



Tell Me the Story of Jesus

Lesson 49 – Acts 25

People — Who is involved?

Festus – Roman governor

Paul – Apostle of Christ

King Agrippa II – ruler of the Jews

Bernice – Agrippa's wife

Places — Where does it happen?

Jerusalem – Festus spoke to the Jewish leaders and heard their requests.

Caesarea – Festus decided to hear Paul's case in Caesarea and not at Jerusalem.

Pearls — What information will help me to understand better?

Vs 1 – Festus was competent and wasted no time going to Jerusalem to meet with the leaders there. Josephus tells us that the High Priest at this time was Ishmael ben Phiabi.

Vs 3- Some ask why they wanted to ambush Paul? They wanted to get a square meal (see Acts 23:12).

Vs 11 – Paul's appeal to Caesar (provocatio) to avoid going before the Jews, based on Roman citizenship. Paul says that he is willing to die if he has committed anything worthy. In other words, "If I did the crime, I will do the time" (Bock, 702).

Vs 13 – This begins Paul's last major discourse in Acts as well as his longest. Paul appeals to: a) his companions on the way to Damascus; b) Jerusalem Jews; c) Agrippa's knowledge of Judaism; d) the Scriptures; e) a heavenly revelation; f) his being there as evidence of God's Providence.

Vs 13 – Agrippa is Herod Agrippa II, aka Marcus Julius Agrippa, only surviving son of Agrippa I (Ac. 12:23) He ruled the northeastern part of Herod the Great's territory including parts of Galilee and some territory east of the Jordan River. Part Jewish, he appointed the High Priest. He later sided with Rome in the war that led to the destruction of Jerusalem. His sister Drusilla was Felix' wife.

Vs 13 – Bernice was Agrippa's sister. She had been married to Herod of Chalcis and King Polemon of Cilicia. She was living in the palace with Agrippa and rumored to have had an incestuous relationship with him. Later she was said to have been a mistress to Emperors Vespasian and Titus.

Vs 18 – Festus had been presented with charges against Paul he was not anticipating.

Vs 19 – The charges centered in Jewish superstition and religious beliefs, not Roman civil law.

Vs 21 – The term Caesar (Sebastou) was equivalent to "His Majesty;" "worthy of reverence;" or "august". It's use with reference to Roman emperors dates back to Octavian in 27 BC.

Vs 23 – Agrippa asked to hear the case and Festus was glad to oblige.

Perspectives – What may I learn from this chapter?

1. *The charges against Paul were bogus. His calm and reasoned response is worthy of imitation.*
2. *The examples of immorality and ungodly motives of the officials is despicable.*
3. *That Paul appealed to Caesar says that Christians may appeal for protection to civil authorities.*