

X-cuses of Felix

Acts 24

Ch. 23 ends with Paul being brought before Felix as Paul was 'Waiting in Jerusalem.'

Last 7 chapters of Acts deal with Paul as a prisoner: Jerusalem 22:24; 2 years in Caesarea 22:33-24:17; at least 2 years in Rome 28:16-30

1. Accusations Against Paul – 24:1-9

- 1: 5 days – length of time Paul in Caesarea
- 2,3: ushered before Antonius Felix, Roman Procurator of Judea [Pilate]. Barclay: "nauseating flattery"
- 4: as if compliments would harm governor
- 5: 1] personal – plague, pestilence
2] political – greatest interest to Felix; peace. Sect = Greek = heresy
- 6: 3] pious (religious): desecrate temple; Felix's job was to keep peace
- 6-8: 3 different accounts: Luke's, 21:27-40; commander's letter, 23:25-30; lawyer's prosecution, 24:5-8 – easily confused
- 9: no formal witnesses called against Paul – their plan

2. Paul's Defense – 24:10-23

- 10: no interrogation of Paul but a simple nod
- 11: 12 days ago went to worship on 1st day in Jerusalem / in Caesarea 5 days = week worth of events in Jerusalem
- 12: P not trying to cause a riot
- 13: accusers put on the spot – brought no witnesses just a smooth-tongued orator. Accusation ≠ Evidence
- 14: plead guilty to being a Christian
- 15: cf. John 5:28-29 – HP a Sadducee
- 16: "I do my best" NASB; spiritual exercise is important – 1 Timothy 4:7-8
- 17: defending temple – at least 4 yrs. since in Jerusalem. Alms – to help. Felix wants \$\$\$
- 18,19: Jews from Asia originally charged Paul with defiling the temple – not there to accuse
- 20-21: concl: a direct challenge to Sanhedrin. "Only thing I am guilty of is doing the job I was told to do." No answer; should be set free

- 22: more exact – term of comparison
- 23: situation probably similar to later Roman imprisonment.
- Luke may have started writing Acts here. [?]

3. Non-Conversion of Felix – 24:24-27

- 24: Drusilla: member of infamous Herod family. Father killed James, 12:1-2; great uncle killed John the Baptist, Mt. 14:1-12; great-grand father tried to kill baby Jesus, Mt. 2. Jewess – great-grandmother a famous Jew
- Felix on 3rd wife. He seduced her at age 16 from her husband, now almost 20 “as fair outwardly as she was rotten inwardly.” Chappell
- 25: “stopped preaching, started meddling”
- 3 point sermon: 3 false accusations against Paul; now, 3 painfully true accusations against Felix & Drusilla
- Righteousness – one of P’s fav. Words. 60x
- Self-control – fruit of spirit, Chr. Graces – physically, sexually, & spiritually
- Judgment – not live in moment. Same 17:30-31
- 26: didn’t find time to talk with Paul about salvation only about trying to get money
- 27: days > weeks > months > 1 year > 2 years
- 2nd hearing of v. 22 never happened [?]
- Sec. history: Felix deposed by Nero, summoned to Rome, AD 59. Paul arrested AD57, Felix to Rome 2 years later. AD59. Journey to Rome AD60. Book closes AD62.

Lessons:

1. Always be willing to stand up for the Lord and the things He has said to be right!
2. We cannot live in the moment only – we must be willing to live now to prepare for eternity!
3. Do not put off your obedience to the Gospel. We don’t have it recorded Felix ever obeyed! The Gospel invitation is constantly available!

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 P. O. Box 292 · Woodbury TN 37190
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