

Acts 24

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1. Who came from Jerusalem to bring charges against Paul before Governor Felix?

Acts 24: 1

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.

The prosecution team was led by the high priest and a lawyer, Tertullus.

Tertullus was a common Greek name. We do not know if he was a Gentile or a Hellenistic Jew. He was chosen because of his expertise in Roman law and his skill in public speaking.

The Sanhedrin was taking no chances on letting Paul slip through its grasp. It had hired Tertullus to act as its lawyer.

Acts 24: 2-4

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,
3 we acknowledge *this* in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with
4 “But, that I may not weary you any further, I beg you to grant us, by your kindness, a brief hearing.

Tertullus addressed Felix with the type of flowery, flattering and complimentary speech.

Rom. 16:18

18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and **by their smooth and flattering speech** **they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.**

Jude 16

16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their *own* lusts; **they speak** arrogantly, **flattering people** **for the sake of *gaining an advantage.***

2. What were the charges against Paul?

Acts 24: 5-6

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.”

6 “And he even tried to desecrate the temple; and then we arrested him. [We wanted to judge him according to our own Law.]”

The Jews charges against Paul

1. Paul is a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world.
2. Paul is the ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.
3. Paul desecrated the temple.

3. How did the commander Claudius Lysias handle the situation?

Acts 24: 7-9

7 “But Lysias the commander came along, and with much violence took him out of our hands,

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.”

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

Acts 24: 10

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 does not use flattering speech.

4. How did Paul respond to these charges?

Acts 24: 11-13

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

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.

13 “Nor can they prove to you *the charges of which they now accuse me.*

5. What did Paul say concerning the Way? What was Paul's attitude in serving God?

Acts 24: 14-16

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;

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.

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

Paul's Defense

A. In verses 11–16 Paul says, “My religious record is clear—no lawbreaking.”

Paul goes straight to the specific charges and brings up that he has only been in Jerusalem for twelve days. It's difficult to start a riot in less than two weeks!

Believing in a future heavenly judgment, Paul then says he takes pains to have a “clear conscience toward God and men” (v. 16).

Paul not only claims to be innocent, but he also claims to have a faith that is in accord with the fundamental outlook of Judaism—with a belief in God, with the Scriptures, with future judgment, and with the importance of holiness.

6. What was Paul's purpose in coming to Jerusalem?

Acts 24: 17-21

17 “Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings;

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—*

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

20 “Or else let these men themselves tell what misdeed they found when I stood before the Council,

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.**’ ”

Paul's Defense

B. In verses 17–20 Paul says, **“My civil behavior is blameless—no riots.”**

In verse 17 Paul returns to the issue about defiling the temple. He gives his version of the story. He first tells Felix that he brought “charitable gifts” to Jerusalem.

He also adds that he presented “offerings” while at the temple, alluding to the payments Paul made on behalf of four men (Acts 21: 23–26).

Paul mentions “some Jews from Asia.” These accusers were conspicuously absent from the trial, however. While these men should have been the ones to bring the charges against Paul, they had no case!

Paul's Defense

C. In verse 21 he proclaims the resurrection, essentially saying, —Jesus is alive!

The resurrection is indeed a central doctrine to the Christian faith that shows the sacrifice of Christ's death for our sins, the supremacy of his Lordship, and His return as Judge.

The Resurrection

1. Before the Sanhedrin the resurrection theme was set. Paul introduced the idea of a resurrection, the **belief in** and **hope for** **the coming resurrection** (Acts 23: 6).

2. The resurrection was defined as including both the **just** and the **unjust**, **thereby implying a coming judgment.** (Acts 24: 21).

The Resurrection

3. Paul's defense speech before Agrippa II focuses on the real issue – **Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.**

Acts 26: 8

8 “Why is it considered incredible among you *people* if God does raise the dead?”

Acts 26: 23

23 that the Christ was to suffer, *and* that by reason of *His* resurrection from the dead He would be the first to proclaim light both to the *Jewish* people and to the Gentiles.”

7. Why did Felix postpone Paul's trial?

Acts 24: 22-23

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.”**

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.

8. What happened when Paul was speaking about the faith in Jesus Christ before Felix and Drusilla?

Acts 24: 24-25

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.

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.”

A. Faith in Christ focuses on righteousness.

Felix and Drusilla had never observed the “righteousness of God”

B. Faith in Christ focuses on temperance, that is self-control.

Both rulers lacked in this area. They were living lives focused upon indulgence and extravagance, wealth and possessions, materialism and secularism, selfishness and pride, greed and covetousness, lusts and sensuality.

C. Faith in Christ realizes there is a judgment to come.

Felix was an unjust judge; now he was hearing that he must stand before God some day and give an account of his life and deeds on earth.

9. What was Felix expecting from Paul?

Acts 24: 26

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.

Felix's Life is similar to Judas Iscariot's Life

Governor Felix

Felix had Paul imprisoned in his palace for two years.

Felix “used to send for Paul quite often and converse with him” (v. 26).

Felix “was hoping that money would be given him by Paul” (v. 26).

Felix, fearing the Jewish authorities, betrayed Paul by refusing to release him despite his innocence.

Judas Iscariot

Judas lived with the Lord Jesus for more than three years.

Judas had many opportunities to talk with Jesus.

Judas betrayed the Son of God for money.

Judas betrayed the Lord to the Jewish authorities.

10. Why did Felix keep Paul imprisoned after he was succeeded by Porcius Festus?

Acts 24: 27

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.

What lessons can we learn from Felix and Drusilla's lives?

1. Felix and Drusilla aren't the only people to care more about career and money than salvation through Christ.

Jesus recognizes this common but unwise choice when asking, "What does it benefit someone to gain the whole world and yet lose his life?" (Mark 8: 36; 1 Tim. 6: 9–10).

Many people, especially those with influence, power and the focus on material things believe they are self-made men or women in control of their own lives and in need of no one.

2. Felix, the Roman governor of Judea, and his wife Drusilla, had the privilege of spending much time with the apostle Paul. Yet, sadly, they let the opportunity slip away, and there is no evidence to indicate they accepted the Gospel.