
a ***Grace Notes*** course

The Acts of the Apostles

an expositional study
by Warren Doud

Lesson 403: **Acts 24:1-27**

ACTS

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ACTS 24:1-27

ACTS 24:1. *And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders,* From Jerusalem to Caesarea: these five days are to be reckoned not from the seizing of Paul in the temple, but from his coming to Caesarea; the Alexandrian copy reads, “after some days”, leaving it undetermined how many: the high priest, with the elders, the members of the sanhedrim, with “some” of them, as the same copy and the Vulgate Latin version read, came down hither; not merely as accusers, by the order of the chief captain, but willingly, and of their own accord, to vindicate themselves and their people, lest they should fall under the displeasure of the Roman governor, for encouraging tumults and riots: the high priest must be conscious to himself that he had acted in an illegal manner, in ordering Paul to be smitten on the mouth, in the midst of the council, in the presence of the chief captain; and if it had not been for the soldiers, Paul had been pulled to pieces in the council: and the elders knew what a hand they had in the conspiracy against his life; and they were sensible that this plot was discovered, and Paul was secretly conveyed away; and what the captain had wrote to the governor, they could not tell, and therefore made the more haste down to him, to set themselves right, and get Paul condemned: *and with a certain orator named Tertullus:* this man, by his name, seems to have been a Roman; and because he might know the Roman, or the Greek language, or both, which the Jews did not so well understand, and was very well acquainted with all the forms in the Roman courts of judicature, as well as was an eloquent orator; therefore they pitched upon him, and took him down with them to open and plead their cause. The name Tertullus is a diminutive from Tertius, as Marullus from Marius, Lucullus from Lucius, and Catullus from Catus. The father of the wife of Titus,

before he was emperor, was of this name ; and some say her name was Tertulla; and the grandmother of Vespasian, by his father’s side, was of this name, under whom he was brought up . This man’s title, in the Greek text, is , “Rhetor”, a rhetorician; but though with the Latins an “orator” and a “rhetorician” are distinguished, an orator being one that pleads causes in courts, and a rhetorician a professor of rhetoric; yet, with the Greeks, the “Rhetor” is an orator; so Demosthenes was called; and so Cicero calls himself . *Who informed the governor against Paul;* brought in a bill of information against him, setting forth his crimes, and declaring themselves his accusers; they appeared in open court against him, and accused him; for this is not to be restrained to Tertullus, but is said of the high priest, and elders with him; for, the word is in the plural number, though the Syriac version reads in the singular, and seems to refer it to the high priest.

ACTS 24:2. *And when he was called forth,* Not Tertullus the orator; for this is not to be understood of him, and of his being admitted to speak, as is thought by some, but the Apostle Paul; which is put out of doubt by the Vulgate Latin version, which reads, “and Paul being cited”; he was ordered to be brought out of custody into the court, to hear his indictment, and answer for himself: *Tertullus began to accuse him;* to set forth his crimes, which he introduced with a flattering preface to Felix: *saying, seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence;* very likely he might refer to his purging the country of robbers; he took Eleazar, the chief of them, who had infested the country for twenty years, and many others with him, whom he sent bound to Rome, and others of them he crucified; and whereas there arose up another set of men, under a pretence of religion, who led people into the wilderness,

signifying, that God would show them some signs of liberty; these seemed, to Felix, to sow the seeds, and lay the foundation of division and defection, which showed his sagacity, and which Tertullus here calls “providence”; wherefore, foreseeing what would be the consequence of these things, if not timely prevented, he sent armed men, horse and foot, and destroyed great numbers of them; and particularly he put to flight the Egyptian false prophet, who had collected thirty thousand men together, and dispersed them; and yet his government was attended with cruelty and avarice; witness the murder of Jonathan the high priest, by a sort of cut throats, who were connived at by him; particularly by the means of Dora his friend, whom he corrupted; and the pillaging of many of the inhabitants of Caesarea: so that this was a piece of flattery, used by Tertullus, to catch his ear, and gain attention, and insinuate himself into his affections.

ACTS 24:3. *We accept it always, and in all places,* The sense is, that the Jews observed with pleasure the provident care the governor took of their nation, and at all times spoke well of him; and wherever they came commended his conduct, and owned the favours they received from him, and the blessings they enjoyed under his government: and then giving him his title of honour, ***most noble Felix;*** Tertullus adds, that this the Jews did ***with all thankfulness;*** as sensible of the obligations they were under to him; but this was all a farce, mere artifice, and wretched flattery.

ACTS 24:4. *Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee,* Suggesting, that he could say a great deal more under this head, but, for brevity sake, should omit it; and because he would not tire his patience, and hinder business going forward: ***I pray thee, that thou wouldst hear us of thy clemency a few words;*** he praises him for his humanity

and good nature, and for his patience in hearing causes, and promises him great conciseness in the account he should give him; and entreats that, according to his wonted goodness, he would condescend to hear what he had to lay before him; all which was artfully said to engage attention to him.

ACTS 24:5. *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow,* Pointing to Paul, the prisoner at the bar; the word here used signifies the “pest” or “plague” itself; and it was usual with orators among the Romans, when they would represent a man as a very wicked man, as dangerous to the state, and unworthy to live in it, to call him the pest of the city, or of the country, or of the empire, as may be observed in several places in Cicero’s Orations. ***And a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world:*** sedition was severely punished by the Romans, being what they carefully watched and guarded against, and was what the Jews were supposed to be very prone unto; and Tertullus would suggest, that the several riots, and tumults, and seditions, fomented by the Jews, in the several parts of the Roman empire, here called the world, were occasioned by the apostle: the crime charged upon him is greatly aggravated, as that not only he was guilty of sedition, but that he was the mover of it, and that he stirred up all the Jews to it, and that in every part of the world, or empire, than which nothing was more false; the Jews often raised up a mob against him, but he never rioted them, and much less moved them against the Roman government: and to this charge he adds, ***and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;*** not Nazarites, as Calvin seems to understand the passage; for these were men of great repute among the Jews, and for Paul to be at the head of them would never be brought against him as a charge: but Nazarenes, that is, Christians, so called by way of contempt and reproach, from Jesus of Nazareth; which name and sect

being contemptible among the Romans, as well as Jews, are here mentioned to make the apostle more odious.

ACTS 24:6. *Who also hath gone about to profane the temple*, By introducing a Greek into it; (see Acts 21:28,29) which was only a supposition and conjecture of the Asiatic Jews, and was a false and groundless one: *whom we took*; as they did in the temple, and dragged him out of it: *and would have judged according to our law*; which was another untruth, for they had him not before any court of judicature; they brought no charge in form against him, nor did they examine his case, and inquire into the truth of things, or hear what he had to say, but fell upon him, and beat him; and if it had not been for the chief captain and his soldiers, would have destroyed him, so far were they from proceeding according to their law: it seems by Tertullus calling the law, “our law”, that he was a Jewish proselyte; or else he speaks after the manner of lawyers, who call what is their clients, theirs.

ACTS 24:7. *But the chief captain Lysias came upon us*, Suddenly, and at unawares, immediately, and with great haste, before they could execute their designs; which were not to judge Paul according to law, but to kill him, in the manner the zealots did: *and with great violence took him away out of our hands*; for he came with an army, and rescued him, (Acts 23:27) Some copies add, “and sent him to thee”; and so the Syriac version reads.

ACTS 24:8. *Commanding his accusers to come unto thee*, But this was not done till after Paul had set forth his case before the people, upon the stairs leading to the castle: and after he had pleaded his own cause before the sanhedrim; and after the chief captain had had intelligence of the Jews lying in wait to kill him: Tertullus would insinuate that the captain was blameworthy, that he hindered a legal process against Paul; and that it was

owing to him, that this trouble was given the governor, as well as the high priest and elders, who by his orders came down from Jerusalem to Caesarea; and that had it not been for him this affair might have been finished with more dispatch, and less trouble. *By examining of whom*; not the accusers, but either the chief captain, as some think, or rather Paul: *thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him*; so impudent was Tertullus, and of such effrontery and assurance, that he feared not to say, that the governor, by examining Paul himself, would easily come to the knowledge of the things he was accused of, and plainly see that he was guilty of them; so that there would be no need of their attestations, or of producing witnesses against him.

ACTS 24:9. *And the Jews also assented*, That is, Ananias the high priest, and the elders that were with him, agreed to what Tertullus said, and confirmed the same. *Saying, that these things were so*; that Paul was such a person, and was guilty of the crimes he had set forth; and that the chief captain had taken the steps, and done the things he had related.

ACTS 24:10. *Then Paul, after the governor had beckoned unto him to speak*, Tertullus having finished his account, Paul was silent to his charge and calumnies, until the governor beckoned with his hand or head, or made some sign to him to speak for himself; which he might not do, until leave was given him; and then he *answered* as follows: *forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation*; some say he was in the thirteenth, others in the tenth year of his government; some copies read a “just judge”; but this does not so well agree with the character of Felix; (see Gill on “Acts 24:27”). *I do the more cheerfully answer for myself*; since if he had been such a mover of sedition everywhere, he must in this course of years have known or heard something of it; and

seeing also he could be no stranger to the temper of the Jews, that they were given to envy, revenge, lying, and perjury, and therefore would not easily believe all they said, or rashly take their part, but rather would pity the apostle, who had fallen into such hands, and do him justice.

ACTS 24:11. *Because that thou mayest understand,* By what Paul now asserted, and by the witnesses which he could produce to certify the truth of it: *that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship;* that is, from the time that he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem, to the present time, in which he stood before Felix, pleading his own cause; which may be reckoned, thus, he came in one day from Caesarea to Jerusalem, (Acts 21:16,17) the next day he visited James and the elders, (Acts 21:18) on the third day he purified himself in the temple, (Acts 21:26) where he was taken and used ill by the Jews; on the fourth day, he was brought before the sanhedrim, and defended himself, (Acts 22:30) on the fifth day forty Jews conspire to take away his life, (Acts 23:11), on the sixth day he came to Caesarea, being sent there by Lysias, (Acts 23:32) and five days after this, which make eleven, Ananias, and the elders, with Tertullus, came down to accuse him; and this day was the twelfth, on which his trial came on. And of these twelve days he was a prisoner nine, and therefore could not have done so much mischief, and stirred up so much sedition as was insinuated; and in opposition to the charge of profaning the temple, he observes that he came up to Jerusalem to “worship”; namely, at the feast of Pentecost.

ACTS 24:12. *And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man,* Either about civil or religious affairs: not that it was criminal to dispute in the temple; it was a common thing for the doctors to dispute about matters of religion, in the porches, and courts,

and chambers of the temple, as it may be observed they often did with Christ; but the apostle mentions this to show, that he was so far from moving sedition among the people of the Jews, that he never so much as entered into any conversation with them, upon any subject whatever: true indeed, he was in the temple, and was found there, but not disputing with any, but purifying himself according to the law of Moses: *neither raising up the people;* stirring them up to sedition, and tumult, to rebel against the Roman government: *neither in the synagogues;* where there were the greatest concourse of people, and the best opportunity of sowing seditious principles, and of which there were many in the city of Jerusalem. The Jews say there were four hundred and sixty synagogues in Jerusalem; some say four hundred and eighty: *nor in the city;* of Jerusalem, in any of the public streets or markets, where there were any number of people collected together; the apostle mentions the most noted and public places, where any thing of this kind might most reasonably be thought to be done.

ACTS 24:13. *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.*] As that he was a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, and a profaner of the temple these things they could not set forth in any clear light, and bring testimonies, or give demonstration of; they could not make them appear to be true, which it lay upon them to do, or otherwise in course he ought be acquitted: this was challenging and defying them to make good their assertions.

ACTS 24:14. *But this I confess unto thee,* What was truth he was not ashamed of, but ready to own, and bear his testimony for, whatever was the consequence of it: *that after the way which they call heresy;* referring to the charge of his being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes, (Acts 24:5) and meaning by the way the Christian religion, or the doctrines

of Christianity, which the Jews called heresy; and as early as this were the Christians, by them, called heretics: so we read of, “a prayer against the heretics”, which Samuel (the little) composed before, or in the presence of R. Gamaliel the elder, he approving of it; which R. Gamaliel was Paul’s master; and some have thought, that Samuel the little, the composer of this prayer, was Saul himself; so that he knew very well that the Christian doctrine was called heresy, and the Christians heretics, for he had called them so himself in the time of his unregeneracy; but now he was not ashamed to profess that way, and walk in it, and according to it worship God, as follows: *so worship I the God of my fathers*; even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, suggesting, that by embracing Christianity, he had not denied, and gone off from the worship of the one, only, living, and true God, the God of Israel; and that there was an entire agreement between the saints of the Old Testament, and the Christians of the New, in the object of worship; the Vulgate Latin version reads, “so serve I the Father, and my God”; that is, God the Father, who is the Father of Christ, and the God and Father of believers in him: *believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets*; which the Sadducees did not; and strictly adhering to these, and not to the traditions of the elders, as did the Scribes and Pharisees; so that since he believed whatever was contained in the sacred writings, he could not be charged justly with heresy; and as he believed, so he taught nothing but what was agreeably to the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

ACTS 24:15. *And have hope towards God,* Of an interest in him, and of enjoying eternal life and happiness with him in a future state: *which they themselves also allow*; that is, some of the Jews, not the Sadducees, for they denied what is afterwards asserted; but the Pharisees, who believed the immortality of the

soul, and its existence in a future state: *and that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust*; agreeably to the doctrine of Christ in (John 5:28,29). In this article the Pharisees of those times were sounder than the modern Jews; for though the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is one of their thirteen articles of faith, and is a fundamental one, which he that does not believe, cannot be said to be of the Jewish religion; yet they limit it entirely to the righteous, and will not allow that the wicked shall rise again: and this notion obtained also very early; for in their Talmud it is reported, as the saying of R. Abhu, that “the day of rain is greater than the resurrection of the dead; the resurrection of the dead is, for the righteous, but the rain is both for the righteous, and the wicked.” Though Abarbinel says, that the sense of this expression is not, that they that are not just shall have no part in the resurrection, but that hereby is declared the benefit and reward to be enjoyed at the resurrection; that that is not like rain, from whence both just and unjust equally receive advantage; whereas only the reward is for the righteous, but not for the ungodly: moreover, he observes, that this saying was not received and approved of by all the wise men, particularly that R. Joseph dissented, and others agreed with him; and as for himself, he openly declares, that that assertion, that the just among the Israelites only shall rise again, is foreign from truth, since the Scripture affirms, (Daniel 12:2) “that many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake”; but if there should be no other than the righteous in the resurrection, they would without doubt be very few; besides it is said, “some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting contempt”; and Isaiah says, (Isaiah 66:24) “and they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me”; which shows, that the ungodly shall rise again, to receive their due

punishment: and Manasseh ben Israel, in the last century, argued for the resurrection of both the godly and ungodly, from the same passages of Scripture; and yet he was not of opinion, that the resurrection would be general and common to all men, only that some of all sorts, good, and bad, and middling, would rise again, and which he supposed was the sense of the ancients. It is certain the Jews are divided in their sentiments about this matter; some of them utterly deny that any other shall rise but the just; yea, they affirm, that only the just among the Israelites, and not any of the nations of the world shall rise; others say that all shall rise at the resurrection of the dead, excepting the generation of the flood; and others think, that only they that have been very bad, or very good, shall rise, but not those that are between both; but certain it is, as the apostle affirms, that all shall rise, both just and unjust: the just are they who are made so by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and who being created anew unto righteousness and true holiness, live soberly, righteously, and godly; the unjust are they who are destitute of righteousness, and are filled with all unrighteousness; and these latter, as well as the former, will rise again from the dead; which is clear, not only from the words of Christ, and the writings of the apostles, but from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, particularly (Daniel 12:2) and also from the justice of God, which requires that they who have sinned in the body, should be punished in the body; wherefore it is necessary on this account, that the bodies of the wicked should be raised, that they with their souls may receive the full and just recompense of reward; and likewise from the general judgment, which will include the righteous and the wicked, and who must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive for the deeds done in the body, whether good or evil; in order to which there must be a resurrection of them; to which add,

the account the Scripture gives of the punishment of the wicked in hell, which supposes the resurrection of the body, and in which the body and soul will be both destroyed. Indeed there will be a difference between the resurrection of the just and of the unjust, both in the time of their rising, the dead in Christ will rise first at the beginning of the thousand years, the wicked not until they are ended; and in the means and manner of their rising; they will be both raised by Christ, but the one by virtue of union to him, the other merely by his power; the just will rise in bodies not only immortal, and incorruptible, but powerful, spiritual, and glorious, even like to the glorious body of Christ; the wicked will rise with bodies immortal, but not free from sin, nor glorious: yea, their resurrection will differ in the end of it; the one will rise to everlasting life and glory, the other to everlasting shame and damnation.

ACTS 24:16. *And herein do I exercise myself.* Or because of this; on account of this doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, which is a doctrine according to godliness, and promotes and engages to a holy life and conversation, as the contrary tends to encourage a dissolute and sinful manner of living; (see 1 Corinthians 15:32) The apostle studied, and laboured, and bent himself, and employed his thought, care, and time, *to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man*; that is, to discharge every duty which God requires, and to give to every man what is due to him; so as to please God, and not offend men, neither Jew nor Gentile, nor the church of God; and so as that conscience may be clear of guilt, and may not be defiled with sin, being purged and purified by the blood of Christ. By a “conscience void of offence”, is meant a good conversation; which as it respects God, lies in a carefulness not to offend him, but to do his will; and as it respects men, a shunning what may give

offence, or be a stumbling to them; and though this cannot be perfectly attained to in each of its branches, yet there is in every good man a concern to have such a conscience; and the consideration of the resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, and a future state, induce him to it.

ACTS 24:17. *Now after many years,* Absence from Jerusalem; it was now about five and twenty years since his conversion, and most of this time he spent among the Gentiles; three years after it he went up to Jerusalem, and fourteen years after that, (Galatians 1:18, 2:1) but it had now been some years since he had been there: *I came to bring alms to my nation;* the collections which were made among the Gentile churches, particularly in Macedonia, for the poor saints at Jerusalem, (Romans 15:25-27, 2 Corinthians 8:1-4). *and offerings;* either for the day of Pentecost, according to the usages of that feast, or the offerings on the account of the vow of the Nazarite, (Acts 21:26). The Vulgate Latin version adds, “and vows”; unless the spiritual and evangelical sacrifices of prayer and praise can be thought to be meant, since the ceremonial law was now abrogated; though it is manifest the apostle did at some times, and in some cases, comply with the Jews in the observance of it, in order to gain some.

ACTS 24:18. *Whereupon,* Or “among which”; while the apostle was busy about the offerings of the Nazarites: *certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple;* and therefore could not be said to profane it; this he observes in answer to the charge of his attempting to profane it, and acquaints the governor how that was; as that having joined himself to four men that had a vow upon them, and being in the temple purifying himself with them, certain Jews that came from Ephesus, in Asia, who knew him there, and had a pique against him, found him here; not profaning the temple, as they pretended,

but acting according to the worship and service of it; and that, *neither with a multitude;* for there were but four men with him; *nor with tumult;* making any noise and riot, or stirring up persons to sedition and rebellion.

ACTS 24:19. *Who ought to have been here before thee,* For they were the only persons who saw him in the temple, and what he was doing; and who by an hideous outcry raised a mob upon him, who took things upon hearsay from them: *and object, if they had ought against me;* either with respect to sedition, or blasphemy, error or heresy, if they were capable of proving anything.

ACTS 24:20. *Or else let these same here say,* They that are present, the high priest and the elders, who were come down to accuse him: *if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council;* or “Jewish sanhedrim”; when he was brought before them by the chief captain, (Acts 22:30, 23:1) meaning, if any evil was then done by him, or any iniquity proved upon him, let it be declared; for as for his imprecation, or prophecy, that God would smite the high priest, he excused himself on that head, as not knowing it was the high priest.

ACTS 24:21. *Except it be for this one voice,* Sentence or expression following, which declares his faith about the resurrection; not that he thought or owned that this was an evil in him, but that it was the only one, that any of them, the Jews, a part among them, namely, the Sadducees, could condemn, or judge to be evil in him: *that I cried, standing among them;* whereby they were thrown into confusion and division among themselves: and it was this, *touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day;* (see Acts 23:6).

ACTS 24:22. *And when Felix heard these things,* Which were said on both sides, both by plaintiff and defendant, the charges brought

against Paul, and his answer to them, as a judge ought to do: *having more perfect knowledge of that way*; the Christian religion, which the Jews called heresy, and Paul had embraced; the sense is, either that he had a more perfect knowledge of it than he had before; and by what Paul had said, he saw that it was not contrary to the law, nor had any tendency to promote sedition and tumult; or rather, when he should have more perfect knowledge of this new way, called the sect of the Nazarenes, he would determine this cause, and not before: wherefore *he deferred* them; put them off to longer time, and would make no decision in favour of one side or the other: *and said, when Lysias the chief captain shall come from Jerusalem to Caesarea, I will know the uttermost of your matters*: as for the way, or religion of the Christians, he proposed doubtless to consult other persons; and as for the profanation of the temple, and especially about stirring up of sedition, he would inquire of Lysias about that; and when he had got full information of these particulars, then he promised them to bring things to an issue, and finish the cause.

ACTS 24:23. *And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul*, In custody, to watch and guard him, and look after him, that he went not away, since he was neither condemned nor acquitted; and therefore must be retained a prisoner, till one or other was done: *and to let him have liberty*; not to go where he pleased, or out of the place of confinement, for then there would have been no need of the after direction, not to prohibit his friends from coming to him; but to free him from his bonds and close confinement; which was done, partly on account of his being a Roman, and partly because he took him to be an innocent man, and it may be because he hoped to receive money from him: *that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him*;

but that they should have free access to him, and the liberty of conversation with him; which layouts granted show that he was inclined to the side of Paul, both through the defence that he had made for himself, and through the letter which Lysias sent him, as well as through the knowledge he had gained by long observation and experience, of the temper and disposition of the Jews, their priests and elders.

ACTS 24:24. *And after certain days*, Some days after this trial: *when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess*; to Caesarea, having been to fetch her from some other place, or to meet her: this woman was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, who was eaten by worms, (Acts 12:23) and sister to King Agrippa, mentioned in the next chapter; but though she was born of Jewish parents, and so a Jewess, as she is here called, yet her name was a Roman name, and is the diminutive of Drusus; the first of which name took it from killing Drausus, an enemy's general, and who was of the Livian family; and the name of the mother of Tiberius Caesar was Livia Drusilla; Caius Caligula, the Roman emperor, had also a sister whose name was Drusilla; this name Herod took from the Romans, and gave to his daughter; though the masculine name is often to be met with in Jewish writings; we frequently read of, "Rabbi Drusai"; Herod Agrippa left three daughters, born to him of Cypris, Bernice, Mariamne, and Drusilla; and a son by the same, whose name was Agrippa; Agrippa when his father died was seventeen years of age, Bernice was sixteen, and was married to her uncle Herod; Mariamne and Drusilla were virgins, but were promised in marriage by their father; Mariamne to Julius Archelaus, son of Chelcias, and Drusilla to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, king of Comagene; but after Herod's death, he refused to marry her, being unwilling to embrace the Jewish religion and relinquish his own, though

he had promised her father he would; wherefore her brother Agrippa married her to Azizus king of the Emesenes, who was willing to be circumcised; but this marriage was quickly dissolved; for Felix coming to the government of Judea, seeing Drusilla, was enamoured with her beauty; and by the means of one of his friends, one Simon a Jew, and a native of Cyprus, who pretended to be a magician, he enticed her from her husband, and prevailed upon her to marry him: *he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ*; which he did, chiefly on account of his wife, who being brought up in the Jewish religion, had some notion of the Messiah the Jews expected, and could better understand what Paul talked of than he did; who at this time doubtless showed, that Christ was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; that he is truly God and man, that he died, and rose again from the dead on the third day, and that he has obtained salvation for sinners, and that whoever believes in him shall be saved; this was the faith in Christ Paul discoursed of, and Felix and his wife heard; but it does not appear that it was attended with the power of God, to the conversion of either of them; it seems to have been merely out of curiosity, and as a diversion to them, and to do his wife a pleasure, that he sent for Paul and heard him.

ACTS 24:25. *And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,* The apostle not only discoursed concerning the doctrine of faith in Christ, but insisted upon the duties of religion: and particularly he reasoned upon righteousness; not justifying righteousness, that is only the righteousness of Christ, and which rather belongs to the doctrine of faith in Christ; but the exercise of justice, or the doing of righteousness between man and man; which was agreeably to the light of nature, to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ, and is a virtue highly necessary in a judge, and was greatly

wanting in Felix; who, as the historian says, was guilty of much cruelty and injustice throughout this government and therefore very appropriately did the apostle fall on this subject: and he might also reason concerning the necessity of a righteousness, in order to justify before God, and to appear before him with acceptance, and to enter into heaven: he might show, that it was the loss of righteousness which was the reason of the first man being removed from his place and state of happiness, in which he was whilst innocent; and that to admit persons into heaven without a righteousness, is contrary to the pure and holy nature of God, who loves righteousness, and hates iniquity; and particularly would not be agreeable to his justice, which requires a perfect righteousness; yea, it would be uncomfortable to holy men themselves, to have ungodly and unrighteous persons with them in heaven: he might also reason upon the want of righteousness, which is in every man; how that the first man having lost his righteousness, all his posterity are destitute of one; and that they are not able to work out one acceptable to God, and which will justify in his sight; that the thing is impracticable and impossible, and that that which men call a righteousness is not one, at least is not a justifying one: he might insist upon the unprofitableness of a man's own works of righteousness for such a purpose, by observing the imperfection of them; and that justification by them is contrary to God's declared way of justifying sinners, is derogatory to his free grace, would make null and void the death of Christ, and encourage boasting in men; and all this he might reason about, in order to convince him of the necessity and suitability of the righteousness of faith in Christ, he had before been discoursing of: and very pertinently in the next place did he insist on "temperance"; or "continence", and chastity; since Felix had enticed away another man's wife, and now lived in adultery with her: and

who was now with him, whilst hearing this discourse; which concluded with an account of “judgment to come”; how that Jesus Christ is appointed the Judge of quick and dead, and that all must appear before him, stand at his bar, and be accountable to him for all their actions, and be judged by him, which will be done in the most righteous manner: he might argue this, not only from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, of which Drusilla might have some knowledge, such as (Psalm 96:13, Ecclesiastes 3:17 11:9 12:14 #Daniel 7:9,10), but from reason, from the relation which men stand in to God, as his creatures, and therefore are accountable to him for their actions; and from the justice of God, which in many instances, in the present state of things, is not manifest: good men are afflicted and suffer much, and bad men flourish and enjoy great prosperity; wherefore there must be another state in which things will have another turn, and justice will take place: he might from hence conclude the certainty of a future judgment; and the universality of it, that it would reach to all men and things, and would proceed according to the strict rules of justice, and in the most awful manner; and that a true and just sentence would be pronounced and strictly executed: upon which account of things, *Felix trembled*; his conscience was awakened, accused him of the injustice and incontinence he had been guilty of; and his mind was filled with horror, at the thought of the awful judgment he could not escape, which Paul had described unto him; nor could he bear him to discourse any longer on these subjects: *and answered, go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee*; he signifying he was not at leisure now to hear him any longer; when he had a spare hour he would send for him, and hear him out; but this was only an excuse to get rid of him now, and lull his conscience asleep, and make it quiet and easy; which he was afraid would be more and more disturbed,

should he suffer Paul to go on preaching in this manner: it is a saying of R. Judah, “say not when I am at leisure I will learn, perhaps thou wilt never be at leisure.”

ACTS 24:26. *He hoped also that money would have been given him of Paul*, For he observed from his own defence, that he came up to Jerusalem to bring alms and offerings; and he perceived by Tertullus’s indictment, that he was at the head of a large body of men; that he was some considerable person, at least who was in great esteem among some sort of people, and whose life and liberty were valuable: and he might hope if Paul had not money of his own, yet his friends would supply him with a sufficiency to obtain his freedom; and it may be that it was with this view that he ordered that they should have free access to him and minister to him, that so he might have to give to him: *that he might loose him*; from all confinement, and set him at entire liberty: *wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him*; but not about religious matters, but about his civil affairs; suggesting he would release him for a sum of money, which the apostle did not listen to, being unwilling to encourage such evil practices, or to make use of unlawful means to free himself.

ACTS 24:27. *But after two years*, Not of Felix’s government, for he had been judge many years in that nation, but of the apostle’s confinement at Caesarea: *Porcius Festus came in Felix’s room*; was made governor of Judea by Nero in his stead; who having had many and loud complaints against him for malpractice, moved him: and so Josephus says, that Festus succeeded Felix in the government of Judea, and calls him as here, Porcius Festus; in the Arabic version he is called Porcinus Festus, and in the Vulgate Latin version Portius Festus, but his name was not Portius, from “porta”, a gate, but “Porcius”, a porcis, from hogs; it was common

with the Romans to take names from the brute creatures; so Suillius from swine, Caprarius and Caprius from goats, Bubulcus from oxen, and Ovinus from sheep. The famous Cato was of the family of the Porcii; his name was M.Porcus Cato, and came from Tusculum, a place about twelve miles from Rome, where there is a mountain which still retains the name of Porcius; we read also of Porcius Licinius, a Latin poet, whose fragments are still extant; whether this man was of the same family is not certain, it is very likely he might: his surname Festus signifies joyful and cheerful, as one keeping a feast; this was a name common with the Romans, as Rufus Festus, Pompeius Festus, and others: *and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound*; he had done many injuries to their persons and properties, he had greatly abused them, and incensed them against him; and now he was sent for to Rome, to answer for his maladministration; wherefore, to gratify the Jews, and to oblige them, in hopes that they would not follow him with charges and accusations, at least would mitigate them, and not bear hard upon him, he leaves Paul bound at Caesarea, when it was in his power to have loosed him, and who he knew was an innocent person: but this piece of policy did him no service, for the persons he had wronged, the chief of the Jews at Caesarea, went to Rome, and accused him to Caesar; and he was sent by his successor thither, to appear before Nero, and answer to the charges exhibited against him; and had it not been for his brother Pallas, who was in great authority at court, he had been severely punished .

Caesarea - Judea

from the Thompson Chain Reference Bible

Caesarea, the Roman capital of Judea in the time of Christ and Paul, was located by the sea, thirty-two miles north of Joppa, and some sixty miles northwest of Jerusalem. Herod the Great began to

build the city in 25 BC, and completed it in 13 BC. At the dedication on 12 BC, he named it Caesarea, in honor of Caesar Augustus, and made it the Roman capital of Judea.

It soon became a busy seaport and a great commercial center. It was one of the most attractive cities of its day. It was constructed so well, and on such a magnificent plan, that it was frequently called "Little Rome." Here lived Philip the Evangelist, and here Paul was imprisoned for two years, during which time he appeared before Felix, Festus, and King Agrippa.

The city stood, with varying fortunes, until 1256 AD, when Sultan Bibars of Egypt captured the city and destroyed its walls and most of its buildings. During succeeding centuries it lay in ruins, with only broken pottery, portions of gates and castles, and fragments of granite and marble columns protruding from the sands and lying half-submerged in the shallow waters of the nearby sea.

The Department of Antiquity of the Government of Israel has undertaken the excavation of Caesarea. Their larger finds, thus far, have included a very splendid Crusader castle, the theater, the amphitheater, the hippodrome, and the pavement of a Jewish synagogue, possibly the very one, or the successor of the one, in which Cornelius once worshipped, and which Philip, Peter, and Paul visited. In the theater they found an inscribed stone which bore the names of Pilate and Tiberius. This was the first time Pilate's name has been found on a stone inscription. A large temple dedicated to Caesar of Rome was uncovered, which contained an unusually large statue of the emperor.

In 1960 the Link Expedition to Israel explored and charted the extensive harbor built by Herod the Great. Only the tops of the elaborate stone breakwater protruded here and there above the waters, but undersea explorations went far in confirming Josephus' description of Caesarea's massive and extensive harbor.

From the Encyclopedia Britannica

<<http://www.britannica.com>>

Caesarea

Hebrew HORBAT QESARI ("Ruins of Caesarea"), ancient port and administrative city of Palestine, on the Mediterranean coast of present-day Israel south of Haifa. It is often referred to as Caesarea Palaestinae, or Caesarea Maritima, to distinguish it from Caesarea Philippi near the headwaters of the Jordan River. Originally an ancient Phoenician settlement known as Straton's (Strato's) Tower, it was rebuilt and enlarged in 22-10 BC by Herod the Great, king of Judaea under the Romans, and renamed for his patron, the emperor Caesar Augustus. It served as a port for Herod's newly built city at Sebaste (Greek: Augusta), the ancient Samaria of central Palestine. Caesarea had an artificial harbor of large concrete blocks and typical Hellenistic-Roman public buildings. An aqueduct brought water from springs located almost 10 miles (16 km) to the northeast. Caesarea served as a base for the Herodian navy, which operated in aid of the Romans as far as the Black Sea.

The city became the capital of the Roman province of Judaea in AD 6. Subsequently, it was an important centre of early Christianity; in the New Testament it is mentioned in Acts in connection with Peter, Philip the Apostle, and, especially, Paul, who was imprisoned there before being sent to Rome for trial. According to the 1st-century AD historian Flavius Josephus, the Jewish revolt against Rome, which culminated in the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70, was touched off by an incident at Caesarea in AD 66. During the Bar Kokhba revolt of AD 132-135, the Romans tortured and killed the 10 greatest leaders and sages of Palestinian Jewry, including Rabbi Akiba. Caesarea was almost certainly the place of execution of Rabbi Akiba and the others according to tradition (c. AD 135). The death of these Ten Martyrs is still commemorated in the liturgy for Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement).

After this Caesarea became the capital of the province renamed Syria-Palaestina by the emperor Hadrian. Under the Byzantine Empire

it was capital of the province of Palaestina Prima. The church historian and biblical topographer Eusebius (c. 260/264-c. 340) served as bishop of Caesarea. The city declined under later Byzantine and Arab rule. Its port and part of the ancient citadel were rebuilt by the crusaders; the city was successively taken and retaken by Muslim and crusader forces, until finally it was captured and razed by the Mamluk Sultan Baybars I in 1265. Between 1884 and 1948 Bosnian Muslims had a settlement there. In 1940 the fishing kibbutz of Sedot Yam was founded just south of the ancient site; this settlement has built a jetty over the Roman and crusader breakwater. It also engages in agriculture and operates a resort hotel.

Excavations undertaken since 1950 have uncovered a Roman temple, amphitheater, hippodrome (which seated 20,000), the aqueduct, and other ruins of Roman and later times. Of particular interest is a Roman inscription, found in 1961, which mentions Pontius Pilate, Roman procurator of Judaea at the time of Jesus' crucifixion. This is the first mention of Pilate ever found that can be accurately dated within his lifetime.

Further excavations in the 1970s and '80s, both on land and underwater, gave a clearer picture of the artificial harbor built by Herod the Great. It was probably the first harbor ever constructed entirely in the open sea (i.e., without the benefit of any protective fringing bay or peninsula) and was protected from the sea primarily by two huge breakwaters built of concrete blocks and filled with stone rubble. This spacious harbor, which Josephus compared favorably with that of Athens at Piraeus, was one of the technological marvels of the ancient world and helped make Caesarea a major port for trade between the Roman Empire and Asia.

The Roman Provincial System

from "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul," by W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson.

From the time when Augustus united the world under his own power, the provinces were divided into two different classes. The business of the first Emperor's life was to consolidate the imperial system under the show of administering a republic. He retained the names and semblances of those liberties and rights which Rome had once enjoyed. He found two names in existence, the one of which was henceforth inseparably blended with the Imperial dignity and military command, the other with the authority of the Senate and its civil administration. The first of these names was "Praetor," the second was "Consul." Both of them were retained in Italy, and both were reproduced in the Provinces as "Propraetor" and "Proconsul."¹ He told the Senate and people that he would relieve them of all the anxiety of military proceedings and that he would resign to them those provinces where soldiers were unnecessary to secure the fruits of a peaceful administration. He would take upon himself all the care and risk of governing the other provinces, where rebellion might be apprehended and where the proximity of warlike tribes made the presence of the legions perpetually needful.

These were his professions to the Senate; but the real purpose of this ingenious arrangement was the disarming of the Republic and the securing to himself the absolute control of the whole standing army of the Empire.² The scheme was sufficiently transparent; but there was no sturdy national life in Italy to resist his despotic innovations, and no foreign civilized

¹ It is important, as we shall see presently, to notice Dio Cassius's further statement, that all governors of the Senate's provinces were to be called Proconsuls, whatever their previous office might have been, and all governors of the Emperor's provinces were to be styled Legati or Propraetors, even if they had been Consuls.

² cf Seutonius and Dio Cassius.

powers to arrest the advance of imperial aggrandizement. Thus it came to pass that Augustus, though totally destitute of the military genius either of Cromwell or Napoleon, transmitted to his successors a throne guarded by an invincible army, and a system of government destined to endure through several centuries.

Hence we find in the reign, not only of Augustus, but of each of his successors, from Tiberius to Nero, the provinces divided into these two classes. One the one side we have those which are supposed to be under the Senate and the people. -The governor is appointed by lot, as in the times of the old republic. He carries with him the lictors and fasces, the insignia of a Consul; but he is destitute of military power. His office must be resigned at the expiration of a year. He is styled "Proconsul" and the Greeks, translating the term, call him "anthupatos," which our English translators has rendered by the ambiguous word "deputy." Acts 13:7, "The deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus." Or, "Gallio was the deputy of Achaia." Acts 18.

On the other side are the provinces of Caesar. The governor may be styled "Propraetor" or "ANTISTRATEIGOS", but he is more properly "Legatus" or "PRESBUTEIS" - the representative or "Commissioner" or the Emperor. He goes out from Italy with all the pomp of a military commander, and he does not return until the Emperor recalls him.³ And to complete the symmetry and consistency of the system, the subordinate districts or these imperial provinces are regulated by the Emperor's "Procurator" (EPITROPOS), or "High Steward." The New Testament, in the strictest conformity with the other historical authorities of the period, gives us examples of both kinds of

³ All these details are stated, and the two kinds of governors very accurately distinguished in the 53rd Book of Dio Cassius, ch. 13. It should be remarked that EPARXIA (the word still used for the subdivisions of the modern Greek Kingdom) is applied indiscriminately to both kinds of provinces.

provincial administration. We are told by Strabo, and by Dio Cassius, that “Asia” and “Achaia” were assigned to the Senate; and the title, which in each case is given to the Governor in the Acts of the Apostles, is “Proconsul.” The same authorities inform us that Syria was an imperial province, and no such title as “Proconsul” is assigned by the sacred writers to “Cyrenius Governor of Syria,” (Luke 2:2) or to Pilate, Festus, and Felix, the Procurators of Judea, which was a dependency of that great and unsettled province.⁴

Dio Cassius informs us, in the same passage where he tells us that Asia and Achaia were provinces of the Senate, that Cyprus was retained by the Emperor for himself, along with Syria and Cilicia. If we stop here, we naturally ask the question, and some have asked the question rather hastily, how it comes to pass that St. Luke speaks of Sergius Paulus by the style of “Proconsul.” But any hesitation concerning the strict accuracy of the sacred historian’s language is immediately set at rest by the very next sentence of the secular historian, in which he informs us that Augustus restored Cyprus to the Senate in exchange for another district of the Empire, a statement which he again repeats in a later passage of his work. It is evident, then, that the governor’s style and title from this time forward would be “Proconsul.” But this evidence, however satisfactory, is not all that we possess. Inscriptions, which could easily be adduced, supply us with the names of additional governors who were among the predecessors or successors of Sergius Paulus.

⁴ The word invariably used in the NT is HEIGEMON. This is a general term, like the Roman “Praeses” and the English “Governor”, as may be seen by comparing Luke 2:2 with 3:1 and observing that the very same word is applied to the offices of Procurator of Judea, the Legatus of Syria, and the Emperor himself.
