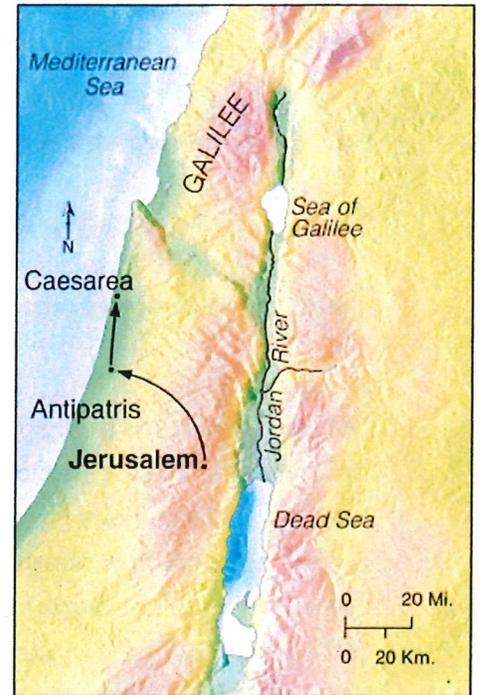


**Acts 24**  
**Paul before Felix at Caesarea**  
**Jay Hohfeler**

**Last Week—Chapter 23:**

- Jerusalem: Paul was imprisoned in a Roman jail for his own protection from Jewish Leaders (Sanhedrin).
- Sanhedrin – 2 Parties
  - Pharisees: Conservative; resurrection, final judgment
  - Sadducees: Liberal; reject: resurrection, angels, miracles
- Jews accused Paul of heresies violating Mosaic Law
- A Jewish plot to kill Paul was discovered.
- Roman Tribune (Lysias) transported Paul by night with 400 armed guards, for his own protection, to Caesarea.
  - Provides letter to Governor, advising a trial
  - Likely no Roman laws broken—just theological
- Caesarea: Felix (Governor of Judea) agrees to hear Paul’s trial.



**Ananias – Chief Priest**

- One of Israel’s:
  - Cruellest
  - Most corrupt
- Pro-Roman policies
- Alienated Jewish people
- Murdered by Jews AD 66

**Antonius Felix – Governor of Judea**

- Former slave
- AD 52 - Promoted to Governor by Emperor Claudius (bribe by powerful twin brother)
- Changed his name to “Felix” (means “Happy”)
- Appeased Jewish community for Rome
- Tenure marked by constant civil unrest
- “Cruel, licentious and base” (Historian, Tacitus)
- Married Drusilla (already-married-daughter of Herod Agrippa I)
- Married 3 times
- AD 58 – Recalled to Rome by Nero (found guilty of cruelty/corruption)
- Succeeded by Festus

**Paul Before Felix at Caesarea**

**24 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before the governor their case against Paul. <sup>2</sup> And when he had been summoned, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying:**

“Since through you we enjoy much peace, and since by your foresight, most excellent Felix, reforms are being made for this nation,<sup>3</sup> in every way and everywhere we accept this with all gratitude.<sup>4</sup> But, to detain you no further, I beg you in your kindness to hear us briefly.<sup>5</sup> For we have found this man a plague, one who stirs up riots among all the Jews throughout the world and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.<sup>6</sup> He even tried to profane the temple, but we seized him.<sup>8</sup> By examining him yourself you will be able to find out from him about everything of which we accuse him.”

<sup>9</sup> The Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that all these things were so.

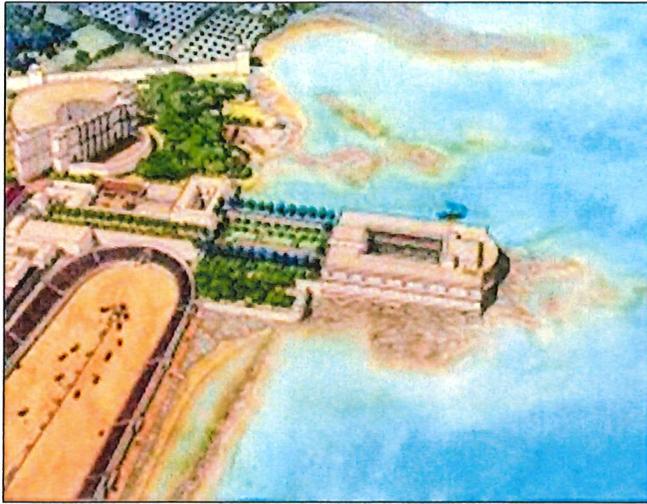
<sup>10</sup> And when the governor had nodded to him to speak, Paul replied:

Defense by Paul:

“Knowing that for many years you have been a judge over this nation, I cheerfully make my defense.<sup>11</sup> You can verify that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem,<sup>12</sup> and they did not find me disputing with anyone or stirring up a crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues or in the city.<sup>13</sup> Neither can they prove to you what they now bring up against me.<sup>14</sup> But this I confess to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets,<sup>15</sup> having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.<sup>16</sup> So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.<sup>17</sup> Now after several years I came to bring alms to my nation and to present offerings.<sup>18</sup> While I was doing this, they found me purified in the temple, without any crowd or tumult. But some Jews from Asia—<sup>19</sup> they ought to be here before you and to make an accusation, should they have anything against me.<sup>20</sup> Or else let these men themselves say what wrongdoing they found when I stood before the council,<sup>21</sup> other than this one thing that I cried out while standing among them: ‘It is with respect to the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial before you this day.’”

### **Paul Kept in Custody**

<sup>22</sup> But Felix, having a rather accurate knowledge of the Way, put them off, saying, “When Lysias the tribune comes down, I will decide your case.”<sup>23</sup> Then he gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody but have some liberty, and that none of his friends should be prevented from attending to his needs.



**Felix's difficult position:**

<p>Already persuaded of Paul's innocence</p> <p>He should release Paul</p>	<p><b>BUT</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not wanting to offend Jewish leadership</li> <li>• Jews don't want him back in Jerusalem</li> <li>• Risks another Jewish outbreak (Rome watching)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disturbing the peace</li> <li>- Tarnishing his rule</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Intrigued by Paul; want him to stay for now</li> <li>• Might squeeze a bribe out of Paul and his friends</li> </ul>
<p>Roman Law perspective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jews' claims baseless</li> <li>- Theological dispute only</li> </ul>	<p><b>BUT</b></p>	<p>Putting Paul in jail would please the Jews</p>
<p>Find Paul guilty</p>	<p><b>BUT</b></p>	<p>Cannot condemn a Roman Citizen w/out cause</p>

Once again, Paul had to grapple with the **hard, but perfect, will of God.**

**We all have some experience with this. How do we process it?**

Satisfaction in life arises from knowing you are and where you belong. Discontented people strive to be somewhere else or someone else.

Joni Eareckson Tada  
*When God Weeps*

## Principle

Knowing WHO God is, is how we endure hardship, loss and strange turns. They are ordained and come from His very hand. His PERFECT hand.

### Drusilla – 2<sup>nd</sup> Wife of Felix

- Jewish Princess
- Beautiful; young; late teens
- Her father: Herod Agrippa I (killed James, brother of John)
- Her Uncle: Herod Antipas (killed John The Baptist)
- Her Great Grandfather: Herod the Great (killed infants in Bethlehem)
- Abandoned husband to marry Felix (violated several Jewish laws)
- AD 79 - She & son died in Pompei, at the eruption of Mount Vesuvius

**<sup>24</sup> After some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup> And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you." <sup>26</sup> At the same time he hoped that money would be given him by Paul. So he sent for him often and conversed with him. <sup>27</sup> When two years had elapsed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. And desiring to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul in prison.**

### **3 topics Paul chose to cover. Why those?**

1. *Righteousness*
2. *Self-Control*
3. *Coming Judgment*

### **Would Paul call this a wasted two years?**

## Principle

It seems inexplicable that God would keep the most mature, Godly and prolific voice of the Gospel confined in House Arrest for two years.

- Sidelined?
- Opportunities wasted?
- Un-productive?

**In God's economy, nothing is wasted.**

God uses time in the “desert” to prepare our heart for more growth. The desert is God’s tool to remove heart issues we usually cannot by ourselves.

<u>GOD’S TOOL</u>		<u>OUR HEART</u>
Obscurity	<i>Removes</i> →	Pride
Time	<i>Removes</i> →	Fear
Solitude	<i>Removes</i> →	Faulty Crutches
Discomfort	<i>Removes</i> →	Resistance

\* Charles Swindoll  
*The Desert: School of Self Discovery*

Something painful happened to me. This is how I met it. I was quiet for a while with the Lord and then I wrote these words for myself:

1. He brought me here. It is by his will I am in this straight place. In that fact, I will rest.
2. He will keep me here in his love, and give me grace to behave as his child. Then, He will make the trial a blessing--teaching me the lessons He intends me to learn, and working in me the grace He means to bestow.
3. In His good time, He can bring me out again. How and when, only He knows.

I am here:

- By God’s appointment
- In His keeping
- Under His training
- For His time

V. Raymond Edman  
*In Quietness and Confidence*