

**PAUL'S APPEARANCE BEFORE A GOVERNOR AND A KING**  
**Acts 25 and 26**

**Introduction:**

1. Paul was in the custody of the Roman governor, Felix, for two years.
2. History tells us Felix was removed from office because of corruption.
  - a. He was exiled to Gaul (France).
  - b. He and Drusilla died in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79.
3. When Felix left office, he left Paul in prison to please the Jews (24:27).

**Discussion:**

- I. **FESTUS REPLACED FELIX AS GOVERNOR (25:1-5).**
  - A. When Festus visited Jerusalem, the Jews made many accusations against Paul.
    1. They asked for Paul to be sent to Jerusalem to be tried.
    2. They planned to ambush him and kill him along the way.
  - B. Festus pointed out that Paul was a Roman prisoner.
    1. He rightly belonged at Caesarea.
    2. He asked the Jews to make their charges at Caesarea.
- II. **PAUL WAS TRIED BEFORE FESTUS (25:6-12).**
  - A. The Jews made many serious charges against Paul.
    1. Likely these were the same charges they had made before.
    2. They could prove none of their accusations against Paul.
    3. Paul replied: "Neither against the Law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all."
  - B. Festus wanted to please the Jews.
    1. History records he was a fair and honorable man.
    2. He appears here as a politician who was willing to compromise in order to gain favor with the Jews.
    3. He asked Paul if he would go to Jerusalem to stand trial.
    4. Paul knew his life would be in jeopardy if he did.
    5. He reminded Festus: "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged. To the Jews I have done no wrong as you very well know."
    6. In order to save his life, Paul appealed unto Caesar.
      - a. This was his right as a Roman citizen.
      - b. Festus said, "You have appealed to Caesar; to

**Caesar you shall go.”**

**III. KING AGRIPPA PAID A COURTESY CALL TO FESTUS (25:13-22).**

- A. Agrippa II and his sister, Bernice, were of the Herodian family.**
  - 1. Their great-grandfather, Herod, tried to kill the baby Jesus.**
  - 2. Their great uncle, Antipas, had killed John the baptist.**
  - 3. Their father, Agrippa I, had killed the apostle James.**
  - 4. Their sister, Drusilla, lived in adultery with Felix.**
  - 5. Bernice became the mistress of Vespasian and later of his son, Titus.**
  
- B. Festus laid the case of Paul before the king.**
  - 1. He told him of the charge the Jews made against Paul.**
  - 2. He had wanted Paul to go to Jerusalem to be tried.**
  - 3. Instead, Paul appealed unto Caesar.**
  - 4. He had no charges against Paul to send to the emperor.**
  - 5. Agrippa wanted to hear Paul himself.**

**IV. AN APPEARANCE OF PAUL WAS ARRANGED (25:23-26:32).**

- A. Many from the highest levels of society were invited.**
  - 1. Agrippa and Bernice “came with great pomp.”**
  - 2. The commanders of the army and the prominent leaders of Caesarea were also invited.**
  - 3. Paul had an opportunity to preach to people he would not have reached as a free man.**
  
- B. Paul’s speech is a masterpiece of courtesy and persuasion.**
  - 1. He was happy to appear before the king for he was an expert in the religion and customs of the Jews.**
  - 2. Paul was a fellow Jew as was shown by his early life.**
    - a. He was a Pharisee, the strictest sect of the Jews.**
    - b. The Jews knew this and could testify of it.**
  - 3. He was being judged for believing the hope of Israel.**
    - a. Israel had long awaited the Christ and His kingdom.**
    - b. They opposed Paul because he preached Jesus was the Christ and the church was the kingdom.**
  - 4. Paul asked the skeptics: “Why should it be thought incredible that God raises the dead?”**
    - a. This was the hope of Israel.**
    - b. This was the very heart of the Gospel (Rom. 1:4).**
  - 5. Paul then spoke of his past as a persecutor.**

- a. He had shut up the saints in prison.
  - b. He voted for the saints to be put to death.
  - c. He had compelled Christians to blaspheme.
  - d. He even went to foreign cities to persecute saints.
6. Paul next related his conversion to his mixed audience.
- a. On his way to Damascus, he saw a great light from heaven.
  - b. A Voice spoke, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"
  - c. He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" and the Voice replied, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."
  - d. Jesus said: "I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things you have seen and of the things I will reveal."
  - e. He would preach to both Jews and Gentiles.
7. Paul was only teaching what the Law and the Prophets foretold- that Christ would suffer and rise from the dead."
8. Festus interrupted: "Paul, you are crazy. Your great learning is driving you insane."
- a. Paul politely denied Festus' outrageous reaction.
  - b. He appealed to Agrippa who was aware of the Jewish faith and the claims of Christ.
9. Paul asked the king: "Do you believe the Law and the Prophets? I know you do."
10. Agrippa answered:
- a. "You almost persuade me to be a Christian."
  - b. Paul courteously replied: "I wish all of you were like me except for my chains."

**C. The meeting broke up at this point.**

- 1. The king arose and the others followed.
- 2. The guests discussed what they had heard.
- 3. All agreed Paul was innocent of any charge of wrongdoing.
- 4. Agrippa said: "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

**Conclusion:**

- 1. Festus died two years after taking office as governor.
- 2. Agrippa sided with the Romans in the War with the Jews.
- 3. He lived until early in the second century.
- 4. Are you "almost persuaded to become a Christian?"

