

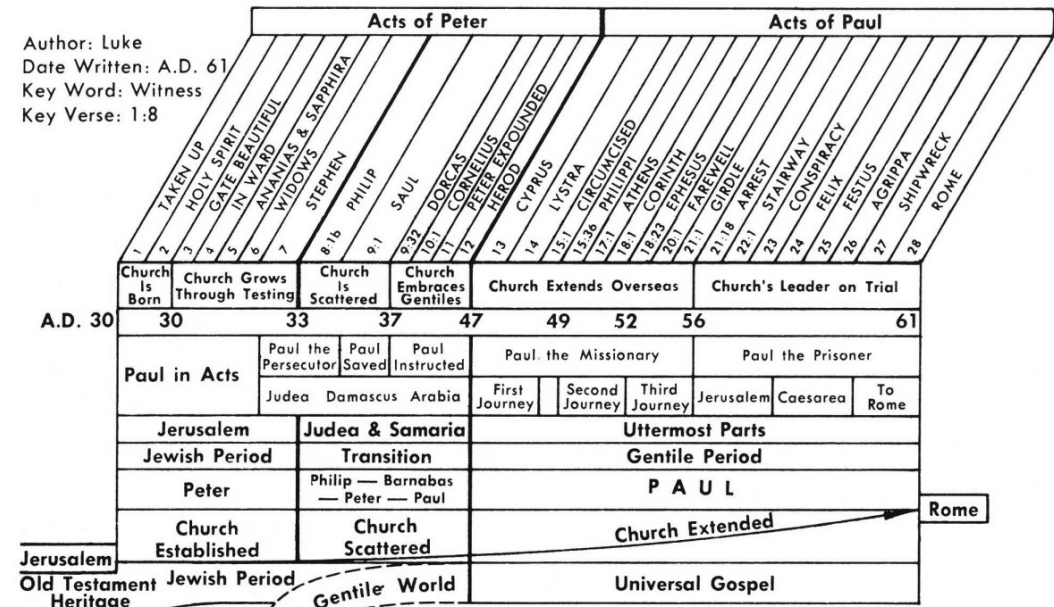
# Acts 25 Commentary

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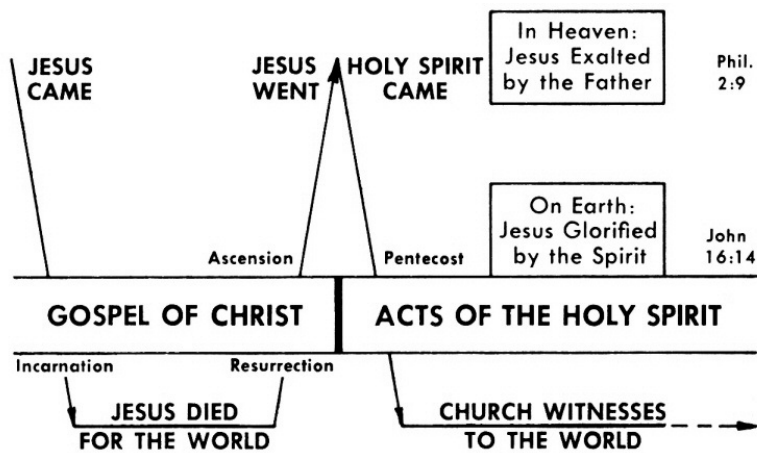
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Chart from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

## THE EXPANDING WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT-EMPOWERED CHURCH



Click chart to enlarge

## John Hannah's Outline for Third Missionary Journey (see [map](#))

### D. The third missionary journey of Paul (Acts 18:23-21:16)

1. The ministry in Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23)
2. The ministry in Ephesus (Acts 18:24-19:41)
  - a. Instruction of Apollos (Acts 18:24-28)
  - b. Instruction of some of John's followers (Acts 19:1-7)
  - c. Instruction of the Ephesians (Acts 19:8-20)
  - d. Instructions concerning his plans (Acts 19:21-22)
  - e. The riots in Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41)
3. The ministry in Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 20:1-5)
4. The ministry in Troas (Acts 20:6-12)
5. The ministry in Miletus (Acts 20:13-38)
  - a. His journey to Miletus (Acts 20:13-16)
  - b. His message to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17-35)
    1. Concerning his ministry (Acts 20:17-27)
    2. Concerning the church (Acts 20:28-35)
  - c. His farewell to the Ephesians (Acts 20:36-38)
6. The ministry at Tyre (Acts 21:1-6)
  - a. His journey to Tyre (Acts 21:1-3)
  - b. His ministry in Tyre (Acts 21:4-6)
7. The ministry in Caesarea (Acts 21:7-16)
  - a. Agabus' prediction (Acts 21:7-12)
  - b. Paul's reply (Acts 21:13-14)
  - c. The journey toward Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-16)

### E. The journey of Paul to Rome (Acts 21:17-28:31)

1. His witness in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17-23:35)
  - a. Paul's report to the elders (Acts 21:17-26)
  - b. Paul's arrest (Acts 21:27-36)
  - c. Paul's defense (Acts 21:37-23:10)
    1. His first defense (Acts 21:37-22:23)
      - a. The background (Acts 21:37-40)
      - b. The content (Acts 22:1-21)
      - c. The result (Acts 22:22-23)
    2. His second defense (Acts 22:24-23:10)
      - a. The background (Acts 22:24-29)
      - b. The council (Acts 22:30)
      - c. The content (Acts 23:1-9)
      - d. The conflict (Acts 23:10)
  - d. Paul's deliverance (Acts 23:11-35)
    1. The encouragement (Acts 23:11)
    2. The plot (Acts 23:12-16)

3. The counterplot (Acts 23:17-24)
  4. The letter to Felix (Acts 23:25-30)
  5. The deliverance to Felix (Acts 23:31-35)
2. His witness in Caesarea (Acts 24:1-26:32)
    - a. Paul's defense before Felix (Acts 24:1-27)
      1. The setting (Acts 24:1)
      2. The accusations of Tertullus (Acts 24:2-9)
      3. The reply of Paul (Acts 24:10-21)
      4. The consequences (Acts 24:22-27)
    - b. Paul's defense before Festus (Acts 25:1-12)
      1. The setting (Acts 25:1-5)
      2. The trial (Acts 25:6-11)
      3. The result (Acts 25:12)
    - c. Paul's defense before Agrippa (Acts 25:13-26:32)
      1. The arrival of Agrippa (Acts 25:13)
      2. Festus' presentation of Paul's case (Acts 25:14-22)
      3. Festus' presentation of Paul (Acts 25:23-27)
      4. Paul's defense before Agrippa (Acts 26:1-23)
      5. Paul's answer to Festus (Acts 26:24-26)
      6. Paul's interaction with Agrippa (Acts 26:27-29)
      7. The conclusion (Acts 26:30-32)
  3. His witness on the way to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:15)
    - a. His witness aboard ship (Acts 27:1-44)
    - b. His witness on Malta (Acts 28:1-15)
      1. Paul's miraculous preservation (Acts 28:1-6)
      2. Paul's healing of Publius' father (Acts 28:7-10)
      3. Paul's continued journey toward Rome (Acts 28:11-15)
  4. His witness in Rome (Acts 28:16-31)
    - a. The occasion for his witness (Acts 28:16-22)
    - b. The content of his witness (Acts 28:23-28)
    - c. The result of his witness (Acts 28:29)
    - d. The summary of Paul's witness in Rome (Acts 28:30-31)
- [Hannah's Bible Outlines](#) - Recommended Resource

**Acts 25:1 Festus then, having arrived in the province, three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.**

NET Acts 25:1 Now three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

GNT Acts 25:1 Φ στος ο ν πιβ ς τ παρχε μετ τρε ς μ ρας ν βη ε ς εροσ λυμα π Καισαρε ας,

NLT Acts 25:1 Three days after Festus arrived in Caesarea to take over his new responsibilities, he left for Jerusalem,

KJV Acts 25:1 Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

ESV Acts 25:1 Now three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

CSB Acts 25:1 Three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea.

NIV Acts 25:1 Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,

NKJ Acts 25:1 Now when Festus had come to the province, after three days he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem.

NRS Acts 25:1 Three days after Festus had arrived in the province, he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem

YLT Acts 25:1 Festus, therefore, having come into the province, after three days went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea,

- **arrived in the province:** Ac 23:34
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries



Ancient Caesarea by the Sea

## FESTUS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING

This chapter picks up from the last verse of Acts 24 - But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, and wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned. (Acts 24:27) Felix was a procrastinator, but Festus was a mover and so he [hit the ground running](#) so to speak.

**Festus** - Festus assumed this office at Nero's appointment in A.D. 60. He held it until his death in A.D. 62. Paul the apostle appealed to Porcius Festus for the opportunity of being tried before Caesar, and Festus granted that request. **NET Note** adds that "Porcius Festus was the procurator of Palestine who succeeded Felix; neither the beginning nor the end of his rule (at his death) can be determined with certainty, although he appears to have died in office after about two years. Nero recalled Felix in A.D. 57 or 58, and Festus was appointed to his vacant office in A.D. 57, 58, or 59. According to Josephus (Ant. 20.8.9–10 [20.182–188]; J. W. 2.14.1 [2.271–272]), his administration was better than that of his predecessor Felix or his successor Albinus, but Luke in Acts portrays him in a less favorable light: He was willing to sacrifice Paul to court Jewish favor by taking him to Jerusalem for trial (Acts 25:9), regardless of Paul's guilt or innocence. The one characteristic for which Festus was noted is that he dealt harshly with those who disturbed the peace."

**Constable** points out that "This is the shortest of Paul's five defenses that Luke documented. It is quite similar to Paul's defense before Felix except that now the apostle appealed to the emperor.

**Derek Thomas** introduces this chapter with these comments - God's providence may sometimes appear to us to be inefficient. Why place one of the best preachers of the seventeenth century—John Bunyan—in prison for twelve years? The answer, from our perspective over three centuries later, is obvious: without the imprisonment there would have been no **Pilgrim's Progress**. That book still ranks as one of the most important in all of Christian literature. The same thought could be had concerning Paul's imprisonment. Why place the most useful Christian in the world at that time in prison? But God's ways are not our ways (cf. Isa. 55:8–9), and there is a yet-unseen purpose behind this "frowning providence." (William Cowper - Listen to the beautiful version of [God Moves in Mysterious Ways](#)) Later, from his incarceration in Rome, Paul would testify that God had worked in such a way as to secure advantages for the gospel that otherwise would not have been possible. It had become known among members of the imperial guard that his imprisonment had been due to his relationship to Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:13<sup>+</sup>). Opportunities for witness had been given to him in the most unlikely places. Seeming inefficiency was actually part of God's strategy. (Reformed Expository Commentary: Acts p. 675). (Or here is [Derek Thomas' sermon on Acts 25:1-12](#)).

**Then** (oun) serves to indicate a transition to something new, the next "trial" of Paul before the Romans.

**Having arrived in the province** - The [Roman province of Judea](#) which incorporated the regions of Judea, Samaria and Idumea, and extended over parts of the former regions of the Hasmonean and Herodian kingdoms of Judea. ([see map](#)).

**Province** (1885) (eparchia from epi = over + arche = rule) denotes the area ruled over by a governor (known as an "eparchos") or [prefect](#). **Eparchia** "is used, like the Lat. provincia, in Ac 23:34+, Acts 25:1, to denote "province," "sphere of duty.""

**Having arrived** (1910) (epibaino from epi = upon + baino = to step) literally means to step upon. It was used of mounting an animal (Mt 21:5, boarding a ship (embarking) (Acts 27:2) or as in the present case of entering a region or country and thus setting foot in it (Acts 20:18, Acts 25:1). In Acts 21:4 "they kept telling Paul through the Spirit not to **set foot** in Jerusalem."

**Gilbrant** - Many ancient writers used this word when describing the boarding of ships. The word is used to indicate the mounting of camels (Genesis 24:61) and donkeys (Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:5). The second use could be translated as "set foot in." This use

can be found in ancient writings and in the New Testament. In extra-Biblical literature the verb was sometimes used to denote hostile intent (for example, a band of robbers; cf. Moulton-Milligan). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Epibaino** - 6x - arrived(1), embarking(1), mounted(1), set foot(2), went aboard(1). Matt. 21:5; Acts 20:18; Acts 21:2; Acts 21:4; Acts 25:1; Acts 27:2

#### **Epibaino in Septuagint -**

Ge. 24:61; Lev. 15:9; Num. 22:22; Num. 22:30; Deut. 1:36; Deut. 11:25; Deut. 33:26; Deut. 33:29; Jos. 1:3; Jos. 14:9; Jos. 15:6; Jdg. 5:10; Jdg. 10:4; Jdg. 12:14; 1 Sam. 5:5; 1 Sam. 25:20; 1 Sam. 25:42; 1 Sam. 30:17; 2 Sam. 18:9; 2 Sam. 19:26; 1 Ki. 13:13; 2 Ki. 4:24; 2 Ki. 9:25; Neh. 2:12; Est. 6:8; Job 6:21; Job 30:21; Ps. 18:10; Ps. 68:4; Ps. 68:33; Ps. 76:6; Ps. 91:13; Prov. 21:22; Jer. 10:5; Jer. 17:25; Jer. 18:15; Jer. 22:4; Jer. 46:4; Jer. 46:9; Jer. 50:21; Ezek. 10:18; Amos 4:13; Mic. 1:3; Mic. 5:5; Mic. 5:6; Nah. 3:17; Hab. 2:1 (And **station** myself on the rampart); Hab. 3:8; Zech. 1:8; Zech. 9:9;

Zech 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and **mounted** (epibaino) on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

**John MacArthur** gives us some background on the political scene at this time - Felix's callousness and cruelty had left a legacy of profound hatred toward Rome by the Jews. Their hostility and suspicion now focused on Festus, their new Roman overlord in occupied Palestine. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

**Three days later went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea** ([see some excellent pictures of the archaeological remains at Caesarea Maritima](#)) - **Went up** because Jerusalem is elevated. Since according to Josephus Felix had been removed because of poor leadership and incompetence, Festus made a point immediately to get to know his Jewish constituents and lay the groundwork for peace for the "[Pax Romana](#)" as it was called was the highest priority for provincial governors.

**Robertson** on **three days later** - (meta treis hēmeras). So in Acts 28:17 in Rome. That is on the third day, with a day of rest in between. Precisely the language used of the resurrection of Jesus "**after three days**" = "**on the third day.**" (Mt 27:63, Mk. 8:31; Mk. 9:31; Mk. 10:34) So by common usage then and now. (**ED**: This exact phrase "meta treis hemeras" is found 7x in the Bible - Jos. 3:2; Jos. 9:16; Matt. 27:63; Mk. 8:31; Mk. 9:31; Mk. 10:34; Acts 25:1)

**Jack Arnold** points out that "Acts 24-26, gives us the actual fulfillment of prophecy concerning Paul's ministry. The resurrected Christ said of Paul when he was first converted, "he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15+). In these three chapters in Acts, Paul stood before **kings, governors, Gentiles** and **Israelites**. The three main characters Paul faced were Felix, Festus and King Agrippa, and to each one of these Paul gave the truth of Jesus Christ. When presented with the claims of Christ, Felix, the governor of Judea, procrastinated and said, "Go away for the present and when I find time, I will summon you" (Acts 24:25). When Agrippa heard the gospel, he was an almost Christian and said, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian," or as the King James Version says, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28). However, after Festus, the rationalist, heard the gospel, he said, "Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad" (Acts 26:24). All three of these men heard the gospel and rejected it. Felix and Agrippa came close to truly yielding to Christ, but Festus was calloused and hardened to the truth, so that he never even considered it. ([Sermon](#))

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**Festus in Hastings Bible Dictionary** - No information is forthcoming concerning Porcius Festus, who succeeded Felix in the procuratorship of Judaea, other than that supplied by Acts 24:27; Acts 26:32 and by Josephus, Ant. xx. viii. 9f., ix. 1, and Bellum Judaicum (Josephus) II xiv. 1. According to Josephus, Festus set himself with vigour and success to restore order to his province, which he found distracted with sedition and overrun by bands of robbers. 'He caught the greatest part of the robbers, and destroyed a great many of them.' More particularly it is added that he 'sent forces, both horsemen and footmen, to fall upon those that had been seduced by a certain impostor, who promised them deliverance and freedom from the miseries they were under, if they would but follow him as far as the wilderness. Accordingly, those forces that were sent destroyed both him that had deluded them and those that were his followers also.' The only other incident in the administration of Festus which Josephus relates shows him, in association with King Agrippa II., withstanding 'the chief men of Jerusalem' ([Josephus Antiquities 20.8.9-11](#) scroll down page), and permitting an appeal to Caesar-an interesting combination in view of the narrative in Acts. The circumstances, as stated by Josephus, were those: Agrippa had made an addition to his palace at Jerusalem, which enabled him to observe from his dining-hall what was done in the Temple. Thereupon 'the chief men of Jerusalem' erected a wall to obstruct the view from the palace. Festus supported Agrippa in demanding the removal of this wall, but yielded to the request of the Jews that the whole matter might be referred to Nero, who upheld the appeal and reversed the judgment of his procurator.

Josephus evidently regards Festus as a wise and righteous official, affording an agreeable contrast to Albinus, his successor, of whom he says that 'there was not any sort of wickedness that could be named but he had a hand in it' ([Josephus Wars 2.14.1](#) - scroll down).

Turning to the Book of Acts, we find that there, while justice is done to the promptness with which Festus addressed himself to his duties and to the lip-homage he was ready to pay to 'the custom of the Romans,' he appears in a less favourable light, and the outstanding fact meets us of the estimate which St. Paul formed of him. St. Paul preferred to take his chance with Nero to leaving his cause to be disposed of by this fussy, plausible official. 'I appeal unto Caesar,' is the lasting condemnation of Festus. He was persuaded that the Apostle was innocent of the 'many and grievous, charges' brought against him, yet he was quite prepared to sacrifice him, if thereby he 'could gain favour with the Jews'; hence the preposterous proposal of a re-trial at Jerusalem. The noble use which St. Paul made shortly after of the opportunity given him by Festus to speak for himself before Agrippa and Berenice should not blind us to the callousness of the man who planned that scene with all its pomp and circumstance, and deliberately exploited a prisoner in bonds for the entertainment of his Herodian guests. Festus died after holding his office for a brief term-'scarcely two years' (Schürer, History of the Jewish People (Eng. tr. of GJV).] I. ii. [1890] 185). See article Dates for discussion of the chronology of the procuratorship of Festus.

### **Acts 25:2 And the chief priests and the leading men of the Jews brought charges against Paul, and they were urging him,**

NET Acts 25:2 So the chief priests and the most prominent men of the Jews brought formal charges against Paul to him.

GNT Acts 25:2 νεφ υισ υ τε α τ ο ρχιερεις κα ο προτοι τ υ ουδα ων κατ το Πα λου κα παρεκ λουν α τ υ

NLT Acts 25:2 where the leading priests and other Jewish leaders met with him and made their accusations against Paul.

KJV Acts 25:2 Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him,

ESV Acts 25:2 And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews laid out their case against Paul, and they urged him,

CSB Acts 25:2 Then the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews presented their case against Paul to him; and they appealed,

NIV Acts 25:2 where the chief priests and Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.

NKJ Acts 25:2 Then the high priest and the chief men of the Jews informed him against Paul; and they petitioned him,

NRS Acts 25:2 where the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews gave him a report against Paul. They appealed to him

YLT Acts 25:2 and the chief priest and the principal men of the Jews made manifest to him the things against Paul, and were calling on him,

- Ac 25:15 24:1 Job 31:31 Pr 4:16 Ro 3:12-19
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### **AFTER 2 YEARS PAUL STILL HAS A TARGET ON HIS HEAD!**

Jack Andrews points out that "The Jews were so bent on destroying Paul that they had not forgot about him. [Out of sight—out of mind](#)" did not work with these men." (Jack Andrews Expository Studies – Understanding Acts"

**And the chief priests and the leading men of the Jews brought charges against Paul-** This is a very sad description. The leading men is the "first men," the Jewish men who should have known better but who were morally and ethically the worst men in town. Once again while undoubtedly their arrogant flesh is driving them, the lying and murdering devil is also behind the scenes shooting fiery missiles to urge them on to destroy Paul. And remember Paul has been in prison for 2 years, not out in the Judean countryside proclaiming the Gospel. That did not deter these evil men from desiring to shut him up forever!

Just as the "leading men" among the Jews "were trying to destroy" Jesus (Lk 19:47+), here we see another cohort of leading men seeking to destroy Paul.

**Robertson** notes "There was another high priest now, Ishmael in place of Ananias." And remember the high priests were Sadducees and so Ishmael would be adamantly against Paul's teaching of the resurrection of the dead, especially the resurrection of a dead man named Jesus!

**Brought charges** (1718)(**emphanizo** from **en** = in, into + **phaino** = make visible or conspicuous) means to lay something open to view so that it is clear or plain and all can see and in this context the Jews brought charges against Paul in a formal judicial report. This is their modus operandi for in Acts 24:1+ Luke records "After five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders, with an attorney named Tertullus, and they **brought charges** to the governor against Paul."

**And they were urging him - Urging** is **parakaleo** and the **imperfect tense** depicts them urging him again and again. They were persistently pleading their case! Hatred is a strong motivating force as these men demonstrate for it has been 2 years since they brought charges in Acts 24:1+. Their enmity is still at full throttle so to speak. The proverb is true of them which says "For they cannot sleep unless they do evil; and they are robbed of sleep unless they make someone stumble." (Pr 4:16). They have had insomnia for 2 years!

**THOUGHT-** Are you angry with anyone? Be careful not to let it simmer lest it become a long lasting enmity as with the supposedly "religious" Jews. Real "religion" confesses and repents of angry so as not to grieve or quench the Spirit and potentially incur God's hand of discipline.

**Furneaux** on their **urging** - This renewal of the charge after two years, on the very first opportunity, is a measure, not only of their unsleeping hatred, but of the importance which they attached to Paul's influence.

It is also notable that the enmity of the Jews motivated them to take extremely quick action against Paul, bringing formal charges against him only 3 days after Festus had arrived as the new governor to replace Felix (Acts 24:27+). Presumably they had been attempting to urge Felix to conclude the case against Paul but were unsuccessful. Now that they had a new governor, there was a new opportunity to finish Paul off for good! Isn't it amazing to watch little men strive and connive against a "big," omnipotent, sovereign God Who (of course unbeknownst to them) had promised Paul safe passage to Rome (Acts 23:11+, cf Jesus' prophecy about Paul in Acts 9:15+).

**Acts 25:3 requesting a concession against Paul, that he might have him brought to Jerusalem (at the same time, setting an ambush to kill him on the way).**

NET Acts 25:3 Requesting him to do them a favor against Paul, they urged Festus to summon him to Jerusalem, planning an ambush to kill him along the way.

GNT Acts 25:3 α το μενοι χ ριν κατ α το πως μεταπ μπηται α τ ν ε ς ερουσαλ μ, ν δραν ποιο ντες νελε ν α τ ν κατ τ ν δ ν.

NLT Acts 25:3 They asked Festus as a favor to transfer Paul to Jerusalem (planning to ambush and kill him on the way).

KJV Acts 25:3 And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him.

ESV Acts 25:3 asking as a favor against Paul that he summon him to Jerusalem-- because they were planning an ambush to kill him on the way.

CSB Acts 25:3 asking him to do them a favor against Paul, that he might summon him to Jerusalem. They were preparing an ambush along the road to kill him.

NIV Acts 25:3 They urgently 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.

NKJ Acts 25:3 asking a favor against him, that he would summon him to Jerusalem-- while they lay in ambush along the road to kill him.

NRS Acts 25:3 and requested, as a favor to them against Paul, to have him transferred to Jerusalem. They were, in fact, planning an ambush to kill him along the way.

YLT Acts 25:3 asking favour against him, that he may send for him to Jerusalem, making an ambush to put him to death in the way.

- **requesting a concession against Paul:** Ac 9:2 1Sa 23:19-21 Jer 38:4 Mk 6:23-25 Lu 23:8-24
- **at the same time, setting an ambush** Ac 23:12-15 26:9-11 Ps 37:32,33 64:2-6 140:1-5 Jer 18:18 Joh 16:3 Ro 3:8
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE JEWS' DEVILISH REQUEST

**Requesting a concession against Paul** - **Requesting** is in the [present tense](#) indicating this was continual. As noted above, these Jews were determined and persistent to do evil stirred on by evil spirits. Would it be that God's people would be as determined and persistent to do good enabled by the Spirit.

**Requesting** (154)([aiteo](#)) means to ask for something or make petition. It can mean to ask with a sense of urgency and even to the point of demanding, this latter nuance likely the case in this passage. The [middle voice](#) speaks of the Jews personal involvement in the "**requesting**" as if asking this special favor for themselves, presumably trying to put a little extra pressure on Festus, who does show his true colors as a "people pleaser" at heart. Undoubtedly as the new governor, he wanted to make a good impression on his subjects.

**Concession** (5485)([charis](#)) in this context speaks of a beneficent disposition of Festus toward the Jews and thus conveys the sense of asking (even demanding) a favor from Festus, something we discover he was clearly predisposed to accommodate (see Acts 25:9+)

**Charis** in Acts -

Acts 2:47; Acts 4:33; Acts 6:8; Acts 7:10; Acts 7:46; Acts 11:23; Acts 13:43; Acts 14:3; Acts 14:26; Acts 15:11; Acts 15:40; Acts 18:27; Acts 20:24; Acts 20:32; Acts 24:27; Acts 25:3; Acts 25:9

**That he might have him brought to Jerusalem** - They knew this 60 mile trip from Caesarea would cover some rough terrain that would be optimal for ambushing and assassinating Paul.

**Might have him brought** (3343)([metapempo](#) from **meta** = after + **pémpō** = to send, dispatch) means to send for ([middle voice](#)) or summon Paul to himself (to Festus).

**Metapempo** is found only in Acts - Acts 10:5; Acts 10:22; Acts 10:29; Acts 11:13; Acts 20:1; Acts 24:24; Acts 24:26; Acts 25:3

**At the same time, setting an ambush to kill**([anaireo](#) - Acts 23:15, 21, 27+) **him on the way** - These men were not the 40 Jews who 2 years earlier had sought to assassinate Paul and took a vow to not eat until they had accomplished their devilish deed (Acts 23:12-15+). Now it was the religious leaders themselves who sought to assassinate Paul. The plot comes straight from the top, the Jewish Sanhedrin. So much for low "justice" in the Jewish high court! In less than 20 years hence they would reap the injustices they had sown when their City and Temple were demolished by the Romans in 70 A.D.

These men clearly "did not trust the Roman legal process, but preferred to take matters into their own hands." (NET Note)

**Jack Andrews** rightly observes that these Jews "were willing to die in the process—kill Roman soldiers to get to Paul to kill Paul. It didn't matter to these Jews—they hated Paul! You talk about some hatred!" (Ibid)

**Ambush** (1747)([enedra](#) from **en** = in + **hedra** = sitting) literally means a sitting in or on a spot and then figuratively lying in wait as in ambush. **BDAG** - "'sitting in', hence as act of concealment for surprise attack." **Louw-Nida** - "to conceal oneself or to proceed secretly, while waiting for an appropriate opportunity to attack - 'to be in an ambush, to make plans for a secret attack.'" The only other use in the NT is Luke's description of the ambush planned by the 40 Jews in Acts 23:16+.

**The way** (ten hodon) - This exact Greek phrase is used by Luke 3x to describe believers in Jesus - Acts 19:9, Acts 22:4, Acts 24:14. And so here it is a bit ironic that these Jews plan to kill the "ringleader" of the Way, on "the way!"

**Acts 25:4 Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea and that he himself was about to leave shortly.**



NET Acts 25:4 Then Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and he himself intended to go there shortly.

GNT Acts 25:4 μ ν ο ν Φ στος πεκρθη τηρεσθαι τ ν Πα λον ε ς Καισ ρειαν, αυτ ν δ μ λλειν ν τ χει κπορε εσθαι·

NLT Acts 25:4 But Festus replied that Paul was at Caesarea and he himself would be returning there soon.

KJV Acts 25:4 But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself would depart shortly thither.

ESV Acts 25:4 Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea and that he himself intended to go there shortly.

CSB Acts 25:4 However, Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was about to go there shortly.

NIV Acts 25:4 Festus answered, "Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon.

NKJ Acts 25:4 But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was going there shortly.

NRS Acts 25:4 Festus replied that Paul was being kept at Caesarea, and that he himself intended to go there shortly.

YLT Acts 25:4 Then, indeed, Festus answered that Paul is kept in Caesarea, and himself is about speedily to go on thither,

- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Festus then answered that Paul was being kept in custody at Caesarea**- The Jews knew exactly where Paul was.

**A T Robertson** comments on KJV's rendering that begin with "**but**" (Gk - *men oun*) noting that this Greek sentence is **not** a contrast as would be implied with "**but**." He suggests that instead the Jewish leaders "probably argued that it was easier for one man (Paul) to come to Jerusalem than for many to go down there. But Festus was clearly suspicious (Acts 25:6) and was wholly within his rights to insist that they make their charges in Caesarea where he held court." (ED: The seat of the official Roman Court was not Jerusalem but Caesarea).

**Kept in custody** (5083)(**tereo** from **teros** - a guard) means to keep an eye on, watching over and thus retaining in custody.

**And that he himself was about to leave shortly**- To travel to Caesarea.

**Acts 25:5 "Therefore," he said, "let the influential men among you go there with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them prosecute him."**

NET Acts 25:5 "So," he said, "let your leaders go down there with me, and if this man has done anything wrong, they may bring charges against him."

GNT Acts 25:5 Ο ο ν ν μ ν, φησ ν, δυνατο συγκαταβ ντες ε τ στιν ν τ νδρ τοπον κατηγορε τωσαν α το .

NLT Acts 25:5 So he said, "Those of you in authority can return with me. If Paul has done anything wrong, you can make your accusations."

KJV Acts 25:5 Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

ESV Acts 25:5 "So," said he, "let the men of authority among you go down with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them bring charges against him."

CSB Acts 25:5 "Therefore," he said, "let the men of authority among you go down with me and accuse him, if there is any wrong in this man."

NIV Acts 25:5 Let some of your leaders come with me and press charges against the man there, if he has done anything wrong."

NKJ Acts 25:5 "Therefore," he said, "let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man, to see if there is any fault in him."

NRS Acts 25:5 "So," he said, "let those of you who have the authority come down with me, and if there is anything wrong about the man, let them accuse him."

YLT Acts 25:5 'Therefore those able among you -- saith he -- having come down together, if there be anything in this man -- let them accuse him;'

- **Therefore," he said, "let the influential men:** Ac 25:16, 23:30, 24:8
- **if there is anything wrong about the man:** Ac 25:18,19,25 18:14 1Sa 24:11,12 Ps 7:3-5 Joh 18:29,30
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## GOD SOVEREIGNLY USES FESTUS TO PROTECT PAUL

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion - since the Jews wanted Paul to come to Jerusalem and Festus was going to Caesarea where Paul was then why don't they go with him.

**He said let the influential men among you go (down) there with me** - A better translation is "let the men of authority go down" (ESV, CSB), the idea being men who had authority to bring charges against Paul. **Robertson** adds they were "The mighty ones among you," "the men of power" (dunatoi) and authority, "the first men," the Sanhedrin, in other words."

**Influential** (1415)(**dunatos** from **dunamai** = to be capable) refers to one inherent ability and/or resources in a position to do something. Used of Apollos who "was mighty in the Scriptures." (Acts 18:24+)

**Dunatos in Acts** - Acts 2:24; Acts 7:22; Acts 11:17; Acts 18:24; Acts 20:16; Acts 25:5;

**And if there is anything wrong about the man** - To Festus Paul is still innocent regardless of the charges by the Jews. The "IF" here is a condition of the first class which assumes that what follows is true, that Paul has done something wrong (not that he is morally defective per se, but that he has committed something legally wrong, even a crime worthy of the death penalty). **Robertson** suggests Festus makes this positive statement "to be courteous to" the Jewish leaders.

**Wrong** (824)(**atopos** from **a** = without + **topos** = place) means literally having no place, out of place or out of the ordinary and hence unusual, unexpected, surprising ("nothing **unusual** happened" Acts 28:6+) . When **atopos** is used in an ethical context (as in this passage) it pertains to not being in accordance with what is right or fitting. The idea is behaviorally "out of place," and hence improper or wrong. It was used by the criminal on the cross speaking of Jesus "this man has done nothing **wrong**." (Lk 23:41+).

**Atopos** - 4x - perverse(1), unusual(1), wrong(2). - Lk. 23:41; Acts 25:5; Acts 28:6; 2 Th 3:2

**Atopos in the Septuagint** - Job 4:8; Job 11:11; Job 27:6; Job 34:12; Job 35:13; Job 36:21; Prov. 30:20

**Let them prosecute him** - If you really want to press charges then let some of your authorities go with me. There you are to repeat the accusations ([present imperative](#)) before the accused.

**MacArthur** points out that "Though Festus was inexperienced, had an obvious desire to conciliate the Jewish authorities, and lacked personal knowledge of Paul, God used him, as He had others, to providentially protect Paul from another plot against his life." (Ibid)

**Let them prosecute** ([present imperative](#) - command)(2723)(**kategoreo** from **kata** = against + **agora** =place of public speaking) means to speak against a person before a public tribunal or bring an accusation in court. The cognate word **kategoria** was a legal technical term that referred to the content of the accusation or charge made against someone. Note that all of the Gospel uses involve accusing Jesus (except John 5:45).

**Kategoreo** - Matt. 12:10; Matt. 27:12; Mk. 3:2; Mk. 15:3; Mk. 15:4; Lk. 6:7; Lk. 23:2; Lk. 23:10; Lk. 23:14; Jn. 5:45; Jn. 8:6; Acts 22:30; Acts 24:2; Acts 24:8; Acts 24:13; Acts 24:19; Acts 25:5; Acts 25:11; Acts 25:16; Acts 28:19; Rom. 2:15; Rev. 12:10+ (of Satan the Accuser!)

**Acts 25:6 After he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, and on the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.**

NET Acts 25:6 After Festus had stayed not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea, and the next day he sat on the judgment seat and ordered Paul to be brought.

GNT Acts 25:6 Διατρψας ὀ ν α το ς μ ρας ο πλε ους κτ ὀ κα, καταβ ς ε ς Καισ ρειαν, τ π α ριον καθ σας π το β ματος κ λευσεν τ ν Πα λον χθ ναι.

NLT Acts 25:6 About eight or ten days later Festus returned to Caesarea, and on the following day he took his seat in court and ordered that Paul be brought in.

KJV Acts 25:6 And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought.

ESV Acts 25:6 After he stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.

CSB Acts 25:6 When he had spent not more than eight or 10 days among them, he went down to Caesarea. The next day, seated at the judge's bench, he commanded Paul to be brought in.

NIV Acts 25:6 After spending eight or ten days with them, he went down to Caesarea, and the next day he convened the court and ordered that Paul be brought before him.

NKJ Acts 25:6 And when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought.

NRS Acts 25:6 After he had stayed among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down to Caesarea; the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought.

YLT Acts 25:6 and having tarried among them more than ten days, having gone down to Caesarea, on the morrow having sat upon the tribunal, he commanded Paul to be brought;

- **he took his seat on the tribunal:** Ac 25:10,17 18:12-17 Mt 27:19 Joh 19:13 2Co 5:10 Jas 2:6
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FESTUS TAKES THE BEMA SEAT

**After he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them** - Luke does not specifically state it, but there is little doubt the Jews continued to "pester" Festus about Paul during this time he remained in Jerusalem. **Utley** quips " I would imagine the Jewish leaders wined and dined Festus. They manipulated all the Roman officials."

**Wikipedia** on [tribunal](#) - A tribunal, generally, is any person or institution with authority to judge, adjudicate on, or determine claims or disputes—whether or not it is called a tribunal in its title. For example, an advocate who appears before a court with a single judge could describe that judge as 'their tribunal'.

**He went down to Caesarea - Went down** as always speaks of down in elevation when compared to Jerusalem.

**And on the next day he took his seat on the tribunal and ordered Paul to be brought**- Notice that Festus again moves quickly and convenes court the day after his arrival from Jerusalem.

**On the tribunal** (Judgment Seat = KJV, NET)([968](#))([bema](#) from [bainō](#) = to step, ascend"; see [Wikipedia; picture of bema](#)) in its most common NT use refers to a raised platform on which an official is seated when rendering judgment on certain legal cases. NET Note adds that "The judgment seat (bēma) was a raised platform mounted by steps and sometimes furnished with a seat, used by officials in addressing an assembly or making pronouncements, often on judicial matters. The judgment seat was a familiar item in Greco-Roman culture, often located in the agora, the public square or marketplace in the center of a city."

**Bema** in NT - ground(1), judgment seat(7), rostrum(1), tribunal(3).

Matt. 27:19; Jn. 19:13; Acts 7:5; Acts 12:21; Acts 18:12; Acts 18:16; Acts 18:17; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:17; Rom. 14:10; 2 Co. 5:10

**Ordered** (Commanded) ([2753](#))([keleuo](#)) means to give a command, usually as in this context, in an official setting.

**Keleuo** is frequent in **Acts** -

Acts 4:15; Acts 5:34; Acts 8:38; Acts 12:19; Acts 16:22; Acts 21:33; Acts 21:34; Acts 22:24; Acts 22:30; Acts 23:3; Acts 23:10; Acts 23:35; Acts 24:8; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:17; Acts 25:21; Acts 25:23; Acts 27:43

**Acts 25:7 After Paul arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove,**

NET Acts 25:7 When he arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many serious charges that they were not able to prove.

GNT Acts 25:7 παραγενομ νου δ α το περι στησαν α τ ν ο π εροσολ μων καταβεβηκ τες ουδα οι πολλ κα βαρ α α τι ματα καταφ ροντες ο κ σχιουον ποδε ξαι,

NLT Acts 25:7 When Paul arrived, the Jewish leaders from Jerusalem gathered around and made many serious accusations they couldn't prove.

KJV Acts 25:7 And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.

ESV Acts 25:7 When he had arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and serious charges against him that they could not prove.

CSB Acts 25:7 When he arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him and brought many serious charges that they were not able to prove,

NIV Acts 25:7 When Paul appeared, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove.

NKJ Acts 25:7 When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about and laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove,

NRS Acts 25:7 When he arrived, the Jews who had gone down from Jerusalem surrounded him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove.

YLT Acts 25:7 and he having come, there stood round about the Jews who have come down from Jerusalem - - many and weighty charges they are bringing against Paul, which they were not able to prove,

- **bringing many and serious charges:** Ac 25:24 21:28 Acts 24:5,6,13 Ezr 4:15 Es 3:8 Ps 27:12 35:11 Mt 5:11,12 Mt 26:60-62 Mk 15:3,4 Lu 23:2,10 1Pe 4:14-16
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Paul Appears Before Festus

## JEWISH ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PAUL, BEFORE FESTUS

Even after 2 years the Jews still had no solid evidence against Paul! Regardless of the fact that they had no case against Paul, so great was their hatred that nothing would deter them from trying to destroy him.

**After Paul arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him** - One can imagine this scene with Jewish eyes filled with daggers watching the Apostle Paul, the greatest Jew other than Jesus. Notice the phrase **had come down from Jerusalem** (verb [katabaino](#)) because of Jerusalem's elevation compared to surrounding towns, especially Caesarea on the seacoast. But these Jews came down not just physically but morally and ethically, for they came down to cast lies and slander at Paul. Indeed, they would continue to go down (assuming they never believed in Messiah) to the depths of [Sheol](#) (Pr 9:18) and then the [Lake of fire](#), where they would suffer a greater degree of punishment because of their stubborn rejection of a greater degree of Gospel light (cf Lk 10:11-15+)

The Jews that **stood around** Paul recall a similar scene with his Master, Luke recording "And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently." (Lk 23:10+)

**Robertson** points out that "They have no lawyer this time, but they mass their forces so as to impress Festus."

**Stood around** (4026)([periistemi](#) from [peri](#) = around + [histemi](#) = to stand) means literally to stand around which describes these Jews forming a group around Paul, literally encircling him. In one secular use it described a calvary posted for action, not a bad picture for Paul's persecutors! Here these men are like vultures gathering around their soon to be dead prey (if they had their way!)

or like a pack of ravenous wolves around an innocent sheep! But as **MacArthur** says "these wolves were toothless; the **many and serious charges** they brought were the same ones (sedition, sectarianism, and sacrilege, cf. Acts 24:5-6) that they had been unable to prove two years earlier before Felix. Those unsubstantiated charges were no more likely to convince Festus than they had Felix."

**Bringing many and serious charges against him which they could not prove** - They may have been **many and serious** but they were groundless, unfounded, unsubstantiated, unproven, unsupported, uncorroborated. They were **many and serious** fabricated lies! And not only were they watching Paul, they were falsely accusing Paul. Robertson says "bringing...against" has the sense of "bearing down" which is very vivid in view of the fact that they had encircled him! Just imagine the scene and the Spirit enabled boldness it would take to stand there and just "take it" so to speak (of course he will get a chance to rebut). And their "trumped up" charges were basically the same as before -- "a real pest and a fellow who stirs up dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. And he even tried to desecrate the temple." (Acts 24:5-6+)

As **MacArthur** points out "Ironically, it was those same Jews, not the Christians, who finally rose in open revolt against Rome (**ED**: SEE [FIRST JEWISH-ROMAN WAR - 66-73 A.D.](#)). When Rome ultimately did take action against the Christians, it was not because they were revolutionaries. The Romans persecuted and killed them for refusing, on religious grounds, to participate in the empire-unifying ritual of emperor worship." (Ibid)

**John G. Butler** wrote, "The world may put Christianity in a lowly, scorned position. But that does not change the value of Christianity or the vileness of evil. When evil seems overpowering and threatening to destroy, be encouraged that God is with the righteous; and, therefore, they will eventually be the victors."

**R. Kent Hughes** wrote, "When we are wrongly accused, slandered, or treated harshly, we must remember that God, the Judge of Heaven, will hold men accountable." Indeed, they may have been before the Emperor's Tribunal (Judgment Seat) but one day they would be before the Righteous Judge Jesus Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment and the charges against them will be **many and serious** and such that they warrant an eternal death sentence!

**Bringing...against** (2702) (**kataphero** from **kata** = down against + **phero** = bring, carry, bear) means literally to bring or bear against as of legal charges here in Acts 25:7. Used in Acts 26:10 where Paul describes his judicial vote cast against the Christians! In the third and final NT use in Acts 20:9 **kataphero** is used as an idiom to describe Eutychus as "overcome by sleep" which is literally to be carried away by deep sleep. **Kataphero** means to cause something adverse to happen to someone, usually in connection with accusations or condemnations [LN]. It means to cause something to happen that is opposed to another's interest [BDAG].

**Kataphero** in the **Septuagint** -

Gen. 37:2; Deut. 1:25 = "they **brought** us **back**"; Deut. 22:14; Jdg. 7:4; Jdg. 7:5; Jdg. 16:21 = "they **brought** him **down** to Gaza"; 2 Sa 14:14; 1 Ki. 1:53 "they **brought** him **down** from the altar."; Isa. 17:13; Isa. 28:2; Ezek. 47:2; Dan. 5:20 = "he **was deposed** from his royal throne"; Mic. 1:4

**Gilbrant - Kataphero** was used by Homer and other classical writers to mean "bring down, fall down, pull down," as well as to mean "fall or drop asleep" (cf. Liddell-Scott). **Katapherō** appears in later Greek literature also. In most cases it has the meaning of "bringing down." This word occurs 15 times in the Septuagint. Five of these times it translates *yāradh* ("cause to go down, bring," etc.), having the same basic meaning as in the classical period. A second meaning of "flowing, gushing, or pouring out" is seen in 2 Samuel 14:14 and Micah 1:4, both times translating the Hebrew *nāgar*. Only Luke used **katapherō** in the New Testament (Acts 20:9 [twice]; 25:7; and 26:10). In Acts 20:9 Eutychus "(fell) into a deep sleep" and was "sunk down (overwhelmed) with sleep." In Acts 25:7 the people "laid (cast) many and grievous complaints against Paul," implying that the charges were "brought forward" or "laid down." Similarly, in Acts 26:10 Paul "gave" his voice "against" the Christians. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Serious** (926) (**barus**) means heavy and is used figuratively in the NT. In 2 Cor 10:10 the phrase "'His letters are **weighty**" speaks of rules and regulations difficult to obey, burdensome, oppressive (BDAG has "pert. to being a source of difficulty or trouble because of demands made."). In Mt 23:23 Jesus accused the religious leaders saying you "have neglected the **weightier** provisions of the law", the truly important matters ("justice and mercy and faithfulness"). In Acts 20:9 Paul warned the Ephesian elders that after he leaves "**savage** wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock" thus characterizing them as fierce, cruel, vicious (BDAG = "pert. to being of unbearable temperament."). And in 1 Jn. 5:3+ **barus** speaks of God's commandments - "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not **burdensome**."

**Barus** describes something as being important because of unusual significance particularly with regard to certain legal directives [BDAG].

These Jews who are leveling **serious** (**barus**) charges are like the "**savage** (**barus**) wolves" Paul had warned the Ephesians to watch out for!

**Barus** - 6v - burdensome(1), heavy(1), savage(1), serious(1), weightier provisions(1), weighty(1).

Matt. 23:4; Matt. 23:23; Acts 20:29; Acts 25:7; 2 Co. 10:10; 1 Jn. 5:3+

### **Barus** in the **Septuagint** -

Gen. 48:17; Exod. 17:12; Exod. 18:18; Num. 11:14; Num. 20:20; Jdg. 20:34; 1 Sam. 4:18; 1 Sam. 5:11; 1 Ki. 3:9; 1 Ki. 10:2; 1 Ki. 12:4; 1 Ki. 12:11; 2 Ki. 6:14; 2 Ki. 18:17; 2 Chr. 9:1; 2 Chr. 10:4; 2 Chr. 10:11; 2 Chr. 25:19; Neh. 5:18; Job 6:3; Job 15:10; Job 23:2; Job 33:7; Ps. 35:18; Ps. 38:4 - **heavy** burden; Prov. 27:3; Dan. 2:11; Nah. 3:3;

**Gilbrant** on **barus** - Among classical writers *barus* enjoyed much diversity of use. Its meaning extends from the general sense of "heavy" (in weight; cf. *baros* [916], "weight"), to have a variety of connotations. Perhaps the common denominator among the various uses is intensity; *barus* thus can denote "severe" ("weighty") suffering or a "stern, harsh" person. When used of impressions on the faculties it can depict a "strong, deep" sound or a "low" pitch (Liddell-Scott). Six different Hebrew words are translated by *barus* in the Septuagint, although generally either the adjective *kāvēdh*, "heavy, weighty," or the related verb *kāvēdh*, "to weigh heavily," stand behind it. The variety found in classical Greek continues in the Septuagint. It describes Moses' hands which became "heavy" (cf. NIV's "tired") after having lifted the staff of God for so long (Exodus 17:12). Or, Jethro felt that the "heavy" (i.e., "hard") work of ruling Israel was more than Moses could bear (Exodus 18:18; cf. Nehemiah 5:18, of "harsh" demands). The Psalmist could speak of the heavy burden of his guilt (Psalm 38:4 [LXX 37:4]), and the author of 1 Maccabees could write of a "strong force" (of soldiers) (RSV; 1:17,20,29). The New Testament records *barus* six times; the versatility is still apparent. Jesus reproached the Pharisees and legal experts for having neglected the (literally) "weightier" matters of the Law (Matthew 23:4; NIV, "more important"). At the same time, these same individuals were guilty of making the Law a "heavy" burden for the rest of the people (Matthew 23:4; cf. 1 John 5:3). Paul warned that harsh, "grievous," wolves would emerge from the Ephesians' own ranks. Here the idea is of severe, stern, or overly strict rulers who as "wolves" would devour the "sheep" of the flock of God (Acts 20:29). Paul was accused of writing *barus* letters, but being a weak person of contemptible speech in person. Here the contrast is between "forceful, convincing" letters and "contemptible" speech (2 Corinthians 10:10). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

All disciples of Jesus have been forewarned that they would be subjected to unjust persecution...

Matthew 5:11; 12 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

1 Peter 4:12-16 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 15 Make sure that none of you suffers as a murderer, or thief, or evildoer, or a troublesome meddler; 16 but if anyone suffers as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but is to glorify God in this name.

**Could (not)** ("not able to") (2480)(**ischuo** from **ischus** = might) means to be strong in body or in resources. **ischuo** can speak of physical power (Mk 2:17, 5:4, 9:12). It can speak of having the required personal resources to accomplish some objective as here in Php 4:13 or conversely with the negative speaks of that which is good for nothing (Mt 5:13-note). **ischuo** is the equivalent of to have efficacy, to avail or to have force.

**Prove** (584)(**apodeiknumi** from **apo** + **deiknumi** = to point out, cause to see) means to cause something to be known as genuine, to cause it to become displayed in a manner accessible to or observable by the public. It means demonstrating by argument, shown to be true, something the Jews could not do. In Acts 25:7 Paul says that serious charges were brought against him which his accusers "could not **prove** (apodeiknumi)." So here the idea of **apodeiknumi** is to show by argument and so to prove, which is the same sense as Peter intends to convey here in Acts 2:22. Jesus was shown to be Who He claimed to be!

**Jack Andrews** - The Jews had no witnesses—no evidence—therefore their testimony was their word against Paul's word!

**Charles Spurgeon** said, "We ought never to fear those who are defending the wrong side, for since God is not with them their wisdom is folly, their strength is weakness, and their glory is their shame."

**John Phillips** pointed out, "In court (Paul) faced again... a dish of lies and half-truths, served up with venom and spite and seasoned with the deadly poison of a charge of insurrection and high treason. What must Festus have thought of it all, a Roman trying a case filled with such religious overtones? What a betrayal it all was of the calling and destiny of Israel to be a witness for God to the Gentile world. Far from being attracted to the true and living God by these Jewish leaders, Festus must have thanked his gods a thousand times that he was a Roman, not a Jew." (Exploring Acts)

What Paul must have known is the truth of Jesus' promise in Sermon on the Mount

Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Mt 5:11-12+)

**Acts 25:8 while Paul said in his own defense, "I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."**

NET Acts 25:8 Paul said in his defense, "I have committed no offense against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar."

GNT Acts 25:8 το Πάλου πολογουμ νου τι Ο τε ε ρ τ ν ν μον τ ν ουδα ων ο τε ε ρ τ ε ρ ν ο τε ε ρ Κα σα ρ τι μα ρ τον.

NLT Acts 25:8 Paul denied the charges. "I am not guilty of any crime against the Jewish laws or the Temple or the Roman government," he said.

KJV Acts 25:8 While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all.

ESV Acts 25:8 Paul argued in his defense, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I committed any offense."

CSB Acts 25:8 while Paul made the defense that, "Neither against the Jewish law, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I sinned at all."

NIV Acts 25:8 Then Paul made his defense: "I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."

NKJ Acts 25:8 while he answered for himself, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all."

NRS Acts 25:8 Paul said in his defense, "I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against the emperor."

YLT Acts 25:8 he making defence -- 'Neither in regard to the law of the Jews, nor in regard to the temple, nor in regard to Caesar -- did I commit any sin.'

- **I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews** Ac 25:10 6:13,14 23:1 24:6,12,17-21 28:17,21 Ge 40:15 Jer 37:18 Da 6:22 2Co 1:12
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL DENIES THE CHARGES

**While Paul said in his own defense** - The [present tense](#) indicates he was continually arguing his defense because there was more than one charge.

**Said in his own defense** (626) ([apologeomai](#) from **apó** = from + **lógos** = speech) literally means to speak oneself off, hence to plead for oneself, to defend or speak or plead for oneself ([middle voice](#) speaks of one's personal involvement) before a tribunal or elsewhere. **BDAG** says "to speak in one's own defense against charges presumed to be false."

All uses of **apologeomai** - Lk. 12:11; Lk. 21:14; Acts 19:33; Acts 24:10; Acts 25:8; Acts 26:1; Acts 26:2; Acts 26:24; Ro 2:15; 2 Co. 12:19

**I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews**([sectarianism](#)) **or against the temple**([sacrilege](#)) **or against Caesar** ([sedition](#)) - **The Law of the Jews** = Law of Moses. Paul succinctly rebuts three charges saying in essence "I have sinned in nothing." (The absolute negative particle for each of the three charges - Paul is adamantly denying the charges!)

**Paul** "argues that he has not disturbed the peace at any level. This was the standard charge made against early Christians (Luke 23:2+; Acts 17:6-7+)." (NET Note)

**Caesar** (2541)(**kaisar** - of Latin origin) is the title for the emperor of Rome. It was originally a surname of Julius Caesar, later adopted by Octavianus Augustus and his successors afterward as an **appellative** (identifying word or words by which someone or something is called) as a part of their title. Festus was most interested in this remark for he did not care about his religious activities but was deeply concerned about his political activities.

**Robertson** - Nero was Emperor A.D. 54–68, the last of the emperors with any hereditary claim to the name “Caesar.” Soon it became merely a title like Kaiser and Czar (modern derivatives). In Acts only “Caesar” and “Augustus” are employed for the Emperor, not “King” (Βασιλεὺς [Basileus]) as from the time of Domitian.

**I have committed no offense** (264)(**hamartano**) literally means to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize). By far the majority of the uses of hamartano mean to act contrary to the will and law of God and thus almost every one of the 43 NT uses are rendered in some way as to sin or commit sin.

**NET Note** - Paul’s threefold claim to be innocent with respect to the law ... the temple and Caesar argues that he has not disturbed the peace at any level. This was the standard charge made against early Christians (Luke 23:2; Acts 17:6–7). The charges here are emphatically denied, with the Greek conjunction *oute* repeated before each charge.

**Acts 25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges?"**

NET Acts 25:9 But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and be tried before me there on these charges?"

GNT Acts 25:9 Φ στος δ θ λων το ς ουδα οις χ ριν καταθ σθαι ποκριθε ς τ Πα λ ε πεν, Θ λεις ε ς ε ροσ λυμα ναβ ς κε περ το των κριθ ναι π μο ;

NLT Acts 25:9 Then Festus, wanting to please the Jews, asked him, "Are you willing to go to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there?"

KJV Acts 25:9 But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?

ESV Acts 25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, said to Paul, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and there be tried on these charges before me?"

CSB Acts 25:9 Then Festus, wanting to do a favor for the Jews, replied to Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem, there to be tried before me on these charges?"

NIV Acts 25:9 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?"

NKJ Acts 25:9 But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?"

NRS Acts 25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?"

YLT Acts 25:9 And Festus willing to lay on the Jews a favour, answering Paul, said, 'Art thou willing, to Jerusalem having gone up, there concerning these things to be judged before me?'

- **Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem** Ac 25:3,20 12:3 24:27 Mk 15:15
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **FESTUS ON THE HORNS OF A DILEMMA**

**Horns of a dilemma** refers to alternatives, each of which is equally difficult. If you are on the horns of a dilemma, you have to choose between two things, both of which are unpleasant or difficult. That describes Festus for Paul was a Roman citizen who had been falsely accused and was innocent. On the other hand, if Festus released Paul, it would arouse the anger of the Jews and he would run the risk of a significant disturbance of the peace, which would be "bad news" for him back in Rome! And so he offers what seems to be a compromise of trying Paul in Jerusalem but under Roman jurisdiction not Jewish.



**Jack Arnold** adds "At this point, Festus should have dismissed the case against Paul, but now we find this man is a compromiser, always seeking to find the middle ground. He was a true politician because he wanted to please his Jewish subjects, and after all, it was more important to please millions of Jews than to release a man called Paul, the pest. Festus suggested that Paul be taken to Jerusalem to be tried, not by the Sanhedrin but by Festus himself." ([Sermon](#))

**But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor** - This is the exact phrase used of Felix in Acts 24:27+ "and **wishing to do the Jews a favor**, Felix left Paul imprisoned." Remember Festus is just beginning his tenure as governor of Judea and wants to get off to a good start with the Jewish populace, most of whom are not Christians.

**Wishing** ([present tense](#)) ([2309](#))([thelo](#)) refers to exercising one's will with the underlying sense of to desire, want or wish. Thelo "expresses not simply a desire, but a determined and constant exercise of the will." (W E Vine)

All uses of **thelo** in Acts -

Acts 2:12; Acts 7:28; Acts 7:39; Acts 10:10; Acts 14:13; Acts 16:3; Acts 17:18; Acts 17:20; Acts 18:21; Acts 19:33; Acts 24:6; Acts 24:27; Acts 25:9; Acts 26:5;

**Favor** ([5485](#)) see preceding note on [charis](#)

**Answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me on these charges?"** - Festus, realizes it would be unjust to condemn Paul on these charges also see it would not be politically expedient to absolve him. Therefore in a question he offers Paul the same proposal that the Jewish rulers had made to him in Jerusalem - "requesting a concession against Paul, that he might have him brought to Jerusalem...." (Acts 25:3) Of course Festus makes no mention of the possibility of an ambush by the Jews (presumably he did not know about their malicious plot.)

**Warren Wiersbe** wrote, "A Roman judge could not move a case to another court without the consent of the accused, and Paul refused to go! Instead, he claimed the right of every Roman citizen to appeal to Caesar." (BEC)

**Acts 25:10 But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know.**

NET Acts 25:10 Paul replied, "I am standing before Caesar's judgment seat, where I should be tried. I have done nothing wrong to the Jews, as you also know very well.

GNT Acts 25:10 ε πεν δ Παλος, π το β ματος Κα σαρος σ τς ε μι, ο με δε κρ νεσθαι. ουδα ους ο δ ν δ κησα ς κα σ κ λλιον πιγιν σκεις.

NLT Acts 25:10 But Paul replied, "No! This is the official Roman court, so I ought to be tried right here. You know very well I am not guilty of harming the Jews.

KJV Acts 25:10 Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

ESV Acts 25:10 But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you yourself know very well.

CSB Acts 25:10 But Paul said: "I am standing at Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as even you can see very well.

NIV Acts 25:10 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.

NKJ Acts 25:10 So Paul said, "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.

NRS Acts 25:10 Paul said, "I am appealing to the emperor's tribunal; this is where I should be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you very well know.

YLT Acts 25:10 and Paul said, 'At the tribunal of Caesar I am standing, where it behoveth me to be judged; to Jews I did no unrighteousness, as thou dost also very well know;

- **I am standing before Caesar's tribunal** Ac 16:37,38 22:25-28
- **as you also very well know:** Ac 25:25 23:29 26:31 28:18 Mt 27:18,23,24 2Co 4:2

- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE PROPER JUDGE THE PROPER PLACE

**But** - Term of contrast. Paul begs to differ with the governor's question about being tried in Jerusalem. He is a Roman citizen and knows that Caesarea is the place he should be tried and Festus is the one who should be the judge, not the Jews in Jerusalem! Paul was no fool. He knew if he could not get justice in neutral Caesarea, then it would be impossible to get justice in hostile Jerusalem.

**Paul said** - And so Paul counters Festus' question.

**I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried** - Paul says this is a legitimate Roman citizen and rightly standing in a legitimate Roman courtroom. This is where he should be tried, and actually the word for "ought" is "must" - this is where he must be tried!

**Ought** (1163)([dei](#) rom [deo](#) = bind, tie together root of [doulos](#), bond-servant) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity of happening. Paul knew the Roman law and that he was at the proper courtroom for trial.

**Tribunal** (968)([bema](#) from [bainō](#), "to step, ascend"; see also [Wikipedia](#)) (see also [Judgment by the Saints](#)) ([see picture of ancient bema](#)). in its most common NT use refers to a raised platform on which an official is seated when rendering judgment on certain legal cases or athletic events. It is a platform before which someone would walk up to receive judgment; the administration of justice, given from "a tribunal-chair" (throne) at which there is a meting out rewards and punishments. Pilate sat on a judgment seat (*bēma*) in Christ's trial (Mt 27:19; Jn 19:13). Gallio sat on a judgment seat (Acts 18:12-17). All believers must stand before the judgment seat of God/Christ (Ro 14:10; 2Cor 5:10). This divine judgment will reward our works – not judge our sins, for that judgment occurred 2000 years ago on the mighty Cross when the humble Lamb bore ALL our sins, His temporal death giving us eternal life! However, it is a mistake to assume God "doesn't care" about the small matters (decisions) of life. Far from it! Each and every scene of life is a "partnership invitation" from God to live with Him – not just for Him! (Cp Lk 16:10 with Eccl 12:14, 1Cor 4:5)

**Bema** in Acts Acts 7:5; Acts 12:21; Acts 18:12; Acts 18:16; Acts 18:17; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:17

**Robertson** has a lengthy note - If Festus was unwilling to give Paul justice in Caesarea where his regular court held forth, what assurance was there that Festus would give it to him at Jerusalem in the atmosphere of intense hostility to Paul? Only two years ago the mob, the Sanhedrin, the forty conspirators had tried to take his life in Jerusalem. Festus had no more courage to do right than Felix, however plausible his language might sound. Festus also, while wanting Paul to think that he would in Jerusalem "be judged of these things before me," in reality probably intended to turn Paul over to the Sanhedrin in order to please the Jews (ED: THIS IS SUPPOSITION AND NOT PROVEN BY THE BIBLICAL TEXT), probably with Festus present also to see that Paul received justice. Festus possibly was surprised to find that the charges were chiefly against Jewish law, though one was against Caesar. It was not a mere change of venue that Paul sensed, but the utter unwillingness of Festus to do his duty by him and his willingness to connive at Jewish vengeance on Paul. Paul had faced the mob and the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, two years of trickery at the hands of Felix in Caesarea, and now he is confronted by the bland chicanery of Festus. It is too much, the last straw.

**I have done no wrong to the Jews** - Paul once again pleads his Innocence. Here he emphasizes he did not act unjustly toward the Jews and did not violate any of their laws. This was a fact and his Jewish protagonists had to accept to their chagrin.

**Jack Andrews** points out that "We can learn from Paul that just because we are Christians does not mean that we have to take everything the world dishes out—that we cannot stand up and speak up for our rights as citizens!" (Ibid)

**As you also very well know** - How did Paul know that Festus knew he was innocent? I am not sure how he could say this with such assurance but clearly he was absolutely correct as we see in Acts 25:18-19<sup>+</sup> when Festus says to Agrippa ""When the accusers stood up, they began bringing charges against him not of such crimes as I was expecting. but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive."

**Know** (present tense) (1921) ([epiginosko](#)) means that Festus knew exactly or completely.

**MacArthur** points out that Paul's statement "served as a rebuke and a call to integrity, since he did know that Paul was innocent (vv. 18-19). The high standards of Roman justice, and his duty as a Roman judge, demanded that he release the apostle." (Ibid)

**Acts 25:11** "If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar."

NET Acts 25:11 If then I am in the wrong and have done anything that deserves death, I am not trying to escape dying, but if not one of their charges against me is true, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar!" (Act 25:11 NET)

GNT Acts 25:11 ε μ ν ο ν δικ κα ξιον θαν του ππραχ τι, ο παραιτο μαι τ ποθανε ν· ε δ ο δ ν σπιν ν ο τοι κατηγορο σ ν μου, ο δε ς με δ ναται α το ς χαρ σασθαι· Κα σαρα πικαλο μαι.

NLT Acts 25:11 If I have done something worthy of death, I don't refuse to die. But if I am innocent, no one has a right to turn me over to these men to kill me. I appeal to Caesar!"

KJV Acts 25:11 For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

ESV Acts 25:11 If then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death. But if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar."

CSB Acts 25:11 If then I am doing wrong, or have done anything deserving of death, I do not refuse to die, but if there is nothing to what these men accuse me of, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

NIV Acts 25:11 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!"

NKJ Acts 25:11 "For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar."

NRS Acts 25:11 Now if I am in the wrong and have committed something for which I deserve to die, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can turn me over to them. I appeal to the emperor."

YLT Acts 25:11 for if indeed I am unrighteous, and anything worthy of death have done, I deprecate not to die; and if there is none of the things of which these accuse me, no one is able to make a favour of me to them; to Caesar I appeal!"

- **If, then, I am a wrongdoer:** 1 Co 15:2 Ac 18:14 Jos 22:22 1Sa 12:3-5 Job 31:21,38-40 Ps 7:3-5
- **no one can hand me over to them:** Ac 16:37 22:25 1Th 2:15
- **I appeal to Caesar.** Ac 25:10,25 26:32 28:19 1Sa 27:1
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### PAUL DOES NOT SEEK TO EVADE BUT TO DEMAND JUSTICE

Paul knew he was innocent and he knew the Roman law was on his side and that he therefore had the right to demand justice.

**If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death** - For the sake of argument Paul states this as a [condition of the first class](#) (actually there are 2 "conditions") which assumes the possibility it is true. He is saying "If I am in the habit of committing injustice " and "if I have done anything deserving death." Notice that Paul's affirmation indicates that he is fully aware of the desire of the Jews to take his life. As **Andrews** says "The Jews were not after his detaining, but his death. They didn't want him put away in a cell—they wanted him done away and killed!"

**NET Note** - Both "if" clauses in this verse are first class conditions. Paul stated the options without prejudice, assuming in turn the reality of each for the sake of the argument.

**I am a wrongdoer** ([present tense](#)) (91)([adikeo](#) from [adikos](#) = unjust) means do wrong Col 3:25; the evildoer Rev 22:11. Be in the wrong Acts 25:11.

**Adikeo** in **Acts** - Acts 7:24; Acts 7:26; Acts 7:27; Acts 25:10; Acts 25:11

**I do not refuse to die** - "I am not trying to escape death." "I do not beg off dying from myself." Josephus the Jewish historian when

brought before a mob and threatened with his life spoke words very similar to Paul - "Men, compatriots! **I do not beg to avoid dying**, if that is just. But at the same time I do want, before I should end my life, to indicate the truth."

**Not refuse** (not beg for, ask for)(3868)([paraitomai](#)) in this context means to decline, refuse, avoid, reject. **BDAG** notes that "a wrestler is declared the victor when his opponents decline (refuse) to engage him upon seeing his unclothed physique."

**Jack Arnold** - Paul believed in submission to existing government. "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good" (Ro 13:1-4a+). He saw Festus as a minister of God in civil matters and knew he was to be subject to the laws of the land. Government is set up to do good and as long as a government does not ask a Christian to do something which would be unchristian and unbiblical, then the Christian is to submit to government. ([Sermon](#))

**but** - Term of contrast.

**If none of those things is true of which these men accuse me** - This is another [first class conditional statement](#) (or [here](#)) which is assumed to be true and in this case was absolutely true.

**Accuse** (2723) see above on [kategoreo](#) Uses in Acts = Acts 22:30; Acts 24:2; Acts 24:8; Acts 24:13; Acts 24:19; Acts 25:5; Acts 25:11; Acts 25:16; Acts 28:19

**No one can hand me over to them** -That is, no one can hand me over to the Jews lawfully. Paul knew if the case were moved to Jerusalem he would REALLY be tried before the Jews in one way or another and not before Festus! Paul also knew that legally Festus could not hand him over to the Jews for he was a Roman citizen and was an innocent one at that!

**Hand over** is interesting verb for it is [charizomai](#) which meant to give freely or graciously, something Festus would have loved to do to curry favor with the Jews. But he could not make a free gift of Paul to the Jews (or their Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin). Vincent on charizomai says it conveys "an underlying sense of giving him up as a favor to the Jews."

## **PAUL IN ESSENCE SAYS "I OBJECT!"**

He was not going to Jerusalem to be killed. So he makes an appeal to the "Supreme Court" of that day! Once a Roman citizen appealed to Caesar the trials in the lower courts ended! Paul put an end to the trial before the Jews by appealing to Caesar!

[Robert Girard](#) pointed out, "The current Caesar was Nero. Paul's trial took place in the fifth year of Nero's reign, during the early years when he ruled well and under the wise influence of the Stoic philosopher Seneca. Nero's insane crusade against Christians did not begin until five years later."

**John MacArthur** agrees adding that "Such appeals could come after the verdict (*appellatio*) or, as in Paul's case, before it (*provocatio*). Once granted, the appeal took the case out of the governor's hands and transferred it to the emperor. Paul's appeal seems at first glance to be sheer madness, since the emperor at the time was the infamous Nero. However, the early years of Nero's reign (during which Paul's appeal took place) were not marked by the cruelty and insanity of his later years. (Ibid)

**I appeal to Caesar** - An appeal to the emperor was the right of a Roman citizen, and was highly respected. The Julian law condemned those magistrates, and others, as violaters of the public peace, who had put to death, tortured, scourged, imprisoned, or condemned any Roman citizen who had appealed to Caesar. This law was so sacred and imperative, that, in the persecution under Trajan, Pliny would not attempt to put to death Roman citizens, who were proved to have turned Christians, but determined to send them to Rome, probably because they had appealed.

**I appeal** (1941)([epikaleomai](#) from **epí** = upon + **kaléo** = call) literally means **to call upon** and was often used in secular Greek to refer to calling upon deity for any purpose which is interesting for here Paul "calls up Caesar" who was considered as deity by the Romans. Of course Paul did not have that intent in his appeal, but was simply expressing his wish for a hearing before the emperor. The Greek rendering of the Latin formula **appello**.

**NET Note** - The appeal to Caesar was known as the provocatio ad Caesarem. It was a Roman citizen's right to ask for a direct judgment by the emperor (Pliny the Younger, Letters 10.96). It was one of the oldest rights of Roman citizens.

**Epikaleomai** in Acts -

Acts 1:23; Acts 2:21; Acts 4:36; Acts 7:59; Acts 9:14; Acts 9:21; Acts 10:5; Acts 10:18; Acts 10:32; Acts 11:13;

Acts 12:12; Acts 12:25; Acts 15:17; Acts 22:16; Acts 25:11; Acts 25:12; Acts 25:21; Acts 25:25; Acts 26:32;  
Acts 28:19;

**Robertson** on **I appeal** - Technical phrase like Latin *Caesarem appello*. Originally the Roman law allowed an appeal from the magistrate to the people (*provocatio ad populum*), but the emperor represented the people and so the appeal to Caesar was the right of every Roman citizen. Paul had **crossed the Rubicon** (**ED**: take a decisive, irrevocable step) on this point and so took his case out of the hands of **dilatory** provincial justice (really injustice). Roman citizens could make this appeal in capital offences. There would be expense connected with it, but better that with some hope than delay and certain death in Jerusalem. Festus was no better than Felix in his vacillation and desire to curry favour with the Jews at Paul's expense. No doubt Paul's long desire to see Rome (Acts 19:21+; Ro 15:22–28) and the promise of Jesus that he would see Rome (Acts 23:11+) played some part in Paul's decision. But he made it reluctantly for he says in Rome (Acts 28:19+ "constrained" = **anagkazo** = forced): "I was constrained to appeal." But acquittal at the hands of Festus with the hope of going to Rome as a free man had vanished.

**Utley** writes "The right of appeal to Caesar initially started with Octavian in 30 B.C. (cf. Dio Cassius, History, 51.19). This initial dictate was expanded to forbid blinding, scourging, and torture to any Roman citizen who appealed to Caesar (cf. Paulus, Sententiae 5.26.1).

**Jack Arnold** comments that "Some think Paul should not have appealed but merely trusted his life to God who would have supernaturally delivered him as He delivered Peter from prison in an earlier part of Acts. Not so. Paul had rights as a citizen and could use those rights. Furthermore, Paul realized that the whole system of Roman law was ordained by God and he could commit himself to it because God is providentially in control of government. God had permitted the whole Roman legal system to be formed to protect His servant Paul. It was not Roman lawyers and judges who saved Paul from death, but Roman law. If it had not been for Roman law, Paul would not have stood a chance. The Roman judges and lawyers were corrupt but the Roman law system saved Paul from certain death. Corrupt judges and lawyers were forced by their own law to protect the Apostle Paul. Again we see God's hand at work. We left Paul in Acts 24 in jail with no apparent way to get out and be on his way to Rome. But in Acts 25, we have a change of administration, a new trial, a governor who upheld Roman law, and Paul's appeal which would take him to Rome as a prisoner to appear before Caesar. **God works in strange and mysterious ways.**" ([Sermon](#))

**Acts 25:12 Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go."**

NET Acts 25:12 Then, after conferring with his council, Festus replied, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go!"

GNT Acts 25:12 τ τε Φ στος συλλαλ σας μετ το συμβουλ ου πεκρ θη, Κα σαρα πικ κλησαι, π Κα σαρα πορε σ .

NLT Acts 25:12 Festus conferred with his advisers and then replied, "Very well! You have appealed to Caesar, and to Caesar you will go!"

KJV Acts 25:12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.

ESV Acts 25:12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with his council, answered, "To Caesar you have appealed; to Caesar you shall go."

CSB Acts 25:12 After Festus conferred with his council, he replied, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go!"

NIV Acts 25:12 After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared: "You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!"

NKJ Acts 25:12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!"

NRS Acts 25:12 Then Festus, after he had conferred with his council, replied, "You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you will go."

YLT Acts 25:12 then Festus, having communed with the council, answered, 'To Caesar thou hast appealed; to Caesar thou shalt go.'

- **to Caesar you shall go:** Ac 25:21 19:21 23:11 26:32 27:1 28:16 Ps 76:10 Isa 46:10,11 La 3:37 Da 4:35 Ro 15:28,29 Php 1:12-14,20
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## OFF TO SEE THE EMPEROR

God is a promise keeping God! Recall what the Lord Jesus Christ had promised Paul in Acts 23:1+ "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also." And now he was on his way to Rome!

**Then when Festus had conferred with his council, he answered, "You have appealed to Caesar, to Caesar you shall go."**- Festus was likely relieved to get this political problem out of his jurisdiction.

**Conferred** (talked with)(4814)([sullaleo](#) from [sun/syn](#) = with, speaks of intimacy + [laleo](#) = to talk, speak) means to talk together or with, to converse. **BDAG** = "to exchange thoughts with." This verb means to converse with someone, including a clear implication as to reciprocal response [LN].

**Robertson** - Here it apparently means the chief officers and personal retinue of the procurator, his assessors (*assessores konsilarii*). These local advisers were a necessity. Some discretion was allowed the governor about granting the appeal. If the prisoner were a well-known robber or pirate, it could be refused

What counsel would Festus be seeking? The decision was his alone, but he would ask their advice and opinion. He apparently consulted with them to determine if this case was [extra ordinem](#), outside the normal provincial jurisdiction, a situation in which such an appeal would be legitimate. This case was in fact *extra ordinem*, outside the normal guidelines of clear and established law. He sought their advice about how to report this unusual case to Caesar. It is also notable that a Roman citizen had the right to request a trial by the emperor himself, and a local provincial governor such as Felix could not refuse it at least in an *extra ordinem* case such as this where the charge being brought did not fit clearly within the boundaries of established law [NAC].

**Vincent on the council** - A body of men chosen by the governor himself from the principal Romans of the province. These were called *assessors*, sometimes *friends*, sometimes *captains*. Though a Roman citizen had the right of appeal to the emperor, a certain discretion was allowed the governors of provinces as to admitting the appeal. It might be disallowed if the affair did not admit of delay, or if the appellant were a known robber or pirate. In doubtful cases the governor was bound to consult with his council, and his failure to do so exposed him to censure. Cicero, in his impeachment of Verres, the brutal governor of Sicily, says: "Will you deny that you dismissed your council, the men of rank with whom your predecessor and yourself had been wont to consult, and decided the case yourself?" (ii., 33). That Festus exercised this discretion in Paul's case is shown by his conferring with the council.

**Council** (4824)([sumboulion](#) from [sún](#) = together + [boulé](#) = counsel) speaks of what is related to consultation with [lambánō](#) (receive) meaning to form a plan (in negative sense - plot - Mt 22:15) with [poiéō](#) (do or make) meaning to make or take council (Mark 3:6 = conspiring; Mk 15:1 - held a consultation). to take or receive counsel, to hold or take a consultation (Matt. 12:14; 22:15; 27:1, 7; 28:12) [Sumboulion](#) denotes an advisory council or an official deliberative assembly as a body (council session, meeting) Here in Acts 25:12 it means a council, an advisory council, and speaks of persons who sat in public trials with the governor of a province.

**BDAG** = "the result reached by a deliberating group." **Louw-Nida** = "to engage in joint planning so as to devise a course of common action, often one with a harmful or evil purpose."

**Gilbrant** - This noun refers to a council with the emphasis placed on the result of the council's deliberations. The word occurs quite often from the classical period onward. Plutarch used it to refer to a council of advisors or with the idea of convening a council (Bauer). It was also used in inscriptions of the Second Century B.C. (cf. Moulton-Milligan). [Sumboulion](#) occurs only at 4 Maccabees 17:17 in some manuscripts of the Septuagint. In the New Testament each occurrence of [sumboulion](#) emphasizes the gathering together of a group for the specific purpose of determining or confirming a plan of action. While most of these consultations have a deceitful intent, this is not inherent to the word itself. Matthew used [sumboulion](#) to refer to the Pharisees' actions of taking counsel (12:14; 22:15), as well as to those of the full Sanhedrin (27:1,7), identified as the chief priests and the elders. Mark used it in a similar fashion (cf. 3:6; 15:1). Only Luke used this word in a non-Jewish context. In Acts 25:12 [sumboulion](#) refers to the advisory council of Festus. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Sumboulion** - 8v - conferred\*(2), conspired\*(1), conspiring(1), consultation(1), consulted\*(1), council(1), plotted together(1), together(2).

Matt. 12:14; Matt. 22:15; Matt. 27:1; Matt. 27:7; Matt. 28:12; Mk. 3:6; Mk. 15:1; Acts 25:12

**Appealed** (1941) see above for [epikaleomai](#). Used for Paul's appeal to Caesar in Acts 25:11; Acts 25:12; Acts 25:21; Acts 25:25; Acts 26:32; Acts 28:19;

**Robertson** writes that "Bengel thinks that Festus sought to frighten Paul with these words. Knowling suggests that "they may have been uttered, if not with a sneer, yet with the implication 'thou little knowest what an appeal to Caesar means.' " But embarrassment will come to Festus. He has refused to acquit this prisoner. Hence he must formulate charges against him to go before Caesar."

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**John MacArthur** extracts four lessons from Acts 25:1-12:

**First**, it is another tragic example of Jewish hostility to the gospel—a theme running throughout Acts (Acts 4:1-31; 5:17-42; 6:9-15; 8:1-4; 9:23; 13:6, 45; 14:2, 19; 17:1-9, 13; 18:5-17; 19:8-9; 20:3; 21:27ff.; 23:12ff.). Jesus predicted that opposition in His words to His disciples recorded in John 15:18-25. The Lord's reference to "their Law" shows that He had the unbelieving Jews (particularly their leaders) in mind. No religion is neutral about Jesus Christ; all non-Christian religions are openly or subtly opposed to Him. As He Himself put it, "He who is not with Me is against Me" (Matt. 12:30). Persecution of Christians by false religion is always based on two premises: it is based on false accusations, and it is for Christ's sake. Believers are to live blameless lives and so reveal their critics' accusations to be false (Titus 2:2-8; 1 Pet. 2:12, 15; 3:16).

A **second** truth this text illustrates is the binding power of sin. (**ED**: AND I WOULD ADD THE "BLINDING" POWER OF SIN!) Although he had been out of the mainstream, incarcerated at Caesarea for two years, the Sanhedrin's hatred of Paul had not abated. "Truly, truly, I say to you," Jesus said in John 8:34, "everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." In Romans 6:16, Paul asked rhetorically, "Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?" Peter wrote in 2 Peter 2:19, "By what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved." The Jewish leaders were enslaved by their venomous hatred of Paul, an innocent man.

**Third**, this passage reveals the sovereignty of God in human affairs (cf. Gen. 45:7-8; Dan. 4:17; Luke 22:53; John 7:30; 19:10-11; Acts 2:23). The Sanhedrin's request to bring Paul to Jerusalem to stand trial seemed innocent enough. Festus needed the Jewish leaders' support, so it was essential for him to conciliate them. Granting that seemingly innocuous request would have been, from Festus's perspective, an easy concession. But God providentially intervened to protect His servant.

**Fourth**, the believer's proper relation to government also appears in this passage. Paul willingly submitted to the Roman government—even as embodied in the person of Nero. He practiced the principle he set forth in Romans 13:1-5. Understanding and applying these principles helped Paul's life have the powerful impact on the world that it did. (MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Acts)

### **Acts 25:13 Now when several days had elapsed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus.**

NET Acts 25:13 After several days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus.

GNT Acts 25:13 μερ ν δ διαγενομων τιν ν γρ ππας βασιλε ς κα Βερν κη κατ ντησαν ε ς Καισ ρειαν σπασ μενοι τ ν Φ στον.

NLT Acts 25:13 A few days later King Agrippa arrived with his sister, Bernice, to pay their respects to Festus.

KJV Acts 25:13 And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus.

ESV Acts 25:13 Now when some days had passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and greeted Festus.

CSB Acts 25:13 After some days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived in Caesarea and paid a courtesy call on Festus.

NIV Acts 25:13 A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus.

NKJ Acts 25:13 And after some days King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus.

NRS Acts 25:13 After several days had passed, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to welcome Festus.

YLT Acts 25:13 And certain days having passed, Agrippa the king, and Bernice, came down to Caesarea

saluting Festus,

- **King Agrippa and Bernice:** Ac 25:22,23 26:1,27,28
- **arrived at Caesarea:** 1Sa 13:10 25:14 2Sa 8:10 2Ki 10:13 Mk 15:18
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Boice** points out that "The account of Paul's appearance before King Herod Agrippa II begins at Acts 25:13 and continues to the end of Acts 26 (Acts 26:32). It is a large section of the book, so large that it would be desirable to divide it were it not so clearly a single story. These verses recount the third of three formal defenses of the apostle Paul before the secular authorities subsequent to his arrest in Jerusalem. (An Expository Commentary – Acts)

**Now when several days had elapsed** - It suggest a short time, but one cannot say much more.

**Homer Kent** wrote, "It should not be supposed that Festus was a subordinate to Agrippa. This visit was not that of a monarch to one of his underlings, but a courtesy call from a neighboring ruler to the new procurator of an adjoining province."

**Had elapsed** (1230)(**diaginomai** from **dia** = through + **ginomai** = to become, be) is used of time and means literally to be through (i.e., past). In classic Greek **diaginomai** mean "to go through," "to pass," "to go through life," and "to continue through."

**Gilbrant** on **diaginomai** - Mark's use is in regard to the passing of the Sabbath. The genitive absolute construction makes the Sabbath the subject of **diaginomai** ("was past"). The idea is that the Sabbath had come and was now over. The Sabbath had to pass before the women could resume their intention to complete the preparation of the Lord's body with spices. The use of **diaginomai** in both Acts references (Acts 25:13; 27:9) also has to do with time elapse. In the former reference, days intervened between Paul's trial before the governor Festus and the arrival of King Agrippa. In the latter reference, too much time had passed between the ship's arrival at Fair Havens and the passengers' embarking on the voyage to Rome. Due to the excessive time spent at the fair city of Lasea, there was great danger of winter storms at sea. **Diaginomai** emphasizes the interval of time. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Diaginomai** - 3x - elapsed(1), over(1), passed(1). - Mk. 16:1; Acts 25:13; Acts 27:9

**King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and paid their respects to Festus** - As the new governor of the province, this was good protocol for the royal couple. **Arrived** is literally "came down" which suggest they were at Jerusalem (more elevated) before they arrived.

**NET Note** on [King Agrippa](#) - King Agrippa was Herod Agrippa II (A.D. 27–92/93), son of [Herod Agrippa I](#) (see Acts 12:1+). He ruled over parts of Palestine from A.D. 53 until his death. His sister [Bernice](#) was widowed when her second husband, [Herod King of Chalcis](#), died in A.D. 48. From then she lived with her brother. In an attempt to quiet rumors of an incestuous relationship between them, she resolved to marry [Polemo of Cilicia](#), but she soon left him and returned to Herod Agrippa II. Their [incestuous relationship](#) became the gossip of Rome according to Josephus ([Ant. 20.7.3](#)). The visit of Agrippa and Bernice gave Festus the opportunity to get some internal Jewish advice. Herod Agrippa II was a trusted adviser because he was known to be very loyal to Rome (Josephus, [J. W. 2.16.4](#)).

**Arrived** (2658)(**katantao** from **katá** intensifier + **antáo** = meet) means to come to or to arrive at and literally referred to finishing a journey or arrive at one's destination.

**Katantao** in Acts - Acts 16:1; Acts 18:19; Acts 18:24; Acts 20:15; Acts 21:7; Acts 25:13; Acts 26:7; Acts 27:12; Acts 28:13;

**Paid respects** (782)(**aspazomai** from **a** + **spao** = draw out, pull, breathe) means to enfold in arms, to welcome, to embrace. To salute one (not in a military sense), greet, bid, wish well to. In classical literature **aspazomai** can also be used of physical expressions of welcome, such as "embrace" and "kiss." Uses in Acts - Acts 18:22; Acts 20:1; Acts 21:7; Acts 21:19; Acts 25:13;

**Jack Arnold** gives us a great summary of **Agrippa II** and especially the wicked **Bernice** - King Agrippa and his wife paid a protocol visit to Festus, the new governor to Judea. Agrippa and Bernice were the scandal of Judea. They were blood brother and sister who had not married but were living together as man and wife. This Agrippa is Agrippa II who was the son of Herod Agrippa I, and grandson of Herod the Great. Agrippa was only seventeen when his father died the horrible death of being eaten by worms after putting James to death (Acts 12:1-23). He should have reigned, but Emperor Claudius thought him too young so placed his kingdom under the Roman governor until he came of age. After the death of Claudius, the Emperor Nero gave him a large domain. Agrippa was a Jew who was reared in Rome and was strongly attached to the Romans. So loyal to the Romans was Agrippa II, that in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., he turned his troops on his own countrymen, uniting with the Romans in the destruction of this great city. History tells us that he was a very capable ruler and he died in 90 A.D. in Rome at the age of seventy. Bernice was a very beautiful woman and was the blood sister to Agrippa II and to Drucilla, wife of Felix. Bernice made a fetish of incestuous



relationships. She had been married to her uncle, Herod, King of Chalcis, but when he died she chose to live with her brother, committing the worst kind of incest. Later on, to avoid the scandal with Agrippa, Bernice left Agrippa and married Polemon, King of Pomins. She stayed married for only a brief time, and she divorced her husband. She then went back to Agrippa and together they went to Rome. Bernice then became the mistress to two successive Roman emperors, Vespasian and Titus, who were father and son. ([Sermon](#))

**MacArthur** adds these notes on **Agrippa II** - His great-uncle, Herod Antipas, figured prominently in the gospels (Luke 3:1) as the ruler who executed John the Baptist (Mark 6:14-29), sought Jesus' life (Luke 13:31-33), and later tried Him (Luke 23:7-12). His great-grandfather was Herod the Great, who ruled at the time of Jesus' birth (Matt. 2:1-19; Luke 1:5) and murdered the children of Bethlehem in an effort to kill the newborn King.

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The Herodian family in NT history:

In addition to the father, Herod the Great, and his son and successor, Archelaus (Mt 2:1), three other sons are named in the N.T.:

(1) Herod Antipas (Mk6:14ff.; Mt14:1; Lu 3:1), tetrarch of Galilee and Perea (4 B.C. until banished, A.D. 39).

(2) Herod Philip (Boethos), mentioned Mk6:14 as Philip (v17; Mat 14:3; Luke 3:19).

(3) Another Herod Philip (Lu3:1), tetrarch of territory east of Jordan (4 B.C. - A.D. 33).

Two children of another son of Herod the Great, Aristobulus (a son not included in the N.T.), are also named:

(1). Herodias (mentioned Mk6:17ff.; Mt14:3)

(2). Herod Agrippa I (Ac12:1,6,18-24).

Herodias, had been married to her uncle, Herod Philip (Boethos) but left him to live with another uncle, Herod Antipas, whom John the Baptist rebuked (Mk6:14 - 29; Mt14:1-14). Herodias' daughter is not named in the N.T. (Mk6:22ff.; Mt14:6-11), but from other sources it is known that her name was Salome, whose first husband was her great uncle (the Philip of Lu3:1).

Others of the Herodian family named in the N.T. are three children of Herod Agrippa I:

(1) Herod Agrippa II (Ac25:13ff.;26:1,2,27-32)

(2) Drusilla (Ac24:24)

(3) Bernice (Ac25:13; 26:30).

Thus it will be observed that two or more names of each of three successive generations after Herod the Great are mentioned in the N.T.

**Acts 25:14 While they were spending many days there, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix;**

GNT Acts 25:14 ς δ πλε ους μ ρας δι τριβον κε , Φ στος τ βασιλε ν θετο τ κατ τ ν Πα λον λ γων, ν ρ τ ς σπιν καταλειμμ νος π Φ λικος δ σμιος,

NLT Acts 25:14 During their stay of several days, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. "There is a prisoner here," he told him, "whose case was left for me by Felix.

KJV 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:

ESV Acts 25:14 And as they stayed there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man left prisoner by Felix,

CSB Acts 25:14 Since they stayed there many days, Festus presented Paul's case to the king, saying, "There's a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix.

NIV Acts 25:14 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.

NKJ Acts 25:14 When they had been there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying: "There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix,

NRS Acts 25:14 Since they were staying there several days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying,

"There is a man here who was left in prison by Felix.

YLT Acts 25:14 and as they were continuing there more days, Festus submitted to the king the things concerning Paul, saying, 'There is a certain man, left by Felix, a prisoner,

- **There:** Ac 24:27
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **FESTUS REVIEWS PAUL'S CASE WITH KING AGRIPPA**

**John MacArthur** explains that Paul's appeal to Caesar "though resolving an impasse (WITH THE JEWS), presented Festus with a fresh difficulty. As governor he was required to send a report along with Paul to Rome, detailing the charges against him. But in Paul's case, those charges were theological and general in nature. Festus, only two weeks into his term as governor, was unfamiliar with the nuances of Jewish theology. Since he did not understand the charges (cf. vv. 18-19), he could not write a coherent report explaining them to the emperor. Fortunately, aid arrived in the person of Herod Agrippa." (Ibid)

**While they were spending many days there** - Festus had little concern for Paul so took some time before he brought up his Jewish problem in conversations with the king.

**David Jeremiah** points out that "Agrippa II had more of a figurehead role in Jerusalem as the procurator of the temple given his knowledge of Jewish customs. He was actually subordinate to Festus in power and authority, serving as a consultant of sorts to the Romans on all things Jewish."

**Spending** (tarrying in [imperfect tense](#))(1304)([diatribo](#) from **dia** = through or intensifier + **tribo** = to wear, to spend; English [diatribe](#) = an abusive speech) literally means to rub away, to rub through, to wear away, to consume by rubbing. In the NT spoken only of **TIME** meaning to spend or pass time in a place, to stay, remain, tarry (Jn 3:22 = Jesus "was spending time with" His disciples, Acts 15:35 = "Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch"). Two uses in the Septuagint - Lev. 14:8; Jer. 35:7.

**Diatrimbo** in NT mainly in Acts - Jn. 3:22; Acts 12:19; Acts 14:3; Acts 14:28; Acts 15:35; Acts 16:12; Acts 20:6; Acts 25:6; Acts 25:14

**Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying** - Festus needed a quick tutorial in Judaism to help him come up with charges that would warrant his being sent to Caesar.

**Laid** (394)([anathemi](#) from **ana** = up, again, back + **histemi** = to place, put or lay) is a verb which literally means to set up or lay up (literal sense in Lxx of 2 Sa 6:17 = "set it in its place") or to set apart (this sense in Lxx of Lev 27:28 = "anything which a man sets apart [dedicates] to the LORD"). **Anathemi** is only used in the middle voice in the NT and means to set forth or lay a matter before someone for their consideration or to communicate with a view to consultation, "to set forth, impart or communicate one's cause". **Friberg** - (1) as setting forth one's cause declare, refer to (for counsel) (Acts 25.14); (2) as giving additional information with a request for consideration explain, communicate, put before (Gal 2.2)

**There is a man who was left ( [kataleipo](#)) as a prisoner by Felix** - He reviews Acts 24:27 where Luke recorded "wishing to do the Jews a favor, Felix left Paul imprisoned."

**Robertson** observes that "the tone of Festus about Paul in this proposal for the entertainment of Agrippa and Bernice is certainly one of superficial and supremely [supercilious](#) indifference....Paul is one of Felix's left overs (left behind), a sort of "junk" left on his hands. This cowardly Roman procurator thus pictures the greatest of living men and the greatest preacher of all time to this profligate pair (brother and sister) of sinners. Undoubtedly today in certain circles Christ and his preachers are held up to like contempt."

**Jack Arnold** - Festus laid this whole case out before Agrippa because he thought ,Agrippa, being a Jew and familiar with Jewish customs, could help him figure out some legitimate charges against Paul, for he had to have some charges if he was going to send Paul before Caesar who was then Nero.

**Constable** - Agrippa had a reputation for being an expert in Jewish matters since he was part Jewish and had grown up in the Herodian family. He was the person to whom Rome had given the authority to appoint the Jewish high priest and to preserve the temple treasury and vestments.

**Acts 25:15 and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.**

NET Acts 25:15 When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me about him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.

GNT Acts 25:15 περ ο γενομ μου ες εροσλυμα νεφ νισαν ο ρχιερε ς κα ο πρεσβ τεροι τ ν ουδα ων α το μενοι κατ α το καταδ κην.

NLT Acts 25:15 When I was in Jerusalem, the leading priests and Jewish elders pressed charges against him and asked me to condemn him.

KJV Acts 25:15 About whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.

ESV Acts 25:15 and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews laid out their case against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.

CSB Acts 25:15 When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews presented their case and asked for a judgment against him.

NIV Acts 25:15 When I went to Jerusalem, the chief priests and elders of the Jews brought charges against him and asked that he be condemned.

NKJ Acts 25:15 "about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him.

NRS Acts 25:15 When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me about him and asked for a sentence against him.

YLT Acts 25:15 about whom, in my being at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews laid information, asking a decision against him,

- **when I was at Jerusalem:** Ac 25:1-3 Es 3:9 Lu 18:3-5 23:23
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE JEWS WANTED PAUL'S LIFE NOT JUSTICE!

**and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests ([archiereus](#)) and the elders ( [presbuteros](#)) of the Jews brought charges against** (peri - concerning) **him** -This was described in Acts 25:1-3.

**Brought charges** (1718)([emphanizo](#) from **en** = in, into + **phaino** = show, make visible, make conspicuous) means to make visible, to lay something open to view (clear or plain) so all can see (Jn 14:22, cp Ex 33:13 = idea is "reveal Yourself to me"). To provide information so as to make clear, to explain or to inform (Acts 23:22, He 11:14, Jn 14:21 Isa 3:9). To present evidence or bring charges as in a formal judicial report (Acts 24:1, 25:2, Esther 2:22)

**Asking for a sentence of condemnation against him** - Notice that in Acts 25:3 the Jews were "requesting a concession against Paul, that he might have him brought to Jerusalem." Clearly Festus perceived that they wanted more than a "concession!" They wanted "condemnation!" They wanted Paul's head and Festus at least discerned that much!

**Robertson on condemnation (katadike)** "Only N.T. example of this old word (penalty, fine, condemnation) from **kata** and **dikē** (justice against)."

**Gilbrant on condemnation - Katadikē** was in wide circulation during the Early Church era. However, it is used only once in the New Testament. It may have been a technical term for Greek-speaking courts of law (cf. Liddell-Scott). In secular use katadikē more generally refers to the actual punishment resulting from a judgment (Schrenk, "katadikazō," Kittel, 3:622). This is attested by its use in the papyri (cf. Moulton-Milligan). Its only occurrence in the New Testament is found in Acts 25:15. The chief priests and elders at Jerusalem requested Festus to pass a "sentence of condemnation" against the apostle Paul for his Christian beliefs. ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Acts 25:16** "I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans to hand over any man before the accused meets his accusers face to face and has an opportunity to make his defense against the charges.

NET Acts 25:16 I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had met his accusers face to face and had been given an opportunity to make a defense against the accusation.

GNT Acts 25:16 πρ ς ο ς πεκρ θην τι ο κ σπιν θος ωμα οισ χαρ ζεσθα πινα νθρωπον πρ ν κατηγορο μενος κατ πρ σωπον χοι το ς κατηγο ρους τ πον τε πολογ ας λ βοι περ το γκλ ματος.

NLT Acts 25:16 I pointed out to them that Roman law does not convict people without a trial. They must be given an opportunity to confront their accusers and defend themselves.

KJV Acts 25:16 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.

ESV Acts 25:16 I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid against him.

CSB Acts 25:16 I answered them that it's not the Romans' custom to give any man up before the accused confronts the accusers face to face and has an opportunity to give a defense concerning the charges.

NIV Acts 25:16 "I told them that it is not the Roman custom to hand over any man before he has faced his accusers and has had an opportunity to defend himself against their charges.

NKJ Acts 25:16 "To them I answered, It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him."

NRS Acts 25:16 I told them that it was not the custom of the Romans to hand over anyone before the accused had met the accusers face to face and had been given an opportunity to make a defense against the charge.

YLT Acts 25:16 unto whom I answered, that it is not a custom of Romans to make a favour of any man to die, before that he who is accused may have the accusers face to face, and may receive place of defence in regard to the charge laid against him.

- **it is not the custom of the Romans** Ac 25:4,5
- **has an opportunity to make his defense:** Ac 26:1 De 17:4 19:17,18 Pr 18:13,17 Joh 7:51
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **DEFENDANT MUST BE GIVEN HIS "DAY IN COURT"**

**I answered them that it is not the custom of the Romans**"There is a touch of disdain (Furneaux) in the tone of Festus. He may refer to a demand of the Jews before they asked that Paul be brought to Jerusalem (Acts 25:3). At any rate there is a tone of scorn towards the Jews." (Robertson)

**To hand over any man before the accused ([kategoro](#)) meets his accusers ([kategoros](#)) face to face and has an opportunity ([topos](#)) to make his defense against the charges** - Festus made it clear to Paul's adversaries that he would not convict a man who not even been convicted. The Roman Law called for the accused to stand trial for their crimes.

**MacArthur** explains that "Although Paul had already faced his accusers before Felix (and was not convicted of any crime), Festus wanted to discharge his duty and hear the case himself before rendering a verdict."

**Andrews** says "Roman governor would govern by Roman rule—not Jewish wants!"

**Gilbrant** - Because of his education in the imperial palace in Rome, King Agrippa would be very familiar with Roman law and custom. Actually, it had developed over several hundred years and had often been modified to meet changing needs of the republic and then of the empire. It was eventually codified, and the Roman law codes have influenced the laws of western Europe and America. But at this time much was in the hands of the governor or the king of the particular part of the Roman Empire. It was also part of the Roman custom to bring in experts who would help the judge, governor, or king make his decisions. So it was not out of order for Festus to ask Agrippa for his opinion. Actually, what Festus said about Roman law and custom was part of the Jewish law and custom as well. When the chief priests and Pharisees wanted to arrest Jesus, the officers sent to arrest Him were so impressed

by His teaching that they did not do so. This upset the Pharisees and they remarked that the crowds who were following Jesus did not know the Law and were accursed. But Nicodemus responded by asking whether their Law judged anyone before giving a hearing and finding out what he was doing (John 7:44-51). The Pharisees were implying that because they knew the Law they had more sense than to believe in Jesus. But they were wanting to kill Jesus without a trial, something which was contrary to the Law. (The Complete Biblical Library – Acts)

**Custom** (habit)(1485)(**ethos** from **etho** = to be used, to be accustomed) refers to a usual or customary manner of behavior, habit, pattern of behavior which is more or less fixed by tradition or the usual practice. It may be established by law or otherwise generally sanctioned by the society.

**Hand over** (grant, freely give, bestow) (5483)(**charizomai** from **charis** = grace, undeserved merit or favor) has the basic meaning of to give. To grant as a favor. To give gratuitously, generously, graciously and in kindness.

**Defense** (627)(**apologia** from **apo** = from + **logos** = speech) literally means, "to talk one's self off from". **Apologia** was a technical word used in the Greek law courts and was used of an attorney who talked his client off from a charge that was brought against him. In short it refers to a speech given in defense.

**Charges** (accusation)(1462)(**egklema** from **egkaleo** = to arraign) refers to an accusation made in public (Acts 23:29) or a charge (Acts 25:16 - only 2 NT uses). It was a legal technical term (charge, accusation). It signifies the act or action of finding fault with someone. **Louw-Nida** = "(a technical, legal term) a formal indictment or accusation brought against someone - 'indictment, accusation, case.'" **BDAG** (1) 1 an indictment or charge brought against someone through judicial proceedings, charge, accusation, legal technical term - *defense against the accusation* Acts 25:16; *a charge deserving death or imprisonment* Acts 23:29 (2) 2 the act or action of expressing disapproval, reproach (Acts 23:25) This word appears in classical Greek from the Fifth Century B.C. but is not used in the Septuagint.

**Acts 25:17 "So after they had assembled here, I did not delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought before me.**

NET Acts 25:17 So after they came back here with me, I did not postpone the case, but the next day I sat on the judgment seat and ordered the man to be brought.

GNT Acts 25:17 συνελθ ντων ο ν [α τ ν] νθ δε ναβολ ν μηδεμ αν ποιησ μενος τ ξς καθ σας π το β ματος κ λευσα χθ ναι τ ν νδρα·

NLT Acts 25:17 "When his accusers came here for the trial, I didn't delay. I called the case the very next day and ordered Paul brought in.

KJV 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.

ESV Acts 25:17 So when they came together here, I made no delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought.

CSB Acts 25:17 Therefore, when they had assembled here, I did not delay. The next day I sat at the judge's bench and ordered the man to be brought in.

NIV Acts 25:17 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.

NKJ Acts 25:17 "Therefore when they had come together, without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in.

NRS Acts 25:17 So when they met here, I lost no time, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought.

YLT Acts 25:17 'They, therefore, having come together -- I, making no delay, on the succeeding day having sat upon the tribunal, did command the man to be brought,

- **I did not delay:** Ac 25:6
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**FESTUS DID NOT POSTPONE**

## BUT CONVENED QUICKLY

**So after they had assembled here, I did not delay** - Indeed he acted quickly. Festus thus made it clear to Agrippa there had been no laxity on his part. He had done his duty as a Roman governor as he put Paul on trial.

**Gilbrant on delay - Anabolē** is a legal, technical term for the postponement of trial. It is used only once in the New Testament. In Acts 25:17 Festus claimed that he did not delay Paul's trial. (Ibid) **Louw-Nida** adds **anabole** means "extend a period of time by postponing an event - 'to put off, to postpone.'"

**But on the next day took my seat on the tribunal (bema) and ordered (keleuo) the man to be brought before me** - He took up Paul's case the day after he had returned to Caesarea from Jerusalem (Acts 25:6). Note Festus does not use his name but just refers to the greatest apostle in history as "**the man**." On the other hand, as we might say in slang today, "**Paul, you da man!**"

**NET Note on tribunal** - The *judgment seat* ( bema) was a raised platform mounted by steps and sometimes furnished with a seat, used by officials in addressing an assembly or making pronouncements, often on judicial matters. The judgment seat was a familiar item in Greco-Roman culture, often located in the *agora*, the public square or marketplace in the center of a city.

**Acts 25:18 "When the accusers stood up, they began bringing charges against him not of such crimes as I was expecting,**

GNT Acts 25:18 περι ο σταθ ντες ο κατ γοροι ο δεμ αν α τ αν φερων ν γ πεν ουν πονηρ ν,

NLT Acts 25:18 But the accusations made against him weren't any of the crimes I expected.

KJV Acts 25:18 Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed:

ESV Acts 25:18 When the accusers stood up, they brought no charge in his case of such evils as I supposed.

CSB Acts 25:18 Concerning him, the accusers stood up and brought no charge of the sort I was expecting.

NIV Acts 25:18 When his accusers got up to speak, they did not charge him with any of the crimes I had expected.

NKJ Acts 25:18 "When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed,

NRS Acts 25:18 When the accusers stood up, they did not charge him with any of the crimes that I was expecting.

YLT Acts 25:18 concerning whom the accusers, having stood up, were bringing against him no accusation of the things I was thinking of,

- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## UNEXPECTED ACCUSATIONS

**When the accusers (kategoros) stood up** - The Jews presented their case to Festus and the governor reveals to King Agrippa the nature and content of the Jewish accusations against Paul.

**They began bringing charges against him not of such crimes(poneros = active, injurious evil) as I was expecting** - We don't know exactly what genre of charges Festus was expecting but certainly he was not expecting accusations dealing with religion. He was probably surprised that the Jews did not charge Paul with serious violations of Roman law that would have warranted a death sentence. And so while Festus openly confessed Paul had done no wrong, he was willing to sacrifice Paul on the altar of political expediency. So much for his integrity!

**Gilbrant** - The Roman courts considered criminal cases to include extortion, embezzlement, treason, corrupt practices, murder, fraud, and assault. Since the Jewish leaders were obviously wanting Paul killed, Festus supposed Paul must be guilty of something that would be in the same class as these criminal practices. But Paul was not guilty of anything like any of these, and the Jewish leaders did not try to accuse him of any such matters. (Ibid)

**Acts 25:19 but they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive.**

NET Acts 25:19 Rather they had several points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a man named Jesus who was dead, whom Paul claimed to be alive.

GNT Acts 25:19 ζητ ματα ὀ τινα περ τ ς ὀ ας δεισιδαιμον ας ε χον πρ ς α τ ν κα περ τινος ησο τεθνηκ τος ν φασκεν Πα λος ζ ν.

NLT Acts 25:19 Instead, it was something about their religion and a dead man named Jesus, who Paul insists is alive.

KJV Acts 25:19 But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

ESV Acts 25:19 Rather they had certain points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who was dead, but whom Paul asserted to be alive.

CSB Acts 25:19 Instead they had some disagreements with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, a dead man Paul claimed to be alive.

NIV Acts 25:19 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.

NKJ Acts 25:19 "but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.

NRS Acts 25:19 Instead they had certain points of disagreement with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, but whom Paul asserted to be alive.

YLT Acts 25:19 but certain questions concerning their own religion they had against him, and concerning a certain Jesus who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive;

- **they simply had some points of disagreement:** Ac 25:7 18:15,19 23:29
- **about their own religion and about a dead man, Jesus:** Ac 17:22,23
- **whom Paul asserted to be alive:** Ac 1:22 Acts 2:32 Acts 17:31 Acts 26:22,23 1Co 15:3,4,14-20 Rev 1:18
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **A DEAD MAN WHO IS ALIVE!**

**But they simply had some points of disagreement with him about their own religion-** Not only did Festus not grasp the nature of the Jewish accusations, he was not qualified to judge on religious matters in a Roman court of law.

**Religion** (1175)(*deisidaimonia* from *deido* = fear + *daimon* = divinity, a pagan god) in a good sense describes reverence towards deity, pious attitude toward divinities. It indicates a dread of the gods, usually in a condemnatory or contemptuous sense. In a bad sense it referred to superstition. In a neutral sense it referred to a system of beliefs (religion). Louw-Nida = "a set of beliefs concerning deity, with the implication of corresponding behavior" and it is this last sense which is the most likely in the present passage. The only other NT uses is Acts 17:22 "So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I observe that you are very **religious** in all respects."

**Gilbrant** comments that "The truth of the resurrection of Jesus was, of course, the central point at issue, though Festus seemed almost to hesitate to tell King Agrippa about it and added it as if it were something of an afterthought. To Festus, as to the Greek philosophers in Athens, the idea of the Resurrection was something foreign to their thinking. Festus, however, did not mock or make fun of the idea, although he obviously neither understood nor believed Paul's claim. (Ibid)

**Longenecker** adds "Such matters were plainly incomprehensible and pointless to a Roman administrator." (Expositor's Bible Commentary)

**And about a dead man, Jesus, whom Paul asserted to be alive-** So while Luke did not record Paul mentioning the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, it is clear that Paul did make that declaration before the pagan Festus. **Asserted** is in the [imperfect tense](#) indicating Paul repeatedly testified to the validity of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (a good pattern to imitate)!

**Robertson** - This is the climax of supercilious scorn toward both Paul and "one Jesus." (KJV) [Supercilious](#) = having or showing arrogant superiority to and disdain of those one views as unworthy)

**Asserted** (5335)([phasko](#)) means speaking with confidence and certainty and thus asserting, claiming, declaring. To assert means to state categorically or to declare or affirm solemnly and formally as true. **Phasko** on in NT here, Acts 24:9, Ro 1:22.

**John MacArthur** points out that "Knowing that an obviously intelligent, educated man such as Paul would claim that a dead man had come alive must have especially baffled Festus (cf. Acts 26:24+ ""Paul, you are out of your mind! Your great learning is driving you mad."). Yet it was precisely the issue of the resurrection of Jesus Christ that most clearly set Christianity apart from Judaism and was the cornerstone of the gospel. Festus could not understand the implications of Christ's resurrection because he was ignorant of His life and ministry, and of Scripture. (Ibid)

**Jack Andrews** writes that "Festus didn't know much about Jesus—but he had heard the gospel from the apostle Paul. Paul had declared the gospel—that Jesus died for their sins, was buried, and on the third day He rose again....The resurrection of Jesus is still the dividing point—it is still the decisive point—it is still the dynamic point! We are not going to mesh with other religions—Christianity is not about religion—it is about a relationship with the Living God who rose from the dead and lives forevermore! You cannot be saved if you have not believed that Jesus rose again! Believing that Jesus died on the cross is not enough! He died and He rose again! We serve the Living Savior and Lord! This was the major sticking point with the Jews—Festus didn't get it—it was not a big deal to the Roman governor! He wishes now that he could relive these days and turn to and trust in the certain Jesus who died and whom Paul affirmed was alive again!" (Jack Andrews Expository Studies – Understanding Acts - Volume 7)

**John Phillips** wrote, "Poor Festus. He had in his custody heaven's greatest ambassador, the most eloquent and gifted missionary ever to bless mankind; a man greater far than any Caesar of Rome or any philosopher of Greece. And Festus failed to see it. He was in touch with truths that are the most sublime in all the world, and he did not know it...**Thus destiny and eternity came and knocked, but Festus could not be bothered to so much as go to the door.**" (Exploring Acts)

**Jack Arnold** comments that "Festus' attitude was, "Did you ever hear of such a thing as a man coming back to life? Isn't that ridiculous? And isn't it ridiculous that these Jews, on the grounds of such a ridiculous charge that Paul believes this, want me to put him to death?" Festus was a thoroughgoing rationalist, humanist and anti-supernaturalist."

**Acts 25:20 "Being at a loss how to investigate such matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these matters.**

NET Acts 25:20 Because I was at a loss how I could investigate these matters, I asked if he were willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these charges.

GNT Acts 25:20 πορο μενος δ γ τ ν περ το των ζτησιν λεγον ε βο λοιτο πορε εσθαι ε ς εροσ λυμα κ κε κρ νεσθαι περ το των.

NLT Acts 25:20 I was at a loss to know how to investigate these things, so I asked him whether he would be willing to stand trial on these charges in Jerusalem.

KJV 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.

ESV Acts 25:20 Being at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there regarding them.

CSB Acts 25:20 Since I was at a loss in a dispute over such things, I asked him if he wished to go to Jerusalem and be tried there concerning these matters.

NIV Acts 25:20 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.

NKJ Acts 25:20 "And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters.

NRS Acts 25:20 Since I was at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wished to go to Jerusalem and be tried there on these charges.

YLT Acts 25:20 and I, doubting in regard to the question concerning this, said, If he would wish to go on to Jerusalem, and there to be judged concerning these things --



- **I asked:** Ac 25:9
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FESTUS CONFESSES INADEQUACY

**Being at a loss how to investigate such matters - Festus** realized he did not know how to handle this kind of religious case. How could he investigate a dead man who had supposedly come to life. His attitude recalls Paul's description of natural men

But a natural man does not accept ([dechomai](#) = welcome) the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1 Cor 2:14+).

**Longenecker** adds "With a shrug of his shoulders, Festus confessed his total inadequacy to deal with them." (EBC)

**Being at a loss** (perplexed - [present tense](#)) (639)([aporeo/aporeomai](#)) means literally to be without a way or path, not to know which way to turn, to be at a loss, to be uncertain, to be "dazed and confused" **Vine** says **aporeomai** is literally "to be without a way in which to go," and so to be puzzled, to be at a loss as to what to think or what to do as Jacob was about his brother Esau (Genesis 32:7 = Lxx use of aporeomai which renders "distressed")

**Investigate** (2214)([zetesis](#) from [zeteo](#) = to seek) was used by the Greeks to indicate philosophical inquiry. Vine says first it means "a seeking" and then "a debate, dispute, questioning." In the present passage Festus means a search for information.

**Robertson** - This is not the reason given by Luke in Acts 25:9 (wanting to curry favour with the Jews), but doubtless this motive also actuated Festus as both could be true.

**I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there stand trial on these matters-** Of course Paul was not willing to go to his death at the hands of the Jews in Jerusalem, if he would even have arrived there alive! Paul knew he had rights as a Roman citizen and stood his ground and realized that he would get no further resolution of the matter before Festus.

**Andrews** points out that "**Festus tells Agrippa a lie**—it wasn't because of his uncertainty about these questions—but verse 9 says that he wanted to do the Jews a favor so he asked Paul if he was willing to go up to Jerusalem. Festus was painting himself in the best light possible—he had hidden motives and ulterior motives—he was a politician—and a crooked one at that! The Jews had requested for a trial in Jerusalem and Festus tried to comply with their request. (Ibid)

**Marshall** observes "It is interesting that by this stage the question of Paul's alleged desecration of the temple has quite disappeared from sight, and the topic of the resurrection (Acts 23:4; 24:21) has replaced it...The real ground of dispute is that Paul preaches the resurrection of Jesus, something which the Sadducees refused to believe on principle and which the Pharisees likewise refused to believe although they admitted the fact of a final resurrection of all men." (Tyndale NT Commentary)

**Acts 25:21 "But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar."**

NET Acts 25:21 But when Paul appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of His Majesty the Emperor, I ordered him to be kept under guard until I could send him to Caesar."

GNT Acts 25:21 το ὁ Παυλου πικαλεσαμ νου τηρηθ ναι α τ ν ε ς τ ν το Σεβαστο δι γνωσιν, κ λευσα τηρε σθαι α τ ν ως ο ναπ μψω α τ ν πρ ς Κα σαρα.

NLT Acts 25:21 But Paul appealed to have his case decided by the emperor. So I ordered that he be held in custody until I could arrange to send him to Caesar."

KJV 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.

ESV Acts 25:21 But when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to Caesar."

CSB Acts 25:21 But when Paul appealed to be held for trial by the Emperor, I ordered him to be kept in custody until I could send him to Caesar."

NIV Acts 25:21 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."

NKJ Acts 25:21 "But when Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar."

NRS Acts 25:21 But when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of his Imperial Majesty, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to the emperor."

YLT Acts 25:21 but Paul having appealed to be kept to the hearing of Sebastus, I did command him to be kept till I might send him unto Caesar.'

- **when Paul appealed:** Ac 25:10 26:32 2Ti 4:16
- **for the Emperor's decision:** Ac 27:1 Lu 2:1
- **I ordered him to be kept in custody:** Ac 25:12
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FESTUS BLAMES PAUL FOR HIS DILEMMA

**But when Paul appealed to be held in custody for the Emperor's decision-** Festus implies that if he had been willing to go to Jerusalem, his case would have been settled. Yes, and so would his life! Festus does not emphasize that it was because of his obvious desire to do the Jews a favor (asking for transfer of case to Jerusalem) that Paul was forced to make the appeal to Caesar.

**Decision** is **diagnosis** (related to [diaginosko](#) = to examine thoroughly) "the regular word for a legal examination (cognitio), thorough sifting (dia), here only in N.T." (Robertson) Gilbrant adds "In both classical Greek and intertestamental literature, diagnōsis is used as a legal term meaning "decision." It occurs only once in the New Testament (Acts 25:21) and has the meanings "examination, decision, hearing." It comes from the word diaginōskō (1225) meaning to "investigate, decide, examine." (Compare the English word diagnosis.)" (Gilbrant) **Louw-Nida** on **diagnosis/diaginosko** - to make a judgment on legal matters, with the implication of thorough examination - 'to decide a case, to arrive at a verdict after examination.'

**Andrews - Augustus** (Emperor's) was a title and not a proper name. It was first used by Octavianus, Julius Caesar's adopted son and successor, and was then adopted by the Caesars that followed him.

**Emperor** (KJV = Augustus)([4575](#))(**sebastos** from **sebázomai** = to venerate) means revered, worthy of reverence, august, venerated, august. The Latin is Augustus, which is commonly applied to the emperor. In the NT **sebastos** is used as a title and a proper noun (Augustus). **L-N** - pertaining to the Emperor - 'imperial.'

**Venerated** means to regard with feelings of respect and reverence; to consider hallowed or exalted, or be in awe of. **August** means of or befitting a lord, profoundly honored.

**Friberg** - transliterated from the Latin augustus (sacred, revered, worthy of veneration); substantively as a title for the Roman supreme ruler His Majesty the Emperor (Acts 25.21, 25); Augustan band, imperial cohort or regiment ( Acts 27.1) "

**Vine** on **sebastos** - "august, reverent," the masculine gender of an adjective (from sebas, "reverential awe"), became used as the title of the Roman emperor, Acts 25:21, 25, RV, for AV, "Augustus;" then, taking its name from the emperor, it became a title of honor applied to certain legions or cohorts or battalions, marked for their valor, Acts 27:1. Cp. sebazomai, "to worship," Rom. 1:25; sebasma, "an object of worship," Acts 17:23; 2 Thess. 2:4.

**Sebastos** - 3x - Augustan(1), Emperor(1), Emperor's(1). - Acts 25:21; Acts 25:25; Acts 27:1

**Jack Arnold** - Festus, being a man who was selfish and desiring self-praise, took credit for going by the Roman law, but shamefully, at this point he said nothing to Agrippa of Paul's innocence and that he should have been released.

**I ordered him to be kept in custody until I send him to Caesar-** No, what he really means is "I need to concoct a charge with your help King Agrippa!" And again we see the [providential hand of God](#) use what man meant for evil and bring forth good. In other words, if Festus had done the right thing and exonerated and released Paul, there is a good chance the Jews would have assassinated him. And so Festus' miscarriage of justice resulted in Paul being kept in protective custody, safe from the murderous Jews. (cf Ge 50:20, Ro 8:28).

**Send** ([375](#))(**anapempo** from **ana** = again + **pempo** = to send) means literally to send up and was a legal technical term send (up) to a higher or proper tribunal or official (Lk 23.7); send (back) to the previous tribunal or official (Lk 23.11) to send back to a previous location (Philemon 1:12). BDAG - (1) 1 to send up from a lower position to a higher, send up (2) 2 to send on to someone in authority, send (up), (Lk 23:7, Acts 25:21) (3) to send back to a previous location, send back (Lk 23:11 ; Philemon 1:12; Lk 23:15).

**Gilbrant on anapempo** - Classical Greek writers used anapempō in a literal sense to mean “send up” or “send back” (ana [301], “up/back,” pempō [3854], “to send”). Both meanings are used figuratively as well. For example, anapempō is used of sending someone up to higher ground (topographically speaking), but also of referring someone to a higher authority. Likewise, within the papyri anapempō conveys the sense, “to send up to a higher authority.” It is also used in the more literal sense of “sending back (someone or something).” The expression does not occur in the Septuagint. Both of the above senses are retained in the New Testament and on occasion appear together. In Luke 23:7 Pilate, upon learning that Jesus belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction (exousia [1833], “authority”) “sent” (anapempsen) Him to Herod. When Herod had finished questioning Jesus “he sent him again” (anapempsen) to Pilate (see verse 11). In context the word in verse 7 carries the idea of referral to one in authority, although it is questionable whether Pilate regarded Herod as his superior. Such, however, is clearly the case in Acts 25:21. Festus retained Paul, who had appealed his case to Rome, until a time Festus might “send” Paul to Caesar. The literal sense of “sending back” is more the meaning carried in Luke 23:11. This meaning was employed by Paul in speaking to Philemon of Onesimus, “Whom I have sent again to you” (Philemon 12). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

**Anapempo** - send(1), sent(1), sent...back(3). Lk. 23:7; Lk. 23:11; Lk. 23:15; Acts 25:21; Philemon 1:12

**Caesar** (2541)(**kaisar**) refers to the emperor of Rome. It was originally a surname of Julius Caesar, later taken as a title by the chief Roman ruler. Gilbrant adds that "was the family name of the famous Gaius Julius Caesar who was assassinated in Rome in 44 b.c. His grandnephew Octavius became the first Roman emperor and took the name Augustus Caesar. "Augustus" then became a title applied to his successors who were also Caesars. Augustus means "worthy to be revered." It implied respect and veneration that was usually given to their gods and to sacred things. But the title soon became used to encourage the worship of the emperor."

**Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."**

NET Acts 25:22 Agrippa said to Festus, "I would also like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he replied, "you will hear him."

GNT Acts 25:22 γρ ππαρ δ πρ ς τ ν Φ στον, βουλ μην κα α τ ς το νθρ που κο σαι. Α ριον, φησ ν, κο σ α το .

NLT Acts 25:22 "I'd like to hear the man myself," Agrippa said. And Festus replied, "You will-- tomorrow!"

KJV Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.

ESV Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," said he, "you will hear him."

CSB Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow you will hear him," he replied.

NIV Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself." He replied, "Tomorrow you will hear him."

NKJ Acts 25:22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow, " he said, "you shall hear him."

NRS Acts 25:22 Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear the man myself." "Tomorrow," he said, "you will hear him."

YLT Acts 25:22 And Agrippa said unto Festus, 'I was wishing also myself to hear the man;' and he said, 'To-morrow thou shalt hear him;'

- Ac 9:15 Isa 52:15 Mt 10:18 Lu 21:12
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I also would like to hear the man myself."** - The implication is that Agrippa had heard about this Jew named Paul. The multitudes of Jewish believers in Jerusalem and Judea could not have escaped his notice. There were also assemblies of believers in Galilee, Peraea, Samaria, and the Decapolis.

**Robertson** on **would like** - The [imperfect tense](#) for courtesy, rather than the blunt *boulomai*, I wish, I want. Literally, "I myself also was wishing" (while you were talking), a compliment to the interesting story told by Festus....The imperfect is keen enough and yet polite enough to leave the decision with Festus if inconvenient for any reason

**Longenecker**- This stirred Agrippa's interest so that instead of merely giving his advice, he asked to hear Paul himself. The Greek expression *kai autos* ("also myself"; "myself," NIV) makes the "I" emphatic, laying stress on Agrippa's real desire to meet Paul. (EBC)

**MacArthur** comments on the verb "**I would like**" - The imperfect tense of *boulomai* (**I would like**) suggests Agrippa had been wanting to hear Paul for a long time. He undoubtedly knew of Paul and looked forward to hearing the leading spokesman for Christianity in person.

**I would like** (want, wish) ([1014](#) [boulomai](#)) refers to a settled desire, one born of or springing from **reason** and not from **emotion**. To will, to wish, to will deliberately, to intend, to have a purpose, to be minded. **Boulomai** underlines the preset determined intention which drives one's planning, wishing, resolving. In contrast, the verb [thelo](#) focuses on the desire ("wishfulness") behind making an offer.

**Tomorrow," he said, "you shall hear him."** - "Agrippa's desire to speak with Paul gave occasion for the noblest defense of Christianity ever made before a court of law." (Arnold) For that we can thank Agrippa that he desired to hear Paul and we would be able 2000 years later to hear the great apostle filled with the Spirit and the Word. What an example to imitate he has given us (1 Cor 11:1).

**Longenecker** adds that "Paul's meeting with **Herod Agrippa II** has often been paralleled with that of Jesus before [Herod Antipas](#) in Luke 23:6-12+. Not only was each arraigned before a Roman governor, but each was brought before a Jewish king who wanted very much to meet him (Luke 23:8+). Paul's time with Agrippa II, however, turned out far more harmoniously than that of Jesus before Antipas. While Luke may have had the parallels in mind (only Luke includes the pericope of Jesus' appearance before Antipas), the differences of purpose and detail are too great to class the accounts of the two meetings as doublets.

**Acts 25:23 So, on the next day when Agrippa came together with Bernice amid great pomp, and entered the auditorium accompanied by the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.**

NET Acts 25:23 So the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience hall, along with the senior military officers and the prominent men of the city. When Festus gave the order, Paul was brought in.

GNT Acts 25:23 Τ ο ν π α ρ ι ο ν λ θ ν τ ο ς τ ο γ ρ π π α κ α τ ς Β ε ρ ν κ η ς μ ε τ π ο λ λ ς φ α ν τ α σ α ς κ α ε σ ε λ θ ν τ ω ν ε ς τ κ ρ ο α τ ρ ι ο ν σ ν τ ε χ ι λ ι ρ χ ο ι ς κ α ν ὄ ρ σ ι ν τ ο ς κ α τ ξ ο χ ν τ ς π λ ε ω ς κ α κ ε λ ε σ α ν τ ο ς τ ο Φ σ τ ο υ χ θ η Π α λ ο ς.

NLT Acts 25:23 So the next day Agrippa and Bernice arrived at the auditorium with great pomp, accompanied by military officers and prominent men of the city. Festus ordered that Paul be brought in.

KJV 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.

ESV Acts 25:23 So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

CSB Acts 25:23 So the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the auditorium with the commanders and prominent men of the city. When Festus gave the command, Paul was brought in.

NIV Acts 25:23 The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience room with the high ranking officers and the leading men of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

NKJ Acts 25:23 So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus' command Paul was brought in.

NRS Acts 25:23 So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then Festus gave the order and Paul was brought in.

YLT Acts 25:23 on the morrow, therefore -- on the coming of Agrippa and Bernice with much display, and they having entered into the audience chamber, with the chief captains also, and the principal men of the city, and Festus having ordered -- Paul was brought forth.

- **with Bernice amid great pomp:** Ac 12:21 Es 1:4 Ec 1:2 Isa 5:14 14:11 Eze 7:24 30:18 32:12 33:28 Da 4:30 1Co 7:31 Jas 1:11 1Pe 1:24 1Jn 2:16
- **at the command of Festus** Ac 9:15
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## REGALIA SURROUNDING PAUL'S HEARING

[Regalia](#) describes the ceremonial emblems or robes of royalty, high office, an order, etc. This was "high drama" of the first order and the main character on stage would in fact be Jesus Christ, Whom Paul presented to the royal gathering (Acts 26:9, 15, 23, 28).

Note the parallel between Jesus and Paul - Paul stands before Herod Agrippa II and as his Lord had stood before Herod Antipas (see Luke 23:6-12+). In both of these scenes the prisoner was first arraigned before the Roman governor (Pilate and Festus) and then brought before the Jewish king.

**John MacArthur** writes that "This scene is one of the most riveting in the New Testament....The spectacle must have been breathtaking. Agrippa would have been decked out in all the trappings of royalty, including a purple robe, golden crown, rings, and perhaps a scepter. Bernice, though not technically Agrippa's queen, would have been similarly attired."

**Longenecker** - Paul's defense before Herod Agrippa II was evidently for Luke the most important of the **five defenses**. It is the longest and most carefully constructed of the five—factors that of themselves give notice as to something of its importance in Luke's eyes. Perhaps Luke was in the audience chamber through the courtesy of an officer of the guard, or perhaps he heard Paul's account of the event and what was said at some time later. But however he got the information, he chose to conclude his reports of Paul's five defenses with this speech, which has quite properly been called the apostle's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (cf. Bruce, *Book of the Acts*, p. 488). (EBC)

**So, on the next day when Agrippa came together with Bernice amid great pomp**- Festus really [rolled out the red carpet](#) for Agrippa and Bernice. Notice it is not just "**pomp**" but **great** (pollus = much) **pomp**. In English pomp means ceremonial elegance and splendor, stately or magnificent display. But it can also convey vain and ostentatious display. Given their godless lifestyles, it was probably a combination of both. And it is as if the Holy Spirit is setting the stage for the presentation of a man who was the antithesis of pomp and display. One has to be reminded of the words in 1 Sa 16:7 "But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." We do not know what Paul looked like physically and it doesn't matter for we know what he looked like spiritually and he was without question one of the most Christ-like men who ever walked on this earth and here he was on display before all the pretentiousness of these people. One has to wonder how many of those present were convicted by the Holy Spirit in Paul's subsequent message and came to the realization that it wasn't anyone in the room who was great but it was the Lord Jesus Christ Whom Paul represented as an ambassador who was truly great.

What is so ironic about the great pomp is that this the very city in their father had so dreadfully perished for his pride Luke recording "On an appointed day Herod, having put on his royal apparel, took his seat on the rostrum and began delivering an address to them. The people kept crying out, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" And immediately an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and died. (Acts 12:21-23+)

**Pomp** ([5325](#))(**phantasia** from **phantazo** = to make visible from **phaino** = to show) means an appearing, show, pomp, pageantry, splendor. **Phantasia (pomp)** appears only here in the New Testament and denotes a grand, showy pageant. We get our English word for "Fantasy" from this Greek word. See use of [phantasia in Greek philosophy](#) (e.g., "In Hellenistic philosophy the term *phantasia* is most commonly used to refer not to the capacity to receive or interpret appearances but to those appearances themselves. Both the Epicureans and the Stoics use the word to refer to the impressions we receive through our senses.").

**Friberg** on **phantasia** - strictly making visible; in a negative sense, as an appearance made for effect, for showing off cheap display, pomp, pageantry

**Gilbrant** on **phantasia** - This noun refers to that which appears. It connotes great activity. A big impression was made on the crowds because there were many things to watch at the same time. In this usage the word came to refer to the outward ceremony

and pageantry used to impress people with the importance of government dignitaries.

**Andrews** - The king was living in a fantasy world—they put much stock in public appearance. It is still the same with rulers and governors and presidents and popes and people in authority today! They want to look good on the outside—they want to play the part! John Phillips wrote, “What a display of scarlet and purple, burnished brass and glittering steel, silks and jewels, marble and gold—Pomp!”

**And entered the auditorium accompanied by the commanders**- This would have been the five tribunes commanding the five cohorts stationed at Caesarea.

**Auditorium** (201)(**akroaterion** from **akroamai** = to listen + **-terion** = suffix denoting place) hall of hearing, place for a hearing, place of audience, or listening. (Latin = auditorium) **Louw-Nida** - a relatively large building normally used for legal hearings, though possibly also employed for more general purposes - 'audience hall, auditorium.' **BDAG** - "audience hall (Lat. auditorium) of the procurator, in which hearings were held and justice was privately dispensed."

**Gilbrant** - Bullinger says: “Among the Greeks, (this word refers to) the lecture room; among the Romans, to the place of trial” (“Hearing, place of,” Critical Lexicon and Concordance). This term occurs only in Acts 25:23. The akroatēion was a recitation place reserved exclusively to hear matters common to all hearers, similar to an auditorium or town hall.

**Commanders** (5506)(**chiliarchos**) commanders of a thousand men and in Roman military organization a tribune.

**And the prominent men of the city** - prominent before men but not in the eyes of God. Oh, how easy we all fall into the trap of wanting to be people pleasers, worried about what others think about us, etc, etc.

**Prominent** (1851)(**exochē** from **execho** = stand out, project from - in turn from **ek** = out + **echo** = to have, be) literally standing out, prominence; 'something. that projects from a surface. Figuratively, of persons in high position distinction, prominence.

**Thayer** - 1. properly, in Greek writings any prominence or projection, as the peak or summit of a mountain (Job 39:28 the Septuagint); in medical writings a protuberance, swelling, wart, etc. 2. metaphorically, eminence, excellence, superiority.

**Gilbrant on exochē** - The basic meaning of this word is “projection” or “prominence,” e.g., a mountain peak. In its only occurrence in the Septuagint it is translated “upon the crag (projecting point) of the rock” (Job 39:28). Exochē is used with the preposition kata (2567) in its only New Testament occurrence (Acts 25:23). Here “prominence, jutting out” takes on a symbolic sense of standing out, rather than that of physically doing so. Hence it may be translated “eminent, principal, prominent, or leading” men of the city.

**Robertson on prominent** - The use of *kat' exochēn*, like our French phrase *par excellence*, occurs here only in the N.T., and not in the ancient Greek, but it is found in inscriptions of the first century A.D. (Moulton and Milligan's *Vocabulary*). Exochē in medical writers is any protuberance or swelling. Cf. our phrase "outstanding men."

So in walks Paul with chains rattling (Acts 26:29+) and certainly not in the latest Gucci or Calvin Klein attire, and yet wearing a garment of righteousness purchased for him by Jesus Christ. And yes thought a lowly prisoner Paul was the only person in the great auditorium who was really free (not counting any believers of course), for all of those in external pomp were clothed in filthy rags of their own righteousness and were bound with invisible chains, veritable slaves to their sin, self, pleasure, greed, power and a hundred other sins.

**At the command of Festus Paul was brought in** - Festus as if a maestro tapping on his podium to alert the orchestra and audience that it was time for the main attraction of the day. It is almost as if Paul was on "display" for all to wonder how could a little Jewish man be causing such a fuss? But of course he did not mind, because this was his chance to appear before a king and present the Gospel of the real King of kings. (Acts 9:15+).

**Robert Girard** said, “Legally, the hearing was unofficial, since Agrippa had no jurisdiction in the case. Unofficial or not, it became a grand spectacle. Agrippa and Bernice put on their purple robes and golden crowns. Festus dressed in the scarlet cape worn by Roman governors on high state occasions. Agrippa was attended by his royal entourage and surrounded by Caesarean Jewish leaders, all dressed to kill. With Festus came the captains of the five cohorts stationed at Caesarea, along with an escort of legionnaires at attention.”

**Acts 25:24 Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you gentlemen here present with us, you see this man about whom all the people of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, loudly declaring that he ought not to live any longer.**

about whom the entire Jewish populace petitioned me both in Jerusalem and here, shouting loudly that he ought not to live any longer.

GNT Acts 25:24 κα φησιν Φ στος, γρ ππα βασιλε κα π ντες ο συμπαρ ντες μ ν νδρες, θεωρε τε το τον περ ο παν τ πλ θος τ ν ουδα ων ν τυχ ν μοι ν τε εροσολ μοις κα νθ δε βο ντες μ δε ν α τ ν ζ ν μηκ τι.

NLT Acts 25:24 Then Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are here, this is the man whose death is demanded by all the Jews, both here and in Jerusalem.

KJV 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.

ESV Acts 25:24 And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish people petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.

CSB Acts 25:24 Then Festus said: "King Agrippa and all men present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish community has appealed to me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he should not live any longer.

NIV Acts 25:24 Festus said: "King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.

NKJ Acts 25:24 And Festus said: "King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole assembly of the Jews petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he was not fit to live any longer.

NRS Acts 25:24 And Festus said, "King Agrippa and all here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish community petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer.

YLT Acts 25:24 And Festus said, 'King Agrippa, and all men who are present with us, ye see this one, about whom all the multitude of the Jews did deal with me, both in Jerusalem and here, crying out, He ought not to live any longer;

- **about whom all the people of the Jews appealed** : Ac 25:2,3,7
- **that he ought not to live any longer**. Ac 22:22 Lu 23:21-23
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FESTUS PRESENTS THE MAIN ATTRACTION

**Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all you gentlemen here present with us, you see this man about whom all the people of the Jews appealed to me, both at Jerusalem and here, loudly declaring that he ought not to live any longer** - This is the most honest Festus has been, for now he admits that the desire of the Jews was to kill Paul. And yet even with this announcement Festus was guilty of exaggeration for not **all the people of the Jews** had appealed to him about Paul. In the most recent accusation against Paul the Jews who demanded the death penalty were primarily the chief priests and the Sadducean members of the Sanhedrin. But there were many other Jews, including the thousands of Jewish believers who had no part in this.

**Jack Andrews** - Festus said, "you see this man" which lets us in on the attitude that Festus had about all this. This was an absolute absurdity for Paul to be sent to Caesar—he was not a threat to Rome or to the Jews. He did not have the physical build of Samson or Goliath. He did not intimidate the King and the prominent men of Caesarea. They did not shrink back at his public appearance.

As noted below the verb Festus chose for "**see**" is not a simple looking, but looking closely and even with a sense of wonder. It is as if Festus is presenting Paul before the throng to behold as one would do in a theater. It was part of Festus' performance before his honored guest.

**See** (2334) (**theoreo** from **theaomai** = to look at closely or attentively or contemplatively - even with a sense of wonder; **citheoros** = a spectator; English = theater) can refer to physical sight but also to perception and understanding. And so it can mean to gaze, to look with interest and purpose, to carefully examine with emphasis on or attention to details. **Vincent** adds that **theoreo** "was more than simple seeing. The verb means looking steadfastly, as one who has an interest in the object, and with a view to search into and

understand it: to look inquiringly and intently."

**Appealed** (1793)([entugchano](#)) to fall in with a person, to go to meet for consultation or supplication as here. It speaks of approaching someone with a petition turn to, appeal to; in a negative sense to complain to, make a complaint against. Papyri give many examples of the technical sense of enteuxis as petit. NT uses - Acts 25:24; Rom. 8:27; Rom. 8:34; Rom. 11:2; Heb. 7:25

**Loudly declaring** (shouting loudly in [present tense](#))(994)([boao](#) from [boé](#) 995) means raise a cry, call or shout of joy, pain, etc, by using one's voice with unusually high volume. In several of the NT contexts (and many more of the [Septuagint = LXX](#) uses) crying out was in the context of one seeking help or assistance. Some uses mean simply a loud cry but in some of these situations the cry reflects a state of agitation.

**Boao** in NT - Matt. 3:3; Mk. 1:3; Mk. 15:34; Lk. 3:4; Lk. 9:38; Lk. 18:7; Lk. 18:38; Jn. 1:23; Acts 8:7; Acts 17:6; Acts 25:24; Gal. 4:27

**Acts 25:25 "But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and since he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him.**

NET Acts 25:25 But I found that he had done nothing that deserved death, and when he appealed to His Majesty the Emperor, I decided to send him.

GNT Acts 25:25 γ ὁ κατελαβ μην μηδ ν ξιον α τ ν θαν του πεπραχ ναι, α το ὁ το του πικαλεσαμ νου τ ν Σεβαστ ν κρινα π μπειν.

NLT Acts 25:25 But in my opinion he has done nothing deserving death. However, since he appealed his case to the emperor, I have decided to send him to Rome.

KJV Acts 25:25 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.

ESV Acts 25:25 But I found that he had done nothing deserving death. And as he himself appealed to the emperor, I decided to go ahead and send him.

CSB Acts 25:25 Now I realized that he had not done anything deserving of death, but when he himself appealed to the Emperor, I decided to send him.

NIV Acts 25:25 I found he had done nothing deserving of death, but because he made his appeal to the Emperor I decided to send him to Rome.

NKJ Acts 25:25 "But when I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death, and that he himself had appealed to Augustus, I decided to send him.

NRS Acts 25:25 But I found that he had done nothing deserving death; and when he appealed to his Imperial Majesty, I decided to send him.

YLT Acts 25:25 and I, having found him to have done nothing worthy of death, and he also himself having appealed to Sebastus, I decided to send him,

- **he had committed nothing worthy of death:** Ac 23:9,29 26:31 Lu 23:4,14 Joh 18:38
- **and since he himself appealed to the Emperor:** Ac 25:11,12
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## PAUL AGAIN JUDGED INNOCENT

**But I found that he had committed ([prasso](#)) nothing worthy ([áxios](#)) of death** - Festus very emphatically affirms Paul's innocence, at least of anything that would warrant execution. **Robertson** notes "Acts 25:25 repeats the statement in Acts 25:21, perhaps for the benefit of the assembled dignitaries."

One is reminded of Jesus before the governor Pilate

Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "**I find no guilt in Him.** (Jn 18:38)

**Found** (2638)([katalambano](#) from [katá](#) = adds intensity + [lambáno](#) = take) means literally to take eagerly, grasp with force, lay hold



of. Figuratively as in this passage it means to process information, to understand or to grasp, meaning to learn through the process of inquiry. Also with the sense of to understand in Acts 4:13; Acts 10:34.

**And since he himself appealed ([epikaleomai](#)) to the Emperor, I decided to send him - Decided ([krino](#))** means to judge between choices and reach a decision, in this case to **send** Paul to Caesar because Paul really gave him no choice!

**Gilbrant** - Unfortunately, though Festus had come to an understanding of the fact that Paul was not guilty of anything worthy of death, he had not come to an understanding of what Paul's message was all about. Martin Luther once said, "The object of his (Paul's) mission is to open their eyes—that is, to open and awaken the mind to the truth, and this in order to their conversion. The change is denoted by a twofold contrast—by that between darkness and light, and by that between the ruling power of Satan and the liberating fellowship of God. Finally, the ultimate design of God in their conversion consisted in the forgiveness of sins, and the bestowal of an inheritance, that is, a share in the glory." Festus was still blinded to these truths. (Ibid)

**Emperor** (KJV = Augustus)([4575](#)) see above for [sebastos](#). Longenecker comments that "The title *Sebastos* ("Emperor," v. 25), found only here and in v. 21 in the NT, is the Greek equivalent of *Augustus*. It was first conferred on Octavian, the adopted heir of Julius Caesar, by the Senate in 27 B.C. to denote "one who is augmented" or lifted above other mortals and was restricted to the reigning emperor (and, at times, his wife)." (EBC)

**Acts 25:26 "Yet I have nothing definite about him to write to my lord. Therefore I have brought him before you all and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the investigation has taken place, I may have something to write."**

NET Acts 25:26 But I have nothing definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after this preliminary hearing I may have something to write.

GNT Acts 25:26 περ ο σφαλ ς πι γρ ψαι τ κυρ ο κ χω, δι προ γαγον α τ ν φ μ ν κα μ λιστα π σο , βασιλε γρ ππα, πω ς τ ς νακρ σεω ς γενομ νη ς σχ τ γρ ψω·

NLT Acts 25:26 "But what shall I write the emperor? For there is no clear charge against him. So I have brought him before all of you, and especially you, King Agrippa, so that after we examine him, I might have something to write.

KJV Acts 25:26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write.

ESV Acts 25:26 But I have nothing definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write.

CSB Acts 25:26 I have nothing definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore, I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after this examination is over, I may have something to write.

NIV Acts 25:26 But I have nothing definite to write to His Majesty about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that as a result of this investigation I may have something to write.

NKJ Acts 25:26 "I have nothing certain to write to my lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the examination has taken place I may have something to write.

NRS Acts 25:26 But I have nothing definite to write to our sovereign about him. Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write--

YLT Acts 25:26 concerning whom I have no certain thing to write to my lord, wherefore I brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, king Agrippa, that the examination having been made, I may have something to write;

- especially before you, King Agrippa: Ac 26:2,3

- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE CRUX OF FESTUS' DILEMMA

**Yet I have nothing definite about him to write to my lord** - Festus finally confesses that he had no charge to send to Caesar. He had nothing reliable, nothing definite, nothing trustworthy to write to the emperor Nero. At this time in Nero's reign, he had not yet turned "crazy," but it was still not advisable to send the emperor a prisoner without a charge.

**Definite** (804) (**aphales** from **a** = w/o + **sphallo** = throw down, trip up, totter, bring to the ground, make someone fall) literally means that which cannot be thrown down, tripped up, tottered or overthrown. It describes that which is certain, steady, immovable. Acts 21:34; Acts 22:30; Acts 25:26; Phil. 3:1; Heb. 6:19

**Robertson** adds on **aphales** - Nothing definite or reliable (**a** privative, **sphallō**, to trip). All the charges of the Sanhedrin **slipped away** or were **tripped up** by Paul. Festus confesses that he had nothing left and thereby convicts himself of gross insincerity in his proposal to Paul in Acts 25:9 about going up to Jerusalem. By his own statement he should have set Paul free. The various details here bear the marks of the eyewitness. Luke was surely present and witnessed this grand spectacle with Paul as chief performer.

**Lord** (**master**) (2962) (**kurios**) of course is used most often in the NT of our Lord Jesus Christ. However in ancient Rome **kurios** was used as a respectful designation used in addressing persons of varying social or political rank, often equivalent to our "sir" and that is the sense in the present passage.

**Longenecker** comments on Festus' use of "lord" - The addition of **Kyrios** ("Lord" or "His Majesty") to the imperial title began in the time of Nero (A.D. 54-68), and its usage steadily increased till it became common during the reign of Trajan (98-117). Despite its associations with deity in the eastern realms of the empire, the growth of the imperial cult, and the pretensions to divinity of such emperors as Nero and Domitian, the title **Kyrios** did not by itself signal to Romans the idea of deity but rather connoted that of majesty (cf. TDNT, 3:1054-58). (EBC)

**Vincent** agrees - The title "lord" was refused by the first two emperors, Augustus and Tiberius. The emperors who followed accepted it. In the time of Domitian it was a recognized title. Antoninus Pius was the first who put it on his coins.

**Robertson** on **kurios** - Deissmann (*op. cit.*, pp. 349ff.) runs a most interesting parallel "between the cult of Christ and the cult of Caesar in the application of the term **kurios**, lord" in ostraca, papyri, inscriptions. Beyond a doubt Paul has all this fully in mind when he says in 1 Cor. 12:3 that "no one is able to say **Kurios Iēsous** except in the Holy Spirit" (cf. also Phil. 2:11). The Christians claimed this word for Christ and it became the test in the Roman persecutions as when Polycarp steadily refused to say " **Lord Caesar**" and insisted on saying "**Lord Jesus**" when it meant his certain death (See [video of Polycarp](#)).

**Therefore** - Term of conclusion. Since I have no charge against Paul.

**I have brought him before you all and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after the investigation has taken place, I may have something to write** - Agrippa with his Jewish background can presumably concoct a charge against Paul that can be sent to the Emperor.

**Robertson** on **before you** - The whole company. In no sense a new trial, but an examination in the presence of these prominent men to secure data and to furnish entertainment and pleasure to Agrippa (Acts 25:22).

**Brought...before** (4254) (**proago** from **pro** = before + **ago** = go) means to go before. **Transitively** (BDAG = to take or lead from one position to another by taking charge) = to lead forward, lead or bring out (Ac 12:6; 16:30; 17:5; 25:26) **Intransitively** (BDAG = to move ahead or in front of) = to go before, lead the way, precede either (a) in space Mt 2:9; Mk 11:9; walk ahead of Mk 10:32 or (b) in time go or come before (Mt 14:22; Mk 6:45; 14:28; 1 Ti 1:18; 5:24; Hb 7:18; get in before Mt 21:31)

**Proago** - 20v - before(1), bring(1), bring...forward(1), brought(1), brought...before(1), former(1), get(1), go ahead(4), goes too far(1), going ahead(3), going before(1), led the way(1), previously made(1), walking on ahead(1), went in front(1), went on before(1).

Matt. 2:9; Matt. 14:22; Matt. 21:9; Matt. 21:31; Matt. 26:32; Matt. 28:7; Mk. 6:45; Mk. 10:32; Mk. 11:9; Mk. 14:28; Mk. 16:7; Lk. 18:39; Acts 12:6; Acts 16:30; Acts 17:5; Acts 25:26; 1 Tim. 1:18; 1 Tim. 5:24; Heb. 7:18; 2 Jn. 1:9

**Proago** in the Septuagint - Esther 2:21, Pr 4:27, Pr 6:8.

**Investigation** (351) (**anakrisis** from **anakrino** = to examine) means as an evaluative action investigation; as a legal technical term preliminary hearing, judicial examination. Gilbrant adds "This is a noun used among the Greeks as a legal term to describe the

preliminary hearing to gather evidence for the judges. The main root of the word is **krisis** which is similar to **krinō** and means “to distinguish, decide, discern.” The prefix **ana** is used here to signify “up” or “through,” and qualifies the root word **krisis** to mean to “bring up for examination.” **Anakrisis** is found only once in the New Testament in Acts 25:26. Here it indicates the judicial questioning that Paul underwent at the hands of Agrippa.”

**Robertson** - Festus makes it plain that this is not a "trial," but an examination for his convenience to help him out of a predicament.

**Acts 25:27 "For it seems absurd to me in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him."**

NET Acts 25:27 For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner without clearly indicating the charges against him."

GNT Acts 25:27 λογον γ ρ μοι δοκε πι μποντα δ σμιον μ κα τ ς κατ α το α τ ας σημ ναι.

NLT Acts 25:27 For it makes no sense to send a prisoner to the emperor without specifying the charges against him!"

KJV Acts 25:27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

ESV Acts 25:27 For it seems to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not to indicate the charges against him."

CSB Acts 25:27 For it seems unreasonable to me to send a prisoner and not to indicate the charges against him."

NIV Acts 25:27 For I think it is unreasonable to send on a prisoner without specifying the charges against him."

NKJ Acts 25:27 "For it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him."

NRS Acts 25:27 for it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner without indicating the charges against him."

YLT Acts 25:27 for it doth seem to me irrational, sending a prisoner, not also to signify the charges against him.'

- Pr 18:13 Joh 7:51
- [Acts 25 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### THE ABSURDITY OF A CRIMINAL WITH NO ACCUSATION OF A CRIME

**For it seems absurd to me in sending a prisoner, not to indicate also the charges against him-** Absurd means inconsistent with reason, logic, or common sense. Not only would it have been **absurd** but potentially dangerous to bother Caesar with matters of no import! It is not likely Nero (A. D. 54-68) would have looked favorably on Festus for wasting his time. Even the Jews had a law like this Nicodemus declaring that “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” (Jn 7:51)

**MacArthur** has an interesting note that "Paul was probably not legally bound to attend the inquiry. He had already appealed his case to the emperor, thus taking it out of Festus's jurisdiction. But Paul would not think of passing up an opportunity to preach the gospel in such an important setting. Here is still another example of his courageous commitment to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in every circumstance. The vehicle for his gospel proclamation was to be the powerful, dramatic testimony of his conversion on the road to Damascus."

**Absurd** (unreasonable)(249)(**alogos** from "a" = without + **lógos** = word, reason) means literally without speech or reason and so irrational, not working by reason and so contrary to reason, without cause or without basis.

**Longenecker** on use of **alogos** in this context - Festus's statement that he thought it "unreasonable" (**alogos**) to send on a prisoner with unspecified charges against him is typical of the face-saving language used among officials when what is really meant is that the failure to specify charges would be a dereliction of duty. (EBC)

