

the remotest part of the earth

#28, at Caesarea before Festus – Acts 25:1-27

We have read, that the Lord appeared to Paul as he sat in a barracks back in Jerusalem. The Lord's message was, Acts 23:11, But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also." The problem was, that visit was two years ago! Now he is still imprisoned at Caesarea and to top it off, Felix is gone and there is another governor of the province.

1 Festus then, having arrived in the province, three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. 2 And the chief priests and the leading men of the Jews brought charges against Paul, and they were urging him, 3 requesting a concession against Paul, that he might have him brought to Jerusalem (at the same time, setting an ambush to kill him on the way).

4 Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea and that he himself was about to leave shortly. 5 "Therefore," he said, "let the influential men among you go there with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them prosecute him."

6 After he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.

[1.] Before getting into this lesson let's consider the heading. If you were Paul, even with the Lord's promise, why or why wouldn't you be a little discouraged?

[2.] v:1-3, brought to Jerusalem, This verse gives one reason why the Jews wanted Paul brought to Jerusalem What was it?

[3.] question [2.], Consider another reason for Paul to be in Jerusalem. Approximately 35-yrs previous, the Jewish leaders and an unruly mob seemed to able to "run the table" against the then governor of Judea. Who was the governor and what was the trial?

[4.] v:4-5, What is there about this that makes you feel that Festus had already been "clued in" on the Jews contract regarding Paul?

[5.] v:6, spent not more than eight or ten days among them, How might Festus have passed the time among the Jews?

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7 After Paul arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove,

8 while Paul said in his own defense, " I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar." 9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, " Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges?"

10 But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know. 11 "If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar." 12 Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go."

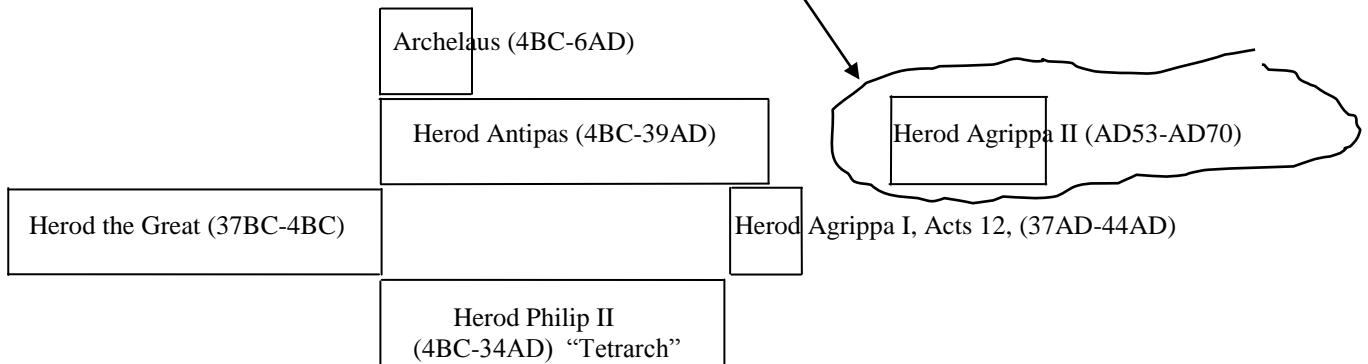
13 Now when several days had elapsed, King Agrippa and Bernice (**Agrippa's sister with whom he had a incestual relationship**) arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus.

[6.] v:7, they could not prove, **So now this should be over, but it isn't! The Jews couldn't prove their charges against Christ either. How then did they finally win?**

[7.] v:8-9, wishing to do the Jews a favor, **In your own words why would Paul know that a Jerusalem trial would not be fair?**

[8.] v:10-12, where I ought to be tried, **What did Paul mean when he stated this?**

King Agrippa, son of Herod of Acts 12.



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Acts 25:13-21

14 While they were spending many days there, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying,
"There is a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix; 15 and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.
16 "I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand over any man before the accused meets his accusers face to face and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges. 17 "So after they had assembled here, I did not delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought before me.
18 "When the accusers stood up, they began bringing charges against him not of such crimes as I was expecting, 19 but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive. 20 " Being at a loss how to investigate such matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these matters. 21 "But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar."

[9.] v:13-21, There are six authorities mentioned in these verses. What are they? OK, I'll answer the hard one for you. Festus; governor of the province, Roman empire. Name and describe the other five.

[10.] Between Festus and Herod Agrippa, who holds more authority and why does he hold more authority?

[11.] v:18, points of disagreement with him about their own religion **Between Festus and the chief priests and the elders of the Jews, who should know more of the old covenant?**

[12.] v:18, At Mt Sinai, what leader had the Lord set apart to handle situations like Festus faced?

[13.] v:13-21 again, As Festus went on about the Paul and the fiasco, why or why wouldn't Herod feel a little "bent out of shape"?

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22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him." 23 So, on the next day when Agrippa came together with Bernice amid great pomp, and entered the auditorium accompanied by the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

24 Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you gentlemen here present with us, you see this man about whom all the people of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, loudly declaring that he ought not to live any longer. 25 "But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and since he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him. 26 " Yet I have nothing definite about him to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him before you all and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the investigation has taken place, I may have something to write.

27 "For it seems absurd to me in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him."

[14.] v:22-23, amid great pomp, OK, right off it seems Agrippa is hauling around a lot of excess baggage. From the list below, select the things he does not need to hear Paul's case.

- a) Bernice
- b) commanders
- c) prominent men
- d) discernment
- e) Festus' permission

[15.] While we're thinking about it, what might be some things we, as Christians, are carrying around while trying to do the work the Lord has for us?

[16.] v:24-25, loudly declaring, What did Festus say, to the group, that proved he knew Paul was being persecuted?

[17.] v:26, nothing definite about him, Houston we have a problem! In admitting his dilemma, what did Festus need?

[18.] v:27, it seems absurd, One doesn't hear it very often but, what truth did the group hear the government speak?

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NOTES