

Festus informs King Agrippa about Paul

ACTS 25:13 *And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus.* Let's learn some things about king Agrippa, and his sister Bernice, for the rest of ACTS 25, and all of ACTS 26 has to do with Paul, Festus, and king Agrippa.

This Agrippa, is known also in history as king Agrippa II, the great-grandson of Herod the Great. Herod the Great is the king who in MATTHEW 2 attempted to kill the young child Jesus when He was two, and in the process caused all the children in Judaea that were two years old and younger to be killed. {Study MATTHEW 2 for yourself and see that Jesus wasn't an infant in a manger when the wise men came to Herod the king inquiring of him who was born King of the Jews.}

After the death of Herod the Great his kingdom was divided by the Romans, and none of them was called King of the Jews. One of his sons, Herod Archelaus ruled in Judaea after his father Herod the Great was dead. Herod Archelaus ruled so badly that after ten years the Romans removed him and replaced him with a Roman.

Herod the Great had two more sons who also ruled. One was named Herod Antipas, called in scripture, Herod the Tetrarch, who had John the Baptist killed. The other son of Herod the Great was Herod Philip who ruled Iturea, Gaulantis, and Trachonitis. Herod Philip married his divorced cousin Herodias, who then divorced him to marry Herod the Tetrarch. These two sons of Herod the Great, Herod the Tetrarch, and Herod Philip are remembered because of their mention in scripture, which is recorded like this in MATTHEW 14. MATTHEW 14:1 *At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,* 2 *And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.* 3 *For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.* 4 *For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.* 5 *And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.* 6 *But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.* 7 *Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.* 8 *And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.* 9 *And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.* 10 *And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.*

This wasn't the last mention of Herod the Tetrarch in scripture either. The following account from LUKE 13 references Herod the Tetrarch. LUKE 13:31 *The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.* 32 *And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.* 33 *Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.* Jesus here was simply stating to the unbelieving Pharisees that He wasn't in hiding; He was doing all of His miracles in the open; He was to accomplish His work in the prophetic two remaining days, for in the third day He would be perfected, or raised from the dead.

Again in LUKE 23 we read another account of Herod the Tetrarch, and at this time Jesus was brought before him. LUKE 23:1 *And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.* 2 *And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King.* 3 *And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.* 4 *Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.* 5 *And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.* 6 *When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilaean.* 7 *And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.* 8 *And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.* 9 *Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.* 10 *And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.* 11 *And Herod with his men of war set him at nought,*

and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate. 12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves. 13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, 14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him: 15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.

The last reference to Herod the Tetrarch in scripture is found in ACTS 4 when Peter and John were released by the chief priests, and went unto their own company where the following event took place. ACTS 4:23 And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. 24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? 26 The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 27 For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, 28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. 29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, 30 By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

King Herod Agrippa I was the grandson of Herod the Great, and nephew of Herod Philip, and Herod the tetrarch, whom we just read about. King Herod Agrippa I scriptural account occurs in ACTS 12, where he is called simply Herod. Herod Agrippa I killed James the brother of John with the sword, and intended to kill Peter after Easter (ACTS 12:4). A couple of years later the angel of Lord smote Herod Agrippa I, as noted in ACTS 12:23 *And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.* King Herod Agrippa I had five children in all, and three of his children are mentioned in scripture: (1) Agrippa II of whom we are studying about in ACTS 25 & 26; (2) Drusilla a beautiful woman who became the wife of governor Felix as we have noted before, and (3) Bernice, who was a year younger than Agrippa II. All of these children of Agrippa I were Jewish, as is again noted in ACTS 24:24 where we find Drusilla, was a Jewess. Their Jewish mother was named Cypros.

Agrippa II sister Bernice had quite a perverted history herself. First she had been married to a man named Marcus, a nephew of the philosopher Philo of Alexandria, who died a short time later, then she was given in marriage by her father Herod Agrippa I to her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis. Seven years, and two children later, he too died, and that is when she first moved in with her brother, now king Agrippa II, where she had a brother/sister/husband/wife relationship, which was the case when Paul was brought before them in ACTS 25 and 26, though Luke makes no mention of all of this. Later Bernice was briefly married to king Ptolemy of Sicily, but shortly there after she left him for her brother king Agrippa II again. Next Bernice became the mistress of Vespasian, Emperor of the Roman Empire, and then she became the mistress of his son, Titus, who, when he became Emperor himself, cast her off.

King Agrippa II, is known to us in ACTS 25 and 26 as king Agrippa, where we find him mentioned twelve times. He was the seventh, and last king of the family of the Herod's, all known for being king of the Jews. One of the meanings of his name Agrippa is "horse-hunter." The horse was a symbol of power in ancient times, and perhaps this meaning of Agrippa's name indicates that Agrippa II hunted after power, which he did like his sister Bernice. Ironically the Apostle Paul was a Holy Ghost inspired race course runner, running to obtain the highest prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, {study 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24-26 and PHILIPPIANS 3:14}, and as a race course running Bridal Saint, Paul could be compared (figuratively speaking) with the finest race horses any "horse-hunter" could ever find. Agrippa came oh so close to believing the message he heard from the horses mouth (so to speak) when he stated to Paul in ACTS 26:28

...Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. What a tragedy to neglect so great salvation. Paul later wrote in HEBREWS 2:3 *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?* Perhaps king Agrippa was part of the inspiration for Paul writing this scripture.

Back to more history of king Agrippa II. He was born in 27 A.D. so he would have been thirty-three when Paul was brought before him here in ACTS 25 and 26. Agrippa II was brought up in Rome in the court of Emperor Claudius, and is noted to be a favorite of that Emperor. He was considered too young to succeed his father Herod Agrippa I when the angel of the Lord smote him dead in ACTS 12:23, which would have been in 44 A.D. In 48 A.D. after the death of his uncle Herod of Chalcis, Agrippa II was granted from Emperor Claudius the petty kingdom of Chalcis, located northeast of Judaea. (Recall that Bernice, Agrippa II younger sister was married to this uncle Herod of Chalcis when he died). Four years later Emperor Claudius took from him Chalcis and gave Agrippa instead a larger domain, of Batanaea, Trachonitis, and Gaulanitis. In the next couple of years, Nero, after becoming Emperor, added to Agrippa's kingdom Tiberias and Taricheae and the Peraean city of Julias, along with fourteen neighboring villages. Agrippa II was given supreme power by the Emperor in Jewish religious life, along with the right of appointing the Jewish high priests, together with the care and oversight of the temple at Jerusalem, including custodian-ship of the temple treasure, and the high priest's vestments. The Romans considered Agrippa an authority on Jewish affairs, Jewish scriptures, and Jewish conflicts, which is why he was given as much power as he was in governing Jewish matters. It is noted that in his private life he was very extravagant, very wasteful, and was completely lacking in self-restraint. He had no children. When the troubles began in Judaea that ended in the destruction of Jerusalem, Agrippa II did all that he could do to preserve peace and order, but when that failed he joined his troops with those of the Romans, and assisted them with the destruction of Jerusalem. It is noted that he celebrated Rome's victory over the Jewish people. Accordingly, he was never found to be popular with his Jewish subjects. After the fall of Jerusalem he went to Rome with his sister Bernice, where he was vested with praetorian rank and kept the kingdom entire until his death, which occurred about 100 A.D. making him about seventy-three years old when he died, having ruled as the last Herod the king for about fifty-two years.

Now, of course, the Apostle Paul would of had very little knowledge of king Agrippa and his sister Bernice when he was brought before them in the following days, nor would he know what we have now learned of Agrippa and Bernice. And it wouldn't have made any difference to the Apostle Paul either, for he himself was no respecter of persons. To Paul, Agrippa and Bernice were just a couple of more needy sinners, who needed to hear about God's saving grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Paul has already written in GALATIANS 2:6 *But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:) for they who seemed to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me:...* . King Agrippa wasn't going to impress Paul, for whatsoever he was, or thought he was made no difference to Paul. Again in 1 CORINTHIANS 1 Paul has already penned these words: 17 *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. 18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. 20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 22 For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: 23 But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many*

mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. So we see that the Apostle Paul always maintained a clear focus upon the Lord, and his own calling as an Apostle of Jesus Christ. It didn't matter to Paul if he preached to the lowly beggar, or the king who was thought of so highly, Paul knew that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, having written this fact already in ROMANS 3:23. At least the lowly beggar knew he was needy, where the king held in high esteem failed to see his need. Thus the statement Paul wrote of in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:26 above: *For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.*

And remember another thing that Paul knew, and probably kept in the back of his mind, which were the words of Ananias of Damascus spoken unto Paul of himself after Ananias expounded the saying of the Lord Jesus found in ACTS 9:15 & 16 -- *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* By this point in time of his life of ACTS 25 we have no record of the Apostle Paul preaching unto any king. Yes, he has preached unto thousands of Gentiles, and thousands of Jews, but not to any kings as far as we are told in scripture. That is until king Agrippa shows up here in Caesarea. And it will be a most remarkable defence/sermon that Paul gets to preach to king Agrippa, as we will see in ACTS 26 when we get there. The events leading up to Paul's preaching unto king Agrippa begins with Agrippa and Bernice arriving in Caesarea in ACTS 25:13.

ACTS 25:13 *And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus.* This simply shows that king Agrippa, and Bernice had come to Caesarea to pay their respects to the new governor Festus, and, no doubt, go over some Roman government business. The one piece of business we find in scripture that they discuss concerns the Apostle Paul, the Apostle unto the Gentiles, and what to do with him. As for the Apostle Paul, he too was on a business trip under the Lord's direction, and had wrote in ROMANS 12 of how the Christian was to conduct himself in everyday life. ROMANS 12:10 *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; 11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; 12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;...* . And in essence this is how we find Paul at this point in his life, *...patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.* Again Paul's focus was always upon Jesus, and winning Him. PHILIPPIANS 3:8 *Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,...* .

ACTS 25:14-22 tells of Festus explaining to king Agrippa after many days of discussion the unfinished business he had concerning Paul. ACTS 25:14 *And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: 15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him. 16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. 17 Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. 18 Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: 19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. 20 And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. 21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be*

kept till I might send him to Caesar. 22 Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

As we examine these verses a little closer for a few moments, note the relative unimportance of the Apostle Paul to governor Festus, and also to the former governor Felix before him. Our focus of attention in this study is on the life of the Apostle Paul, and what the Lord brought him to, and took him through to be the Apostle unto the Gentiles that we are to follow during this present church age. We are to follow Paul as he followed Christ. In 1 CORINTHIANS 11:1 Paul wrote: *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.* The governors in Paul's life here in ACTS 24, 25 & 26 were not followers of the Apostle Paul as we are, thus Paul to them was just another prisoner, whose business they would get to eventually. Governor Felix was not a follower of the Apostle Paul, and only remembered him, and visited with Paul in the false hope that money should have been given him of the Apostle Paul, (ACTS 24:26). When governor Festus came into the governors office to replace Felix, the former governor apparently never mentioned a word concerning prisoner Paul to governor Festus. ACTS 25:14 & 15 bears this out: *And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix: 15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.* Luke here points out how it was the enemies of the Apostle Paul who informed governor Festus about Paul.

As for Paul he never considered the Jews of Jerusalem, or the chief priests, or the Sanhedrin his enemies. Jesus Himself said in MATTHEW 5:44 *But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;...* and we know the Apostle Paul constantly did just that. How do we know that Paul prayed for his fellow Jews? Because of what he already wrote in ROMANS 10:1 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* Remember the Apostle Paul before he was saved was very closely associated with this very same Jewish Sanhedrin council, and chief priests, for we read in ACTS 9:1 & 2 his actions: *And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.* Thus we see when Paul, before he got saved, was out persecuting Christians, the leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem liked him, and approved of his actions, but after Paul himself got saved, and became one of the Christians himself, he became their enemy, all because of Christ. But Paul always had his fellow Jews on his mind. Every town, city or village he went to, he always first tried to preach unto the Jews in that community, even though the Lord had sent him to preach unto the Gentiles. Yet in the process of preaching unto the Jews, Paul was able to reach untold thousands of Gentiles, and get them, to turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. {See ACTS 26:18.} Paul by this time in his life has already written the following scriptures found in 1 CORINTHIANS concerning his preaching. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:23 *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;... .* 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19 *For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. 23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.* The unbelieving Jews didn't like the Apostle Paul every where he went, and we read several accounts during Paul's missionary journeys how they kicked him out of their towns, and persecuted him all along the way. 2 CORINTHIANS 11:24 reads: *Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.* The very next verse tells that *...once was I stoned...* and ACTS 14:19 informs us that the Jews were behind that stoning. Never the less Paul continued to pray for his fellow Jews, praying that they might get saved. In the next few short years left in Paul's life, he will anonymously write one last masterpiece

letter addressed to the Jews, called HEBREWS, which is a defining epistle contrasting in detail the good things of Judaism, and the better things of Christ. So we see once again how that Paul's burning heart's desire, and constant prayer to God for Israel was that they might be saved. No doubt Paul made this prayer request every day. It was the Jewish leadership of Jerusalem, Paul's enemies, whom Paul was daily praying for, that got governor Festus attention concerning Paul, that we read about above in ACTS 25:15 that were *...desiring to have judgment against him.*

Once Festus was made aware of Paul by the Jews of Jerusalem, and pestered about him while Festus visited Jerusalem, Festus told them: *It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him...* ACTS 25:16. And as we noticed earlier, Festus did hear Paul's defence before Festus' court, which information Festus declared unto king Agrippa like this in ACTS 25:17 *Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. 18 Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: 19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. 20 And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. 21 But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar.*

Verses 18 through 20 are most interesting, giving us great insight into Festus perception on these proceeding between the accusing Jews of Jerusalem, and the Apostle Paul. Simply put, governor Festus was hearing things he was unfamiliar with, leaving him at a loss as to what to do next. James Moffatt translation of the Bible tells us as much, giving us this account starting in ACTS 25:18 *"I ordered the man to be brought in, but when his accusers stood up, they did not charge him with any of the crimes that I had expected. 19 The questions at issue referred to their own religion, and to a certain Jesus who had died. Paul said he was alive. 20 As I felt at a loss about the method of inquiry into such topics, I asked if he would go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these charges."*

In reference to Festus' perception of Judaism, the King James version records his words as *...their own superstition...*. The word "superstition," (number 1175 in The Strong's Greek Concordance -- *deisidaimonia* {dice-ee-dahee-mon-ee'-ah}), is only found this one time in scripture, and comes from a Greek word, whose roots essentially mean: "to fear a pagan deity," which further shows us that Festus didn't really have much knowledge of the Jewish religion, nor did he have any knowledge of Jesus. It is suggested by some commentators that Festus didn't use the word "superstition" in disrespect of the Jews, for king Agrippa himself was a Jew, but rather Festus used this word "superstition" in a good sense reverencing the Jews religion, whom he admittedly had limited knowledge of. The greater question raised by Festus to king Agrippa revolved around Jesus, whom Festus as much as acknowledged he was not familiar with.

Another translation of the last part of verse 19 informs us that when the name of Jesus was brought up in Paul's hearing before Festus, Paul affirmed over and over that He was alive. This affirmation by Paul defines his ministry. Again Paul has already written this statement found in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:14 *And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*

Let's look at the last part of ACTS 25:19 a little closer, where we read *...of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.* First of all here note that there really is only one Jesus, one Jesus Christ, One Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, *...one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him...* (1 CORINTHIANS 8:6). In 1 TIMOTHY 2:5 Paul writes this of one Jesus: *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;...*

The second thing we need to note in this portion of ACTS 25:19 is the phrase *"which was dead,"* and that this phrase is only found in two scriptures, both referencing one Jesus. The other scripture that uses these words *"which was dead"* is REVELATION 2:8 where Jesus speaks: *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;...*. This verse also

helps bring emphasis to the third point we need to see in our text of ACTS 25:19, and that being the most important point of all, which is Jesus is alive!

The word "alive" in ACTS 25:19 and REVELATION 2:8 above comes from the same Greek word *zao*, (number 2198 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), found 143 times in New Testament scriptures, translated: live, liveth, be alive, alive, lively, and quick. In REVELATION 1:17 & 18 we read these words of Jesus Christ Himself, where we find "*zao*" used twice: *...I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen;...* . Festus indeed told the truth in ACTS 25:19 when he spoke *...of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive,...* for Paul professed Jesus to be alive, "*zao*," in over ninety scriptures, and further noting that Jesus was raised from the dead in approximately another twenty five scriptures. {For additional information on how Paul affirmed over and over again the fact that Jesus is alive review our chapter on the Doctrine of Resurrection starting on page 806 of these notes.} Then in 1 CORINTHIANS 15, the resurrection chapter, Paul makes another argument expressing how miserable we believers are if Jesus Christ is not alive. Here is how he wrote it in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:12 *Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? 13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: 14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. 16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: 17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. 18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

We have mentioned before how that the Apostle Paul would be the last person in the world that you would ever want to argue with about the resurrection of the dead. No wonder then that governor Festus in his first meeting with Paul was astonished to find Paul affirming over and over again that Jesus was indeed alive. Imagine with me (if you will) some of the things Paul may have said before Festus to once again emphasize the fact that Jesus Christ is indeed alive. Paul could have related the fact that before he was saved, he too persecuted Christians, not believing that Jesus Christ was indeed the Messiah. How that he too did not believe the stories he had heard that Jesus was raised from the dead. Telling how that he questioned in his own mind how Stephen, manifesting himself the face of an angel, that he spoke of seeing Jesus standing on the right hand of God. Paul could have stated how this pricked his conscience night and day, until the time while traveling on the road to Damascus that Jesus Himself appeared unto him in the way, being manifest to him as a Light brighter than the noon day sun, and saying unto him: *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Paul could have then told how he realized the path he had been pursuing was the wrong one, and how that Jesus on that road to Damascus set his course on a street called Straight, with the promise that He would along the way continue to appear unto him, and teach him Christ's gospel, which Paul claimed as his own, having believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. In the course of time, and very trying times in the life of Paul, the Lord continued to appear unto him, and reveal His gospel message unto Paul, showing Paul throughout all the Old Testament scriptures different types, and shadows, and pictures of Himself. With the help and guidance of the Holy Ghost, these Old Testament scriptures, that Paul knew from his youth better than his piers, came alive as the eyes of his understanding were made enlightened, and he saw the immeasurable, abundant, exceedingly above all we could ask or think, grace and mercy of God that is ours, because Christ Jesus, the fulfillment of the type and shadows of the Old Testament, was made sin for us, though He Himself knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Paul may have added: *"governor Festus I affirm unto you these statements are certainly true, and that Jesus Christ is indeed alive, who is currently even at the right hand of God, just as Stephen said before me, and the whole Sanhedrin council years ago before I was a Christian."*

Whatever Paul told Festus, his words were passionate, and clear, for again Festus noted to king Agrippa these words of ACTS 25:19 *...of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.* One of the ninety plus scriptures in which Paul professed

Jesus to be alive using the Greek word *zao* mentioned above, (number 2198 in the Strong's Greek Concordance), is GALATIANS 2:20 where we find Paul once again affirming Jesus to be alive, and living in the heart of Paul, a fact that Festus had no doubt noticed, but didn't comprehend. GALATIANS 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live <198>; yet not I, but Christ liveth <2198> in me: and the life which I <2198> now live <2198> in the flesh I live <2198> by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* We see that the Apostle Paul used the Greek word *zao* five (GRACE) times in this verse, emphasizing to us that active life of Christ, full of grace and truth, that lives in the heart of all believers, that should be manifest as we yield ourselves unto God. Obviously here in ACTS 25:19, The Word of God, who is Jesus (according to REVELATION 19:13), spoke through the mouth of Paul by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and pricked the heart of governor Festus, who then told king Agrippa *...of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.* The fact that The Word of God is alive, and powerful, was later noted by the Apostle Paul when he wrote in HEBREWS 4:12 *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* That word "quick" in HEBREWS 4:12 is a very powerful word in itself, for it again is the Greek word *zao* mentioned above, meaning: living, to be alive, to be in full vigor. Thus we get a better understanding of why governor Festus was so impressed with Paul's insistence in affirming Jesus is alive!

In ACTS 25:20 governor Festus explains to king Agrippa that after hearing Paul's defence he was now at a loss as how to deal with Paul, so he asked Paul if he would be willing to go back to Jerusalem to once again appear before the Sanhedrin. ACTS 25:20 *And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters.* We learned back in verse 11 of ACTS 25 that Paul, after determining that the governor wasn't going to release him, uttered these words: *...I appeal unto Caesar.* Festus then was left with no choice but to grant Paul's well thought out request, and answered Paul in verse 12 *...Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.* Festus explained these events to king Agrippa like this in ACTS 25:21 *But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar.*

This whole narrative we have been studying about of Festus conversation with king Agrippa found in ACTS 25:14-21, helps us better appreciate the situation governor Festus now finds himself in concerning the Apostle Paul. Once a Roman citizen had made an appeal to a higher court, as the Apostle Paul had done had done in verse 11, then, if the appeal was admissible, as we found in was in verse 12, then the appeal at once suspended all further proceedings of the present hearing, as was the case in verse 12. This then put the responsibility of Paul's getting to Caesar upon Festus. Thus it became Festus' legal duty to forward to Rome all the acts and documents bearing upon the trial of Paul, including the deposition of the witnesses on both sides, and the record of Festus' own judgment in this case. (No doubt all of these documents were destroyed in the ship wreck of ACTS 27.) Furthermore it was now Festus' duty to keep Paul in safe custody, and to send him to Rome for trial at the earliest opportunity. However, other than what we have just read, Festus didn't have anything significant to write to Nero regarding Paul's case, other than, "I think this man should be released," which, if you think about it, would have been an unintelligent statement to make to the Emperor, for the Emperor would then wonder why the prisoner wasn't released by Festus himself. So Festus has described all of this to king Agrippa in an effort to get some help from the king in how to word the charges against Paul so that Nero wouldn't think that Festus was totally incompetent as governor. In ACTS 25:22 governor Festus gets the answer he has been searching for from king Agrippa: *Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.*

Thus the stage is set for the Apostle Paul to appear before king Agrippa, and governor Festus. This meeting of king Agrippa and Paul was really an appointment set of the Lord in the eternity's past, as are all of the events of our Christian lives. PSALMS 37:23 tells us: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.* Paul himself later wrote about this in EPHESIANS 2:10 *For we are his workmanship,*

created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. We have also noted before that the Lord made known to Paul early on that he would get to preach before kings. This revelation was spoken by the Lord unto Ananias of Damascus, who then told Paul. We read of this in ACTS 9 in the three short days after Paul was saved on the road to Damascus. ACTS 9:10 *And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.* We haven't read of the Apostle Paul appearing before any kings up to this point in time, but he knew he would, just as Ananias of Damascus had said. Paul had already penned this statement found in GALATIANS 2:6 *But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person:),... and the same thought process in the mind of the Apostle Paul applied here to king Agrippa: ...whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person...* . Furthermore the Apostle Paul had also written this statement found in ROMANS 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;... . "For all" includes everyone, the rich and famous, the poor and needy, governors and kings, and Emperors, Pharisees, Sadducees, Buddhists, hippies, doctors, lawyers, Catholics, Lutherans, Baptists, etc.: ...For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;... .* Paul had also written by this time the following words found in 1 CORINTHIANS 1. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:23 *But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24 But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence. 30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: 31 That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.* So we glimpse Paul's heart here before he goes before king Agrippa.

King Agrippa is the first king that we have read of Paul appearing before, though there may have been other kings he witnessed to along his race course that we don't know about. Let's pause for a minute or two and see a point not before made in this study. Ananias of Damascus was told of the Lord in ACTS 9:15 above about Paul, and told to *...Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings...* . Since Agrippa is the first, and last, king we read of in scripture that Paul got to bear Jesus name before, why did the Lord say he would bear His name before kings, not just one king? The answer to this question is found in scripture. REVELATION 1:6 tells us in part that Jesus Christ *...hath made us kings,...* . REVELATION 5:8-10 further explains who these kings are. REVELATION 5:8 *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. 9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

The four beasts referenced here are further described in REVELATION 4:6-8, which reads: 6 *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in*

the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. 7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. 8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Bible students should know, and be aware of the fact that this description of the four living creatures found in the midst of the throne, closest to Jesus, figures that group of Saints from this yet present church age, that are the Bride of Christ.

REVELATION 4:7 lists four qualities of these four living creatures. Let's focus on their kingly qualities. REVELATION 4:7 *And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.* We know that each of these four living creatures represent a side of Jesus Christ also. These four qualities are expressed in the four gospel records of the New Testament.

MATTHEW portrays Christ as the King, and we have already noted above how Jesus is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. The lion figures the kings of beasts. The lion is also a defender. Paul wrote in PHILIPPIANS 1:7 & 17 of being *...set for the defence of the gospel.* PROVERBS 28:1 also tells us *...the righteous are bold as a lion.*

MARK paints a picture of Jesus as the perfect servant, figured in REVELATION 4:7 as the faithful ox, which is the king of the domestic beasts. The ox also signifies the perfect sacrifice, which Jesus became for our sins. 1 CORINTHIANS 5:7 states, in part: *For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:...* To the potential full overcomer Paul writes in ROMANS 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*

The gospel of LUKE notes many things about Christ the man, who left the lofty heights of heaven, and took those perfect seven steps down found in PHILIPPIANS 2 that took Him to the cross to be the perfect sacrifice for sinful man. PHILIPPIANS 2:5 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.* The kingly character of a man is found in GENESIS 1:26, where we find that man was given *...dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

The forth gospel record is the gospel according to JOHN, figured by the flying eagle in REVELATION 4:7 above. The flying eagle is the king of birds. Christ's quality's figured by the flying eagle shows that He is the eternal, ageless, heavenly One. The flying eagle soars free from the pull of the world, can't be held down, and seeks those things that are above. Such too are qualities of a full overcomer. COLOSSIANS 3:1 reads: *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.* EPHESIANS 1:21 *...Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:...* The flying eagle is at liberty, and ROMANS 8:21 tells of *...the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

So when the Lord told Ananias of Damascus in ACTS 9:15 above about Paul, and told him to *...Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings...* are you beginning to see who these kings are? Paul wasn't told necessarily that he would be bearing the name of Jesus before kings in person, though in the case of king Agrippa, he did. Paul through his gospel record did bear the name of Jesus before untold thousands of kings. Who are these kings? Look around! Look within! These kings are those *...full of eyes before and behind...* (REVELATION 4:6). These particular kings are full of the Holy Ghost. These kings are those who gladly received Paul's gospel message, and have *...kept the word of my patience...* (REVELATION 3:10). These kings follow Paul as he followed Christ. These kings know Paul's gospel, know it is the Word of God, and see the uniqueness in Paul's gospel. These kings have learned that Paul's gospel alone tells us of the race course, of winning Christ as Bridegroom, of a

better resurrection. These kings know that Paul's gospel reveals the whole counsel of God, and how to put on the armour of light, how to put on the new man, how to put on the whole armour of God; and how to, as the elect of God, to put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, and charity, and how we may grow up into Him in all things. These kings have learned that Paul's gospel alone tells us that we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, which is a good kingly quality to know. These kings know that we are to be established in Paul's gospel, to the end that Christ Jesus may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. These kings have learned the mysteries of Christ, revealed unto Paul, that were hidden in ages past, and written in his epistles. These kings know that Paul's gospel teaches us how we are to rule and reign with him, as kings, and priests; as the full overcomers in the Bride of Christ taken from this church age! These kings love His appearing, and are constantly looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, as they patiently run the race that is set before them. Who are these kings? Redeemed Saints who know Paul's gospel!

ACTS 25:23 *And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.* This is quiet an audience, for it consists of all the so called important people who were at Caesarea at this point in time. King Agrippa and Bernice were presented with great pomp, meaning it was a sight to see the parade of attendants, and servants that escorted king Agrippa and Bernice, who themselves were dressed in their royal apparel. One can only imagine the oooing and aaahing that must have taken place upon their grand entry. Additionally there were the chief captains present, who were Roman soldiers that each had command of a thousand men under them! Obviously these were considered important people to governor Festus, and governor Festus was in command over these Roman soldiers. Next we find the principal men of the city present at this hearing, which would have included the magistrates, and the business leaders of Caesarea. This appears to be the most dignified and influential audience that Paul got to address so far in his ministry. Paul has addressed larger crowds, but not one with so many dignitaries present at one time. No doubt all of these people had heard something about the Apostle Paul, but most of them were not familiar with his doctrine, and may not have even known his testimony.

It seems from reading this part of ACTS 25, and all of ACTS 26 that Luke too was an observer of Paul's defence speech before king Agrippa, for Luke gives some details that only an astute observer would give. For example in ACTS 26:1 Luke notes that *...Paul stretched forth the hand,...* . No doubt Luke made note of Paul doing this, and it left an impression in his mind for quiet possibly Paul was still chained to the centurion in charge of him. If this was the case, and if Paul's hand was chained to the centurion, a noted effort would have to be made by Paul to stretch forth his hand. As we cover this speech of Paul's we will note some other instances of what Luke observed.

Back here in ACTS 25:23, once all of these dignitaries were seated, *...at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.* The words Paul penned in 1 CORINTHIANS 4:9 certainly apply here: *For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men.* Obviously Paul was being made a spectacle here as he enters the place of hearing chained to a Roman centurion. Brother Copley writes about this event stating: "It must have been humiliating to dear Paul to be ordered around by wicked men so many times; but he knew that he was there in his Father's will." {End of quoting Brother Copley.} The Apostle John wrote: 1 JOHN 3:1 *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.* Certainly this scripture applies to the Apostle Paul as he now appears before this assembly of the worlds who's who.

In ACTS 25:24-27 we find governor Festus introducing the Apostle Paul to the king, and explaining to the audience the reason for this additional hearing. ACTS 25:24 *And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man,*

about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. 25 But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. 26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, C king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. 27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

In verses 24 & 25 Festus explains to king Agrippa, before this court of influential people, the case of Paul, and how Festus has dealt with him so far. In verses 26 and 27 we find governor Festus appealing to king Agrippa on how to word the charges against Paul in his letter to Caesar. In verse 26 Festus states: *I have no certain thing to write unto my lord.* In other words Festus was making known that he didn't have any certain crime, or substantiated evidence against Paul of committing anything against the Roman empire. With nothing definite to write against Paul, governor Festus was asking king Agrippa for help, since Agrippa was a Jew, and aquatinted with the customs and doctrines of the Jews, Festus hoped that after hearing Paul himself, king Agrippa could help make sense of the exact nature of the charges brought against Paul, so that Festus could put in writing an intelligible case to send to the Emperor. ACTS 25:26 *...Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, C king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. 27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.*

Festus' addressing Caesar as "my lord" in verse 26 shows his respect unto Nero, who had appointed Festus governor in the first place. The term "my lord" in reference to Caesar, was a title that Emperor Nero was glad to have, even though the Emperors before him refused this title.

Verses 23-27 introduce us to a most important day in the life of Paul; a day that will not end until the last verse in chapter 26. This adds to our list more to consider about the importance of one day, which topic we have referenced before. {See again pages 550-552 of these notes.} We previously have noted that HEBREWS 13:8 reads: *...Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* So then think of it like this, it is Jesus Christ who makes a day, any day, important, and it has always been that way, and will always be that way, for again *...Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* And without Jesus Christ in our life, and in our every day, we are wasting our time, and wasting our days. With Jesus Christ in our life, our day is enriched, and complete. It is Jesus who makes each and every day important. And He creates a new important day everyday; *...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* There are those that are getting saved everyday, thus this day becomes the most important day of their life. For the believer each and every day presents a new challenge, a new day of opportunity to trust the Lord, a new day to walk with the Lord, and allow Him to take us to new heights. May we *"...walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called..."* each and every day.... {EPHESIANS 4:1}. May we *"...walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; 12 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son..."* each and every day... {COLOSSIANS 1:10-13}. May we *"...walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory..."* each and every day {1 THESSALONIANS 2:12}. May we one day too be translated like Enoch of old, who every day walked with God, and believed God, and diligently sought God, {study HEBREWS 11:5 & 6}. May we realize each and every day, like David the Psalmist did, that *...The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.* {PSALMS 37:23}.

We have also previously noted some other important days found in scripture that occupy a whole chapter in the Bible, or the majority of a chapter. Obviously these are high water marks of scripture used to emphasize unto us the fact that it is Jesus Christ who makes any day, and each and everyday important. Here are some examples of one day events that occupy a whole Bible chapter, or the majority of a Bible chapter. In

EXODUS 14 we see the children of Israel cross the Red Sea. The events of that memorable day are contained in this one chapter; one day often referenced many times in scripture; one day that illustrates the importance of knowing Jesus as the redeemer; one chapter that defines the salvation of the Lord. EXODUS 14:13 *And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.*

MATTHEW 27; MARK 15; LUKE 23; and JOHN 19 are all chapters of our Bible that cover that most important day when Jesus Christ died for our sins!!! May we always remember that day when *...Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;... 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3.*

ACTS 2:1-41 occur on the day of Pentecost, and define what it means to be a Pentecostal. On that day *...they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. {ACTS 2:4}.* On that day, Peter, who some fifty days earlier had denied that he even knew Jesus, preached his first Holy Ghost inspired sermon, and ACTS 2:41 tells us that around three thousand souls were saved that day there at Jerusalem! This was another day that was long talked about, and still is, concerning the importance of receiving the Holy Ghost after having believed in Jesus as your personal Saviour!

The events of ACTS 7 occur in one day, and it was a defining day in New Testament history, for on that particular day, a man named Stephen, full of the power of the Holy Ghost, preached a sermon still being heard today! Saul of Tarsus heard every word Stephen spoke, and each of these words pricked his conscience like a hot iron for many days to come. How important was that day? Stephen died that very same day, yet his testimony of that now famous day lives on today, and further emphasize unto us the fact that it is Jesus Christ who makes any day, and each and everyday important. Study that sermon on your own some time and see the Old Testament unfolded in a few short verses. And hear Stephen's words of ACTS 7:56 *...Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.* Paul's gospel wouldn't be preached today had not Stephen first preached to him one day. (Think about it).

The events of ACTS 21:26 through ACTS 22:29 occurred in one day. That was the day Paul initially got arrested in Jerusalem, and remains in Roman custody throughout all the rest of the book of ACTS. ACTS 24:1-23 where we find Paul before governor Felix, occurs in one day. And now we come to ACTS 26, all of which takes place in one day!

The theme of ACTS 26 is the testimony of Paul. Paul here bears witness of Jesus of Nazareth before a king, just like the Lord told Ananias of Damascus he would in ACTS 9:15. The greatest miracle of which we can witness, experience, or hear, is when someone accepts Jesus Christ into their own heart as their own personal Saviour! EPHESIANS 2:1 tells us that before any of us were saved, that we *...were dead in trespasses and sins.* Verse 5 goes on to tell us: *Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).* After accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour we are told by Him in JOHN 5:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* The instant we accept Jesus into our hearts we are born again, but can't really understand all that has just taken place, just as was the case when we were born in the natural. As time goes on, however, hopefully we learn what has taken place, and grow up spiritually. So we glimpse a little the greatest miracle any life could experience, that being born again. But this is just the beginning of eternal life. The Holy Spirit left three accounts of the miracle of Paul's salvation here in the book of ACTS in chapters 9, 22, and 26. Here in ACTS 26 Paul will get to finish his interrupted testimony of ACTS 22. Paul also would later write more about the miracle of his own salvation in 1 TIMOTHY 1:15 *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.* Paul now presents his testimony before king Agrippa.