

¹ Now after five days Ananias the high priest came down with the elders and a certain orator *named* Tertullus. These gave evidence to the governor against Paul.

² And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: "Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight,

His speech before Felix is marked by considerable ingenuity. It begins with an adulation of the governorship of Felix that was little in accord with history (see [FELIX](#)); and the subsequent argument is an example of how a strong case may apparently be made out by the skillful manipulation of half-truths. Thus the riot at Jerusalem was ascribed to the sedition-mongering of Paul, who thereby proved himself an enemy of Roman rule and Jewish religion, both of which Felix was pledged to uphold. Again, the arrest of Paul was not an act of mob violence, but was legally carried out by the high priests and elders in the interests of peace; and but for the unwarranted interference of Lysias (see [LYSIAS](#)), they would have dealt with the prisoner in their own courts and thus have avoided trespassing on the time of Felix. They were, however, perfectly willing to submit the whole case to his jurisdiction. It is interesting to compare this speech of Tertullus with the true account, as given in [Acts 21:27-35](#), and also with the letter of Lysias ([Acts 23:26-30](#)). **The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.**

³ we accept *it* always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness.

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⁴ Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us.

⁵ For we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.

⁶ He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, and wanted to judge him according to our law.

Acts 21:26-32 (NKJV) ²⁶ Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them. ²⁷ Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, ²⁸ crying out, "Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all *men* everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place." ²⁹ (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) ³⁰ And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut. ³¹ Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. ³² He immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

⁷ But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took *him* out of our hands,

Acts 23:26-30 (NKJV) ²⁶ Claudius Lysias, To the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings. ²⁷ This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them. Coming with the troops I rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. ²⁸ And when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council. ²⁹ I found out that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. ³⁰ And when it was told me that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him. Farewell.

⁸ commanding his accusers to come to you. By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him."

⁹ And the Jews also assented, maintaining that these things were so.

¹⁰ Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself,

¹¹ because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship.

¹² And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city.

¹³ Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me.

¹⁴ But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

¹⁵ I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of *the* dead, both of *the* just and *the* unjust.

¹⁶ This *being* so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

¹⁷ Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation,

¹⁸ in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult.

¹⁹ They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me.

²⁰ Or else let those who are *here* themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council,

²¹ unless *it is* for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.' "

²² But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of *the* Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case."

And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. Luke describes Felix's knowledge of Christianity as "more perfect," leaving us to ask, more perfect than whose knowledge? Kistemaker believes the meaning to be that he had a better understanding *than most people* (849). The point is, Felix's knowledge of "that way" (Christianity; cf. 9:1) enabled him to see that the Jews' accusations were false. No violation of Roman law had been proved against Paul, as no testimony had been given to sustain the charges against him. Felix should have released Paul, but instead, he deferred the hearing until Lysias could arrive. It is likely that Felix's claim to be awaiting the testimony of Lysias was only a pretext for continuing to hold Paul. There are two facts more likely to have been his real reasons: (1) It would have been politically damaging to release Paul and thus offend the Sanhedrin (Rapske165). (2) He perhaps already hoped to obtain a bribe from Paul (v. 26).

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²³ So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let *him* have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.

²⁴ And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.

Drusilla --- Wife of Felix, a Jewess, who along with her husband "heard (Paul) concerning the faith in Christ Jesus" during Paul's detention in Caesarea ([Acts 24:24](#)). Beta text gives the rendering "Drusilla the wife of Felix, a Jewess, asked to see Paul and to hear the word." The fact that Drusilla was a Jewess explains her curiosity, but Paul, who was probably acquainted with the past history of her and Felix, refused to satisfy their request in the way they desired, and preached to them instead concerning righteousness and self-restraint and the final judgment. At this "Felix was terrified" ([Acts 24:25](#)). Beta text states that Paul's being left in bonds on the retirement of Felix was due to the desire of the latter to please Drusilla (compare [Acts 24:27](#)). Probably this explanation, besides that of the accepted text, was true also, as Drusilla, who was a member of the ruling house, saw in Paul an enemy of its power, and hated him for his condemnation of her own private sins.

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²⁵ Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."

Righteousness --- Romans 1:16-17, Philippians 3:9 & Romans 10:1-3 * **Self-control** --- Romans 6:12 & 1st Corinthians 9:25 * **Judgment** --- Acts 17:30-31 & John 12:48

²⁶ Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him. Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.

²⁷ But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.

Festus --- The Roman governor or procurator who succeeded Felix in the province of Judea ([Acts 24:27](#)), and was thus brought into prominence in the dispute between Paul and the Sanhedrin which continued after the retirement of Felix ([Acts 25](#); [Acts 26](#)). Upon the arrival of Festus in Jerusalem, the official capital of his province, the Jews besought of him to send Paul from Caesarea to Jerusalem to appear before them, intending to kill him on the way ([Acts 25:3](#)). Festus at first refused their request, and upon his return to Caesarea proceeded himself to examine Paul ([Acts 25:6](#)).

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Questions Acts 24

1. Who was Tertullus and describe his address he gave to Felix.

Questions Acts 24

2. How did Paul respond to the charges that were brought against him?

3. How did Felix avoid making a decision concerning the matter of Paul immediately?

4. Who was Drusilla?

5. When Paul had the opportunity to speak to Felix and Drusilla concerning faith in Christ, what did he speak about?

6. Why did Felix call for Paul again after Paul spoke concerning faith in Christ?

7. What will you choose to remember about this chapter?