**Lesson 25 March 24 Acts 24 Trial and Captivity**

In our last lesson Paul was brought before the Sanhedrin by the commander of the cohort. He appealed to the Pharisees and their belief in the resurrection and life after death. The Pharisees and Sadducees engaged in a loud dispute over Paul’s belief in the resurrection of the body. The Pharisees found nothing wrong with Paul’s ideas and the Sadducees sharply rejected Paul’s teachings on the subject. The dispute was so serious, that the commander sent in troops to rescue Paul once again, and again Paul was taken back to the compound of the cohort. Paul had another vision of the Lord. The Lord stood by him and said “Take courage. For just as you have borne witness to my cause in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness in Rome.” Soon after this a plot to kill Paul was discovered and Paul’s nephew went to the commander and told him of the plot. To avoid any confrontation with the Jews who plotted to kill Paul, Paul was taken during the night to Caesarea so Governor Felix could deal with the matter. The Sanhedrin was later notified of the transfer and instructed that they would have to plead a case against Paul, in Caesarea, before Felix. Paul was held in custody in Herod’s praetorium (headquarters, residence or palace.)

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? Was there a particular verse or message in this week’s lesson from Acts 24 that you found inspiring?**
2. **How does Tertullus begin his address to Felix? Do you think this is effective? See Acts 24:1-4 and 24:27. Check to see if you have footnotes on these verses.**

**Acts 24:1-4** **1**Five days later the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and an advocate, a certain Tertullus, and they presented formal charges against Paul to the governor. **2**When he was called, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, “Since we have attained much peace through you, and reforms have been accomplished in this nation through your provident care, **3**we acknowledge this in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all gratitude. **4**But in order not to detain you further, I ask you to give us a brief hearing with your customary graciousness.

**Acts 24:2727**Two years passed and Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus. Wishing to ingratiate himself with the Jews, Felix left Paul in prison.

1. **What parts of Tertullus’ accusations are designed to alarm the Roman court?**

**See Acts 24:5-9**

**Acts 24:5-95**We found this man to be a pest; he creates dissension among Jews all over the world and is a ringleader of the sect of the Nazoreans. **6**He even tried to desecrate our temple, but we arrested him. [**7**]] **8**If you examine him you will be able to learn from him for yourself about everything of which we are accusing him.” **9**The Jews also joined in the attack and asserted that these things were so.

1. **Check footnotes for an explanation of a missing verse in the NABRE text between 24:7 and 24:8. What does the missing verse say?**
2. **Read Acts 24:10-24. Does Paul flatter Governor Felix in the same way that Tertullus did?**

**Acts 24:10-2410**[Then the governor motioned to him to speak and Paul replied, “I know that you have been a judge over this nation for many years and so I am pleased to make my defense before you. **11**As you can verify, not more than twelve days have passed since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. **12**Neither in the temple, nor in the synagogues, nor anywhere in the city did they find me arguing with anyone or instigating a riot among the people. **13**Nor can they prove to you the accusations they are now making against me. **14**But this I do admit to you, that according to the Way, which they call a sect, I worship the God of our ancestors and I believe everything that is in accordance with the law and written in the prophets. **15**I have the same hope in God as they themselves have that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous. **16**Because of this, I always strive to keep my conscience clear before God and man. **17**After many years, I came to bring alms for my nation and offerings. **18**While I was so engaged, they found me, after my purification, in the temple without a crowd or disturbance. **19**But some Jews from the province of Asia, who should be here before you to make whatever accusation they might have against me— **20**or let these men themselves state what crime they discovered when I stood before the Sanhedrin, **21**unless it was my one outcry as I stood among them, that ‘I am on trial before you today for the resurrection of the dead.’”

1. **What does Paul say to reject or dismiss the accusations made against him in Acts 24:10-24 above?**
2. **What part of Paul’s testimony is designed to support his character and intentions?**
3. **Read again Acts 24:15-16 and the Catechism of the Catholic Church #1038. What does Paul say about resurrection of the dead? How does the Catechism support and expand the teaching and beliefs of Paul? See also Matthew 25:31-46.**

**CCC 1038**The resurrection of all the dead, "of both the just and the unjust," will precede the Last Judgment. This will be "the hour when all who are in the tombs will hear [the Son of man's] voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." Then Christ will come "in his glory, and all the angels with him. . . . Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. . . . And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

**Acts 24:15-1615**I have the same hope in God as they themselves have that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous. **16**Because of this, I always strive to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

**Matthew 25:31-46**“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, **32**and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. **33**He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. **34**Then the king will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. **35**For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, **36**naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.’ **37**Then the righteous[[p](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2025&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-28365p)] will answer him and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? **38**When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? **39**When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?’ **40**And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.’ **41**[[q](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%2025&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-28369q)]Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. **42**For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, **43**a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’ **44**Then they will answer and say, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?’ **45**He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.’ **46**And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

1. **What parts of Paul’s teaching do you think makes Governor Felix uncomfortable?**

**See Acts 24:24-26 and your notes on question #8.**

**Acts 24:24-2624**Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish. He had Paul summoned and listened to him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. **25**But as he spoke about righteousness and self-restraint and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, “You may go for now; when I find an opportunity I shall summon you again.” **26**At the same time he hoped that a bribe would be offered him by Paul, and so he sent for him very often and conversed with him.

1. **How long is Paul in prison here? What do we know about his conditions this time, now that he has been identified as a Roman citizen? See Acts 24:23, 24:27, and Acts 23:34b-35**

**Acts 24:2323**He gave orders to the centurion that he should be kept in custody but have some liberty, and that he should not prevent any of his friends from caring for his needs.

**Acts 24:2727**When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison.

**Acts 23:34b-35** Learning that he was from Cilicia, **35**he said, “I will hear your case when your accusers get here.” Then he ordered that Paul be kept under guard in Herod’s palace.