

ACTS CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

Read vs. 1-9

1. *In chapter 23, Gov. Felix told Paul that he wouldn't hear his case until his accusers came to face him in person. Who did Ananias the priest bring with him to support his case against Paul?*

An orator would be referred to as a lawyer today. Tertullus began his speech with flattery for Felix. Felix was governor of Judea from A.D. 52-59 at which time he was demoted. He was a former slave whose position had been bargained for by his brother. He was a ruthless politician and the Jews had very little respect for him. The compliments given to him by Tertullus no doubt stretched the truth.

2. *Like a typical "orator", Tertullus begins his discourse with _____.*
3. *What accusations are brought against Paul? (vs. 5 & 6)*

Tertullus kept his accusations very general. Indeed, Felix doesn't seem to find any of them worth examination. Stirring up riots was the most serious of the charges. The Romans did not tolerate rioting from any group. It was true that Paul had been involved in riots, but he hadn't been the one who started them.

He was also accused of being a ringleader of the Nazarene sect. This was a term used to refer to Christians at that time. Jesus was from the town of Nazareth, so His followers were given this derogatory nickname. The Jewish religion was recognized by Rome, but it was illegal to try to begin any new religions, thus they were a "sect".

Felix wouldn't have had much interest in the temple matters. That was a Jewish religious problem which the Romans tried not to be involved with.

Read vs. 10-21

4. *In verses 11-13, did Paul plead guilty or not guilty?*

Paul gives testimony that he does indeed belong to the Way. This was also referring to believers, probably based on Jesus' talk in John 14:6 where He called Himself the way, the truth and the life. Paul happily admits that he does follow the teaching of Jesus. He also agrees with the law and the prophets and a resurrection of both the good and the bad. All of the Pharisees also believed in these things; there was no law against it.

Paul goes on to say that he was ceremonially clean when they found him in the temple and he certainly wasn't causing any riot. He then points out that some of those men who were involved in the original accusations aren't even here to present their case against him. This was a good point for Paul to make. The Romans did not tolerate no-show accusers.

5. *Paul again insists that the main objection they have against him is his preaching about the _____; (vs. 15)*

Was that true? It all boiled down to the resurrection of Christ. If He was indeed raised from the dead then He must also be the Son of God.

6. *Because of Paul's belief in life after death, he tried to always have _____*

The Bible teaches that all people will stand before God to give an account. For believers, this judgment will determine their rewards. It will not be a question of their salvation. All believers are eternally secure in Christ. See I Cor. 3:11-15. This should be motivation for believers to work for Christ and to keep a clear conscience so they don't have to be ashamed at this judgment.

Unbelievers will also be judged for their works, but it will not determine their eternal destiny, but their degree of punishment. Acts 4:12 tells us that "there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." Jesus is the way. If your name is not written in the book of life because you have accepted God's gift of life through His Son, there will be no hope at the judgment. See Rev. 20:11-15

7. *What does Paul state as his reason for coming to Jerusalem? (vs. 17)*

He mentions that he had been gone from Jerusalem for several years. We know that during this time he was traveling about on his missionary journey. Be reminded that at the end of his travels, he had gone from church to church to collect offerings to take to Jerusalem for the poor.

Read vs. 22-27

8. *From vs. 22 and 23, do you think Felix was more inclined to believe Paul or his accusers?*

He uses the excuse of waiting for Lysias to come before deciding the case, but there is no record that Lysias ever does come. Notice in verse 23 where Felix tells the centurion to give Paul some freedom and to let his friends take care of his needs. He apparently does not find Paul to be a threat, but unfortunately he is not bold enough to dismiss the case. He kept Paul under guard for the rest of his governorship.

9. *Why does Felix ask Paul to come into his presence? (vs. 24)*

Perhaps Drusilla, his wife who was a Jew, wanted to know more about this sect called the Way. Paul was no doubt glad to have a chance to share the gospel with both of them. Felix seems to be under conviction by what Paul says. Notice in verse 25 that Paul talked to him about righteousness, self-control and judgment. Felix was known to be ruthless, corrupt, cruel and immoral.

10. *From verse 25, what was Felix's response to the gospel?*

When we delay in making a decision, we are by default deciding no. This applies to salvation and other things that God convicts us of. There is no record of Felix ever becoming a believer even though he had ample opportunities to hear Paul speak and even to ask him questions.

11. *Even though Felix actually wanted to release Paul, he kept Paul in jail for more than ____
_____ (vs. 26 & 27)*

At the end of the two years, Felix was replaced by Festus because of his poor record of governing. Usually when a change like this occurred, the unconvicted prisoners were released, but Paul was not. God, however, was not unaware of Paul's circumstances. He was still in control. God's timing is often not what we would choose, but God's thinking is not like our thinking either. He has our best interest at heart. Please consider Is. 55:8-11 and Jer. 29:11