

Paul in Caesarea

ACTS 23:34 *And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia; 35 I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.* Another translation of this portion reads: "Felix, after reading the letter, said, what part of the country do you come from? And finding it was Cilicia he said, I myself will hear thee in full when thy accusers, too, are present. And he gave orders that he should be kept safe under guard at his head quarters in Herod's palace."

It was customary, under Roman law, to find out whose jurisdiction a case would fall. In Paul's current situation, after Felix found out he fell under his territory, Felix was then bound to keep Paul in safe custody until his case, along with the vague charges brought against him, should be heard. Felix himself said, *...I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come....* ACTS 23:35.

Lest we think that the Jews would now forget about Paul since he was no longer in Jerusalem, we need to think again. Remember that there were more than forty men who had taken a vow not to eat or drink anything until they had killed the Apostle Paul. (ACTS 23:12 & 13). By the time it was day they would find out that Paul was no longer in Jerusalem. Quickly the Jews would descend upon Caesarea trying to gain the custody of Paul themselves, which we will read and study about in ACTS 24. Suffice it for now to say that they will not get the custody, and ACTS 24:27 through ACTS 25:3 reveals that the Jews some two years later are still very intent on killing Paul. ACTS 24:27 *But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound. 25:1 Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem. 2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him, 3 And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.* So we see how intent the Jews of Jerusalem were killing the Apostle Paul. But God wasn't any where near finished with Paul yet, so the Lord, who always does exceeding abundantly above all we could ever ask or think, has the governor Felix keep Paul in safe custody in his own head quarters!

In the next three chapters, ACTS 24, 25 & 26, we find Paul in Caesarea, and appearing before some of the important people of his day. The fame of these characters would have long ago have been forgotten had they not been mentioned here in scripture. Governor Felix is one such character. Felix's successor was Festus, another important man of Paul's day with whom Paul had to deal with. King Agrippa is another. Two of Agrippa's sisters are also found mentioned in these chapters also: Drusilla, wife to Felix (ACTS 24:24), and Bernice (ACTS 25:23). Keep in mind as we review some things about these people as we study these chapters, that PROVERBS 21:1 informs us: *The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.* DANIEL 4:17 in part reads: *...that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* DANIEL 4:25 & 32 read about the same, and DANIEL 5:21 in part reads: *...that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.* In other words, these so called important people of Paul's day, no matter how corrupt or vile, were mere putty in the hands of the Lord, and would accomplish His will as they dealt with Paul. Paul himself had already written these words found in ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Later in life, after having dealt with all of these important men of his day, including Caesar himself, the Apostle Paul wrote Timothy: 1 TIMOTHY 2:1 *I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* Note that Paul encouraged us to pray for all men to the end *...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* In other words by praying for all men, we end up being the beneficiaries of our own prayers, because our own heart attitudes become right and correct before the Lord, which is the only way *...that we may*

lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Obviously Paul knew this, and in his remaining time here on earth he learned this lesson really well, for he had to deal with some cruel rulers, as we will now see.

Let's learn some things about governor Felix, whom Paul will have to deal with first. History records that Felix "practiced all kinds of lust and cruelty," and that "he exercised the power of a king with the temper of a slave." Early on in his career Felix was tried for robbery and violence, and enriching himself with bribes. He was acquitted of these charges, thus making himself think he could do what he liked with impunity. Felix crushed the Jewish zealots under the name of "robbers," and crucified hundreds of them who openly resisted Roman rule in Palestine. After having them murdered he would plunder some of their homes, and steal their riches. Felix was also famous for pursuing and driving away that Egyptian which led out into the wilderness the 4000 men who were murderers, with whom Paul was wrongly identified initially by Lysias back in ACTS 21:38. Felix also put down false Messiah's, and squelched riots, and even had assassins murder the Jewish high priest Jonathan, because Jonathan had told Felix that he could rule the Jews better than Felix himself. The wife of Felix was Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I, who was his third wife, and whom he persuaded to leave her husband and marry him. Felix, according to ACTS 24:26, held Paul hostage, hoping a large bribe would be paid by Paul for his release. About two years after Paul was put under the custody of Felix, Porcius Festus was made governor by the Emperor Nero. Felix was then accused in Rome by the Jews of Caesarea, who told Nero of the crimes Felix did unto the Jews while he was governor. It seems that Felix escaped the wrath of Nero because of close friendly connections who put a good word in for him to the Emperor. In the end Felix was noted to be a bad governor, and a bad person; very mercenary, oppressive, and cruel.

Now Paul probably had no idea that Felix was this evil man that history records of him. Paul knew that he was going to Rome, for the Lord had told him this information in ACTS 23:11 where Jesus said: *...Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.* Nor did Paul have any remote thoughts of being held hostage by Felix for more than two years, but this is what ends up happening to him. By now we should realize that Paul's daily focus, his hourly focus, his minute by minute focus was on the Lord. Paul didn't have his mind on any one man, nor did he worry about his next move, for he knew the Lord was in control of his next move. He knew the Lord was in control of his every second, of every minute, of every hour, of every day. As for Felix's treatment of the Apostle Paul, scripture records that Felix was descent to Paul, because, as we noted above, he was hoping a large bribe would be paid by Paul for his release. What Paul offered Felix was the opportunity of a life time; eternal life, bought and paid for by Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. Scripture records that Felix waited for a more convenient season to get saved, (ACTS 24:25), which time never came for him. Paul had already written in 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2 that *....behold, now is the day of salvation,...* which is a quote from ISAIAH 49:8, a fact that Felix ignored.

Having now introduced Paul's current situation as he arrives safely in Caesarea, let's read what scripture tells us happens next. ACTS 24:1 *And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.* Here we find that after Paul had been in Caesarea five days, the high priest Ananias, along with certain elders, probably part of the Jewish Sanhedrin council, came down to Caesarea hoping to gain the custody of Paul, with the intentions of killing him. Additionally these Jewish accusers from Jerusalem hired *...a certain orator named Tertullus,* who, no doubt, was a Roman, fluent in Latin, and expert in flattery, which is defined by Webster's Dictionary as excessive, untrue, or insincere praise. As we read Tertullus eloquent words addressed to governor Felix here shortly, realize that he was truly worth whatever his Jewish sponsors were paying him, for he also was expert in Roman customs, Roman law, and Roman protocol, as was governor Felix. Tertullus flattering tongue toward Felix will be used in the opposite manner against Paul, eloquently falsely accusing Paul of things on several points, which we will cover when we get to them.

Tertullus name means: "triple hardened." Often times in scripture when the word "hardened" is used, it references the heart. We will find when we get to ACTS 24:5 & 6

that Tertullus makes three major false accusations against Paul before Felix, showing, in one respect, his “triple hardened” heart against Paul, against the truth of the gospel, and against the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We read in verse 1 that *...Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.*

In ACTS 24:2-4 we read Tertullus introductory statement to governor Felix, which is loaded with embellishing words directed toward the governor, and his leadership. ACTS 24:2 *And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, 3 We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. 4 Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words.* Another expounded translation reveals more of the tone of Tertullus unmerited praises directed towards this wicked governor, Felix. ACTS 24:2 *When Paul had been called forth, Tertullus began his speech for the prosecution. It is through you that we enjoy perfect tranquillity, and we know that it is due to your foresight that the nation enjoys improved conditions of living. 3 Your excellency Felix, we are humbly grateful, now and always. 4 However, not to take more of your precious time, I simply want to ask you to listen, with your usual courtesy, while we briefly set forth the facts.*

What Tertullus was trying to do here by using these flowery words directed at the governor was to get Felix’s undivided attention before he set forth the charges against Paul. Felix, no doubt, was used to getting such unmerited praises everyday, for that was something that came with the territory of being the governor. Tertullus opening statement to Felix was packed full of as many lies as his accusations against Paul. Recall from above that Felix’s pattern of robbery, lust, violence and assassinations were the “*...very worthy deeds...*” that Tertullus was praising him for. Tertullus must have been used to dishing out this kind of praise to members of the Sanhedrin too, for JOHN 12:43 records this of the Pharisees: *For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* In Felix’s defence, he didn’t let the words of Tertullus persuade him to let Paul go. No doubt he realized that Tertullus was full of hot air.

ACTS 24:5 & 6 contain the three false charges against Paul, as spoken by Tertullus to governor Felix. ACTS 24:5 *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: 6 Who also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.* The three charges against Paul are: (1) accusing Paul of causing dissension and disturbances among all the Jews throughout all the Roman Empire; (2) charged Paul of being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes; and (3) accused Paul of an attempt to profane the Temple in Jerusalem. Let’s examine these false charges one by one a little closer.

By accusing Paul of causing disturbances among the Jews throughout all the Roman Empire, Tertullus was stating that Paul in offence against the Roman Government, a charge that amounted to Majestas, or treason against the Emperor. This is termed “sedition” in verse 5. Sedition is defined as an insurrection, or the stirring up of discontent, resistance, or rebellion against the government in power. We have already noted that this charge is blatantly false, for Paul never did preach anything against the Roman Empire. ACTS 17:1-3 simplifies Paul’s gospel message that he preached in Jewish synagogues like this. ACTS 17:1 *Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: 2 And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ.* We noted above {see page 797 of these notes} that Paul already had penned ROMANS 13:1 *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* Does this sound like stirring up of discontent, resistance, or rebellion against the government in power to you? Obviously this was a false charge: *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world...* ACTS 24:5. The word “pestilent” here is also translated: a perfect pest, a source of mischief, and a veritable plague. Of course none of this sounds

like the Apostle Paul we have been studying about, because these are false charges being presented by Tertullus, who is trying his best to sell these concepts of Paul to Felix.

The second false charge brought against Paul in verse 5 states that he was *...a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes...*. This is an interesting charge made by Tertullus in the way it was stated. Tertullus here used a slang term for "Christian" to describe Paul by stating Paul was a "Nazarene." A "Nazarene" as used here in scorn, identified Paul as being a follower of Jesus of Nazareth.

The term "Nazarene" is defined in MATTHEW 2:23, which reads: *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.* We need a little help here in determining that *...which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene...* because there isn't a specific Old Testament scripture that translates it this way into English. However when we understand the meaning of the word "Nazareth," and the root word from which it came, this scripture makes sense. "Nazareth" come from the Hebrew word "Netser" (number 5342 in the Strongs Hebrew Concordance) meaning: a shoot; a descendant; thus a branch, or the Branch. There are several Old Testament scriptures that render the meaning intended in MATTHEW 2:23. For example ISAIAH 11:1 reads: *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.* JEREMIAH 33:15 reads: *In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.* JEREMIAH 23:5 also references Jesus, and states: *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.* ZECHARIAH 3:8 announces the coming Redeemer like this: *...for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.* And ZECHARIAH 6:12 repeats this Messianic title for Jesus, and reads: *Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.* Interesting this word "Netser," out of which we get "Nazareth," also carries with it the sense of greenness as a striking color. Of course green also speaks of resurrection, and as such points to our resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Having now read the above scriptures, MATTHEW 2:23 has a deeper meaning: *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene...* The BRANCH of righteousness out of the stem of Jesse.

Back to the Apostle Paul. Tertullus accused Paul of being *...a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes...* meaning: Paul was a chief, or a captain; one who stands first in an army; a commander, the principle person in charge of extending the sect of the Nazarenes, which charge is true, but here was used in a derogatory manner. By stating that Paul was *...a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes...* Tertullus was conjuring up an image of Paul that both unbelieving Jews, and unbelieving Romans would perceive as being despicable. To the unbelieving Jews the sect of the Nazarenes was a heresy, meaning of a belief opposed to the religious orthodox doctrines of the Jews. Paul himself will address this charge starting in ACTS 24:14 & 15 when he states: *But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: 15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.* Tertullus could have told Felix that Paul was a Christian, but that wouldn't have stirred up as much emotion as he wanted against Paul in Felix's mind, so Tertullus stated that Paul was *...a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.*

The third charge Tertullus so eloquently brought against Paul in the presence of governor Felix was that Paul *...also hath gone about to profane the temple: whom we took, and would have judged according to our law...* {ACTS 24:6}. This was a serious charge, but without merit. This charge stems from the events Luke recorded for us back in ACTS 21:28 & 29, which says: *This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. 29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)* We noted before that Paul never brought any Gentiles into the Jewish temple

here at Jerusalem, they had only “supposed” that he did. We mentioned before how much trouble one can get into by supposing something, or imagining something. Webster defines supposing something, as imagining something. Look up the words “imagination,” or “imagination,” in scripture, and find the connection to an evil heart. In GENESIS 6:5 we find the first use of the word “imagination” in scripture, and it sets the tone for how “imagination” is thought of by God. GENESIS 6:5 *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* After the judgment of the flood in GENESIS 7 we read these words of the Lord in GENESIS 8:21 *And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.* We read this in PROVERBS 6:16-19: *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.* Paul himself wrote this of ungodly man, and his vain imaginations in ROMANS 1:21 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

We saw back in ACTS 21 how the Apostle Paul nearly got killed by the Jews in Jerusalem when they imagined, supposed, he had brought his Greek traveling companion, Trophimus, into the temple. But Paul had not done any such thing, nor could the Jews prove that he did. Yet Paul was wrongfully being accused of doing this, which Tertullus told Felix that Paul *...hath gone about to profane the temple.* Now if I was here to use a bunch of profanity, then we all would realize one of the meanings of profane. Profane means: to cross the threshold; to pollute; to show disrespect for sacred things; irreverence. If the Apostle Paul had brought a Gentile into the temple, he would have been guilty of an offence against Jewish law, which, in turn, would have been an offence against Roman law, for the Roman law declared that the Jews were to be protected in the exercise of their worship. It was the intention of Tertullus here to persuade Felix to give up custody of the Apostle Paul to the Jewish courts, which would have given the forty plus men who had vowed to kill Paul their opportunity to do so. As mercenary as Felix was, it seems to me that if Tertullus had offered him a proper bribe, Felix would have released Paul into Jewish custody. However scripture tells us that Felix *...hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him:...* (ACTS 24:26). Apparently Felix felt that Paul was worth more to him if he remained in his custody.

Tertullus continues his pleading for the Jewish cause, trying to convince Felix to give Paul back into their custody, noting in verses 6-8 how the Roman chief captain, Claudius Lysias had interfered with their justice. ACTS 24:6 *....whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. 7 But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, 8 Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.*

In verse 6 above we see Tertullus trying to explain to governor Felix what a wonderful, and just, and holy group of people these Jerusalem Jews were, by stating this about Paul: *....whom we took, and would have judged according to our law.* This is a lie, for initially when the Jews took Paul in ACTS 21:27-31 they “went about to kill him,” (ACTS 21:31), without any trial, without any righteous judgment according to Jewish law. If Tertullus was referencing in verse 6 the day Paul was brought before the Jewish Sanhedrin council when he said *....whom we took, and would have judged according to our law...* then this too is a lie, for the Jews never took Paul, but rather Lysias brought Paul down, “and set him before them,” according to ACTS 22:30. The end result of that meeting ended with Paul nearly being pulled in pieces of the Jews in this council. Was that what Tertullus meant when he said: *....whom we took, and would have judged according to our law... ?* Tertullus makes is sound like mean old *...chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands...* (verse 7) before Paul had a chance to be rightfully judged according to Jewish law.

We noted a couple of lies in Claudius Lysias letter to governor Felix previously: how that he understood Paul was a Roman citizen, which he didn't learn until a later time, and how he had commanded the Jewish accusers of Paul to present their case before governor Felix, another thing that hadn't taken place until well after this letter was written. However in the portions of verse s 6-8 which we just read, Tertullus makes a couple of statements that makes it seem everything Claudius Lysias had written was indeed true.

Verse 7 makes it seem that Lysias had used his resources to rescue a Roman citizen, which was a true statement regarding Paul's second rescue. ACTS 21:38 makes it known that Claudius Lysias initially thought Paul was that much wanted criminal, *...that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers...*. Chief captain Lysias wanted to be the one given credit for capturing this famous criminal, not the Jews, so Tertullus rightfully notes that "great violence" was used in this so called rescue of Paul. Here Claudius Lysias had really captured Paul with "great violence" from the Jews, rather than rescue him. The violence of this "rescue" of Paul was mentioned in ACTS 21:31-35. On the next day ACTS 23:1-10 tells of how Claudius Lysias brought Paul before the Jewish Sanhedrin council, and how Paul once again had to be rescued by force by the Roman soldiers because the members of the council were about to tear Paul in pieces. However by this time Lysias did indeed know Paul was a Roman citizen.

In verse 8 Tertullus verifies that the Jewish accusers of Paul were actually told by Claudius Lysias to come to governor Felix, for that is why they were now in Caesarea accusing Paul before the governor. ACTS 24:8 *Commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.* However Tertullus was ignorant of the letter chief captain Claudius Lysias had written governor Felix, and what information it contained. Lysias had already wrote to governor Felix his opinion of Paul stating in ACTS 23:29 *Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds.* 30 *And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him.* Note here that it was Claudius Lysias opinion that nothing was laid to the charge of Paul worthy of death, or even bonds, yet the Jews still laid in wait of Paul with the implied understanding being of him being murdered. So we see here that governor Felix already knew the motive of the Jews of Jerusalem here was to obtain the release of Paul for the sole purpose of killing him. Tertullus here in verse 8 also encourages governor Felix himself to examine Paul, and determine for himself that the things which he had just said of Paul were indeed true, but Felix knew that Tertullus had in the least exaggerated things in his condemning Paul.

To make it seem more likely that the words Tertullus had just spoken against Paul were true, Tertullus, it seems, encourages the Jews with him to verify what he has just said was true, so we read in ACTS 24:9 *And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.* Verse 9 is the same as saying: You tell a lie, and I'll swear to it, then they will think that what you said is true. It seems that all the Jews who came down from Jerusalem agreed that what Tertullus had stated of Paul was true.

Now governor Felix has two perspective views of Paul, one from Claudius Lysias, and one from the Jews of Jerusalem as eloquently presented by the orator Tertullus. Felix had already told Paul in ACTS 23:35 that he would hear what Paul had to say when his accusers were come, and now it was Paul's turn to answer these false charges brought against him. Governor Felix is now a most interested listener as to what Paul has to say thanks in part to Tertullus' introduction of him. ACTS 24:10-21 records Paul's words before Felix, and as we read this portion, note that the Apostle Paul was honest, and forth-right as he spoke, and defended himself before the governor. Of course we should expect nothing less of our Apostle Paul, for he by this time in his life has already written in ROMANS 12:17 *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.* Later he would write to the Philippians on how to reason things in your mind, and what kind of things we are to focus upon, stating in PHILIPPIANS 4:8 *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely,*

whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Certainly the Apostle Paul lived Christian his life in all honesty as an example, in part, as what all potential full overcomers must do. Paul, like Jesus, lived his Christian life in truth, with his focus being one the One who is full of grace and truth, that being Jesus Christ. Thus Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* Later Paul would write Timothy in 1 TIMOTHY 4:12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.* So as we get to Paul's defence speech before governor Felix, don't expect to read anything less than the truth. And when Paul addresses the governor, note his non offending tone, and that he uses no flattery as Tertullus before him did, but simply expresses his heart felt satisfaction in being able to present his case before a man who Paul knew had long experience in hearing Jewish matters; a man whom Paul felt also had a better understanding of Jewish laws, and Jewish customs than many he could have been brought before; and a man who had the power to set him free.

Here is what Paul said to the governor Felix in the presence of his accusers. ACTS 24:10 *Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: 11 Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. 12 And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: 13 Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. 14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: 15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. 17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings. 18 Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult. 19 Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me. 20 Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, 21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.*

Let's examine Paul's words here a little closer. Paul first mentions to governor Felix in verse 10 *...Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation,...* History records that Felix had been governor for about six years by the time Paul addresses him here. Paul felt that this experience as a governor, and a magistrate, which was one part of Felix's office, and a ruler over the Jews, would mean that Felix was well qualified to understand the merits of Paul's case. Apparently Paul was unaware of the corruption that surrounded Felix that we went over earlier. But Paul's focus was never on any man, nor what man could do, or had done. Paul had already written in 1 CORINTHIANS 3:21 *Therefore let no man glory in men.* Paul's focus was upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and Paul knew the Lord had given him this opportunity to appear before governor Felix, and Paul relied upon the Holy Ghost to give him the words he needed to speak.

Paul continues in his addressing Felix in verse 10 by stating *...I do the more cheerfully answer for myself.* Paul was saying to Felix here that since he was familiar with the customs, and habits of the Jews, he was happy to be given the opportunity to answer the charges brought by Tertullus for himself. Recall back in ACTS 18 when Paul was in Corinth, that such an opportunity for Paul to defend himself was not given by the deputy of the country, Gallio. ACTS 18:12 *And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia, the Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul, and brought him to the judgment seat, 13 Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. 14 And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, C ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: 15 But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters. 16 And he drave them from the judgment seat.* Now here before governor Felix we find that Paul was pleased to be before one who was familiar with

words and names, and Jewish law, who could judge such matters, for in his heart Paul knew that he was to go to Rome, for again the Lord had told him this in ACTS 23:11 less than a week before. ACTS 23:11 *And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.* So in his thinking Paul probably reasoned that the sooner he could get this matter behind him, the sooner he would be able to travel to Rome.

In ACTS 24:11 Paul informs governor Felix *...that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.* These twelve days can be accounted for in scripture as follows. Day one referenced here is when Paul arrives in Jerusalem noted in ACTS 21:17 *And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.* Day two is found in ACTS 21:18 *And the day following Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present.* Day three is specifically noted in ACTS 21:26 *Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple,...* . All of the events from ACTS 21:26 to ACTS 22:29 happen on this same day three since Paul had arrived in Jerusalem. Day four starts in ACTS 22:30, which reads: *On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them.* Day four ends in ACTS 23:10, and day five, night five, is covered in ACTS 23:11 noted above: *And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.* ACTS 23:12 records day six since Paul came to Jerusalem: *And when it was day,...* . On night six Paul was transported from Jerusalem to Antipatris, a place of safety about half way back to Caesarea recorded in ACTS 23: 31. Day seven is recorded for us in ACTS 23:32 *On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him,...* . On this day seven Paul is brought to Caesarea, where the following events occur: ACTS 23:33 *Who, when they came to Caesarea, and delivered the epistle to the governor, presented Paul also before him.* 34 *And when the governor had read the letter, he asked of what province he was. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia;* 35 *I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall.* Paul was kept here five days, as noted in ACTS 24:1 *And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul.* Seven days plus the five days of ACTS 24:1 equals twelve days, and brings us back to this statement of ACTS 24:11 *...there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.*

I don't know if Felix caught it or not, but Paul stated here in verse 11 the primary reason that he went up to Jerusalem in the first place was *...for to worship.* Paul didn't go up to Jerusalem to profane the temple; to stir up a rebellion amongst the Christians; or to cause any problems in Jerusalem of any kind. Paul said that he *...went up to Jerusalem for to worship.*

Paul then quickly begins to refute the charges brought against him by Tertullus. In ACTS 24:5 Tertullus stated: *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world,...* . Sedition, recall, means an insurrection, or the stirring up of discontent, resistance, or rebellion against the government in power. Paul answers these charges in verses 12 & 13 stating: ACTS 24:12 *And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city:* 13 *Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me.* In other words Paul emphasized that he didn't cause disturbances in the temple, outside the temple, in synagogues, outside the synagogues, or in the city, so he couldn't have been guilty of treason against the Emperor.

In verse 5 Tertullus also accused Paul of being *...a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes,...* which we noted previously was a heresy, meaning of a belief opposed to the religious orthodox doctrines of the Jews. Paul answers this charge in verse 14, stating: *But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.* Paul knew that even the Sadducees, who hired Tertullus to accuse him, didn't even believe *...all things which are written in the law and in the prophets.* Furthermore Paul continues to disprove Tertullus accusation of him being *...a ringleader of the sect of the*

Nazarenes,... by stating in verses 15 & 16: *And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. 16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.* Here Paul was directing his thinking toward the Pharisees, who ...also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. Recall that this statement was raised before the Jewish Sanhedrin council in ACTS 23:6, where Paul ...cried out in the council, *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.* Recall also that this was the last words Paul was allow to utter before the council as a great dissension arose between the Pharisees, and the Sadducees, and the scribes, where upon Claudius Lysias felt it necessary to rescue Paul from their midst. And then in verse 16 Paul affirms that he had never swerved from his belief in the law and the prophets, having ...always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. This essentially is the same statement Paul made before the Jewish Sanhedrin council in ACTS 23:1, where we read: *And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.* The result of that statement before the council was that Paul was then struck on the mouth. Here before Felix, Paul was allowed to continue speaking, but no doubt, his accusers had a hard time keeping their silence.

In ACTS 24:6 Tertullus stated that Paul had ...gone about to profane the temple. This was a totally false charge, for Paul never did show disrespect unto the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. So Paul answers this charge before Felix like this in ACTS 24:18 *Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult.* Paul was saying to Felix, "if the Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, then it would have been impossible for me to profane the temple, wouldn't it? Nor was their a multitude with me, only four men. And none of us were making any noise, or riot, or were they there to accomplish any seditious purpose." Furthermore Paul goes on to state in verse 19 this of these men from Asia: *Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.* Of course these ...certain Jews from Asia... were the ones noted in ACTS 21:27-29, where we read: *And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, 28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. 29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)* True was Paul's statement of these men in ACTS 24:19 *Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.* After all Paul had spent the better part of three years at Ephesus, and because of Paul's gospel we read in ACTS 19:20 *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

We have commented many times in this study about what Paul said in verse 17, which was: *Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.* Felix seem to latch on to this statement, as we have previous noted, for later in ACTS 24:26 Felix held the Apostle Paul rather than release him unto the Jews because ...*He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him...*

The main reason Paul brought alms and offerings to Jerusalem in the first place was because of a request made by Peter, James, and John in GALATIANS 2:10, when Paul and Barnabas and Titus were in Jerusalem in ACTS 15 time frame. Paul wrote their request in GALATIANS 2:10 *Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.* While on his second and third missionary journeys, Paul took collections for the poor Saints in Jerusalem. His efforts along this line during his third missionary journey are recorded in his epistles as follows. In ROMANS 15:25 & 26 Paul writes: *But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. 26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.* 2 CORINTHIANS 8 and 9 further explain how this collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem took place, which you can read and study on your own. 1 CORINTHIANS 16:1-3 tells us: *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no*

gatherings when I come. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

After Paul finishes telling Felix about the Ephesian Jews who initially charged Paul with being in violation of Jewish law and customs, and noting how they were now not present, though they should have been if they had such serious objections to Paul conduct, Paul then points to his accusers, who were present, and states: ACTS 24:20 *Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, 21 Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.* In verse 20 Paul asks those present to point out the evil he had done that they had witnessed when he was before them when he was before the Jewish Sanhedrin council. All of the other charges were just "here say," and not true, and Paul had already addressed these false accusations in the previous verses, which we also noted above. The one thing that Paul said that caused an uproar in the council meeting of ACTS 23:1-10 was his statement referenced here in verse 21: *...I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.* This is the second time that Paul makes reference unto the resurrection of the dead in his defense speech before Felix, for Paul noted in verse 15 how he himself did *...have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.* Here we get a hint of how Paul was always, and ever...*Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works....* (TITUS 2:13 & 14).

The Doctrine of Resurrection

Now Paul would be the last person in the world you would want to argue with about the resurrection of the dead. For starters, Paul has many times already seen the resurrected Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ himself. The first time was on the road to Damascus, which is recorded for us three times in scripture, in ACTS 9, ACTS 22, and ACTS 26. Paul, a Pharisee, before he was even saved believed in the resurrection. ACTS 23:8 verifies the belief of the Pharisee's, stating: *For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.* No doubt it was basically the Sadducees who hired Tertullus to present their case before governor Felix, but as noted above, and as we have also previously noted, *...the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection,...* . It was the Sadducees of the Jewish Sanhedrin council who came against Peter and John in ACTS 4:2, and were...*grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.* Paul not only believed in the resurrection from the dead, but himself had by now personally witnessed resurrected Jesus Christ many times more after his first encounter with Him on the road to Damascus.

Paul recalls this first appearance by the Lord Jesus Christ unto him this way in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3 *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: 5 And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: 6 After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. 7 After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. 8 And last of all he was seen of me also, (first on the road to Damascus) as of one born out of due time. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*

This is a remarkable portion of scripture in that it gives some added detail that we haven't previously seen in scripture concerning Jesus resurrection from the dead. GALATIANS 1:18 & 19 states one possibility where Paul could have obtained this information, noting that he had spent fifteen days with Peter upon his return to Jerusalem three years after getting saved on the road to Damascus, and having also interviewed James the Lord's brother. Certainly Peter and James could have related unto Paul how many times they too had seen the Lord Jesus Christ after his resurrection,