

## ACTS 25:1-22

Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,<sup>2</sup> where the chief priests and the Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.<sup>3</sup> They requested Festus, as a favor to them, to have Paul transferred to Jerusalem, for they were preparing an ambush to kill him along the way.<sup>4</sup> Festus answered, “Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon.<sup>5</sup> Let some of your leaders come with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, they can press charges against him there.”

<sup>6</sup> After spending eight or ten days with them, Festus went down to Caesarea. The next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him.

<sup>7</sup> When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them.

<sup>8</sup> Then Paul made his defense: “I have done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar.”

<sup>9</sup> Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?”

<sup>10</sup> Paul answered: “I am now standing before Caesar’s court, where I ought to be tried. I have not done any wrong to the Jews, as you yourself know very well.<sup>11</sup> If, however, I am guilty of doing anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die. But if the charges brought against me by these Jews are not true, no one has the right to hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!”

<sup>12</sup> After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: “You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!”

<sup>13</sup> A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus.<sup>14</sup> Since they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul’s case with the king. He said: “There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner.<sup>15</sup> When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned.

<sup>16</sup> “I told them that it is not the Roman custom to hand over anyone before they have faced their accusers and have had an opportunity to defend themselves against the charges. <sup>17</sup> When they came here with me, I did not delay the case, but convened the court the next day and ordered the man to be brought in. <sup>18</sup> When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected. <sup>19</sup> Instead, they had some points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. <sup>20</sup> I was at a loss how to investigate such matters; so I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial there on these charges. <sup>21</sup> But when Paul made his appeal to be held over for the Emperor’s decision, I ordered him held until I could send him to Caesar.”

<sup>22</sup> Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear this man myself.”

He replied, “Tomorrow you will hear him.”

NOTES

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

| Have you ever been involved in a real-life courtroom drama? Served on jury duty?  
| Had to be on the witness stand? What happened?

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| Read Acts 24:27. How long has Paul been in prison awaiting his trial and verdict?  
| Who is the new leader that will be over him?

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| Why do the Jewish leaders want Paul to be tried in Jerusalem? Where was the  
| court convened and what was the result? How did Paul escalate his case?

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| Paul relied on both God's rescue and wise legal strategy. What does this say about  
| his faith in action? What was significant about Paul's appeal to appear before  
| Caesar in Rome?

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| King Agrippa presents Paul with yet one more opportunity to speak about Jesus.  
| How do you see God using Paul's circumstances for Kingdom purposes?

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| In what ways can God use your current circumstances to advance the Kingdom?  
| Who has God placed in your life needing to experience the goodness and truth  
| of God?

## DAILY READINGS

1. LUKE 21:10-36
2. PSALM 46:1-11
3. PHILIPPIANS 1:12-20
4. 2 TIMOTHY 2:1-13
5. HEBREWS 12:1-17
6. ACTS 25:1-12
7. ACTS 25:13-22