

ACTS 25:1-22

Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,² where the chief priests and the Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.³ They requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.⁴ Festus answered, "Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon.⁵ Let some of your leaders come with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, they can press charges against him there."

⁶ After spending eight or ten days with them, Festus went down to Caesarea. The next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him.

⁷ When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them.

⁸ Then Paul made his defense: "I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar."

⁹ Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?"

¹⁰ Paul answered: "I am now standing before Caesar's court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well. ¹¹ If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

¹² After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

¹³ A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus.¹⁴ Since they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. He said: "There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner.¹⁵ When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned.

¹⁶ “I told them that it is not the Roman custom to hand over anyone before they have faced their accusers and have had an opportunity to defend themselves against the charges. ¹⁷ When they came here with me, I did not delay the case, but convened the court the next day and ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸ When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected. ¹⁹ Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. ²⁰ I was at a loss how to investigate such matters; so I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial there on these charges. ²¹ But when Paul made his appeal to be held over for the Emperor’s decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar.”

²² Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear this man myself.”

He replied, “Tomorrow you will hear him.”

NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

| Have you ever been involved in a real-life courtroom drama? Served on jury duty?
 | Had to be on the witness stand? What happened?

| Read Acts 24:27. How long has Paul been in prison awaiting his trial and verdict?
 | Who is the new leader that will be over him?

| Why do the Jewish leaders want Paul to be tried in Jerusalem? Where was the
 | court convened and what was the result? How did Paul escalate his case?

| Paul relied on both God's rescue and wise legal strategy. What does this say about
 | his faith in action? What was significant about Paul's appeal to appear before
 | Caesar in Rome?

| King Agrippa presents Paul with yet one more opportunity to speak about Jesus.
 | How do you see God using Paul's circumstances for Kingdom purposes?

| In what ways can God use your current circumstances to advance the Kingdom?
 | Who has God placed in your life needing to experience the goodness and truth
 | of God?

DAILY READINGS

- 1. LUKE 21:10-36
- 2. PSALM 46:1-11
- 3. PHILIPPIANS 1:12-20
- 4. 2 TIMOTHY 2:1-13
- 5. HEBREWS 12:1-17
- 6. ACTS 25:1-12
- 7. ACTS 25:13-22