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today.'"

The only charge the Sadducees would have against him is his belief in the resurrection. This would not be a matter for Felix to deal with.

Acts 24:22 But Felix, having a more exact knowledge about the Way, put them off, saying, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case."

Felix knew more about Jesus than the Jews would have suspected. After hearing Paul's case it seems he knew Paul was innocent but he puts them all off waiting to hear from Lysias.

3. Paul's converses with Felix for two years, 24:24-27

Acts 24:23 Then he gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him.

Since Paul could not be found guilty at this time he was provided some freedoms.

Acts 24:24 But some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla, his wife who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus.

Acts 24:25 But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time I will summon you."

Here we see an example of those who hear the word but because they are living a life not according to Gods teaching they send the preacher away.

Acts 24:26 At the same time too, he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul; therefore he also used to send for him quite often and converse with him.

It was a common practice to pay off an official to be granted a favor. Felix expected Paul to pay him something and so he kept sending for him, but the money never came.

Acts 24:27 But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned.

It is time for Felix to depart from his work as governor and instead of releasing Paul he left him imprisoned seeking to do the Jews a favor. Maybe they had given him some money.