



THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The Record of the Beginning of Jesus' Reign

Chapter Twenty-Four

INTRODUCTION

IN THIS CHAPTER we continue following Paul through his trial before the Judean and Roman rulers. Jerusalem's High Council (the Sanhedrin) was accusing Paul of crimes against the state. Earlier, in Jerusalem, the Roman police intervened and extracted Paul out of the hands of an angry mob of Jews outside one of their temples. They would have probably beat him to death, but the Romans did Paul a favor by rescuing him from the hands of the rabid Jews.

Claudias Lysias, the Roman military leader in Jerusalem, inquired as to the reason for the disorderly Jewish mob. Standing before the Roman officer, Paul explained that he was not the one causing trouble. Rather it was the Jewish mob. Paul was then transferred to another court to stand before Felix the Roman governor.

If justice was hard to find in the Roman courts, it was impossible to find in the Jewish Sanhedrin. Before this ordeal is over Paul will make his defense in several courts and stand before several judges, including Festus (the new governor who replaced Felix), Agrippa (the Judean king), and eventually he will even go to Rome to appeal to Caesar's court.

As we pick up the story, Paul has been moved to Antipatris, awaiting the arrival of his accusers from Jerusalem. Upon their arrival his trial before Felix will continue.

NOTE: We will pay close attention to Paul's words, as well as his accusers, in this chapter. Vital questions are answered here ... for those with eyes to see and ears to hear.

Paul is at a critical juncture in his life with mortal enemies bearing down on him. While giving his defense in court he clarifies some important truths for all of us.

ACTS 24:1-4 THE JEWISH LAW TEAM

And after five days Ananias the high priest arrived with some elders and a certain orator named Tertullus who made emphasis to the governor against Paul.

And when he was called forth, Tertullus started accusing him, saying, "For the great peace obtained through your planning and reforms in the nation,

"We honor you, mightiest Felix, in every way and in every place, with all thankfulness.

“But that I may not intrude more upon you, I pray you will indulge us and hear us briefly.”

ANANIAS arrived at Felix’s court with his team. The text calls them “priests” and “orators.” Today we might call them “politicians” and “lawyers.” The jackals were trailing Paul. No matter what they are called, they are known by their ways. Tertullus was one of these jackals – the equivalent of a prosecuting lawyer with a flare for oration.

Tertullus begins his legal attack against Paul by addressing Felix. His introduction might be called “polishing the apple,” an attempt to prejudice the governor towards his side of the case. He thanked Felix for being the wonderful and benevolent ruler that he was, well loved by all reasonable people. It’s not hard to see that Tertullus was a professional lawyer - he was a skillful liar.

In the exchange that follows we will learn the so-called crime of which Paul was being accused. They were a criminal law team. Their attack was planned, and they intended to make the case larger-than-life. They were no longer a mob of mindless, raving maniacs, pulling their hair, ripping their clothes, screaming and spitting ... as earlier in Jerusalem when Claudias Lysias (the Roman officer) rescued Paul from them. Now they were presenting their case cunningly and diplomatically before Felix in a Roman court.

So begins Tertullus the Jewish lawyer.

QUESTION: It seems ironic that the lawyer occupation has been a seemingly necessary fixture of society since ancient times, and yet lawyers have been hated by the people for their hypocrisy, dishonesty, and lack of conscience. If the lawyer profession is so hated, why then does society cling to the industry and tolerate lawyers to remain in power and privilege?

ACTS 24:5-9 THE CRIME OF “STANDING”

For we have found this man a pestilence and an inciter of sedition to all the Jews throughout the empire, and a leading seditionist in the sect of the Nazarenes;

Who also tried to profane the temple; and whom we captured.

(Verse 7 is a KJV insertion, not found in the original text.)

And all these things, of which we are accusing him, you can fully obtain from him by interrogation.

And the Jews joined in the attack asserting these things to be so.

IN VERSE FIVE we hear the accusation against Paul. It is revealing. Its significance has been covered up by church deceit. The reason for cover-up will become clear as we continue.

The King James Version says Paul was a “*mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world.*” The Greek word they translated “world” in verse five is “*oikoumeney*,” which literally means “*the inhabited lands*” (i.e., the lands of the Roman Empire). Thus, it means “*throughout the Roman Empire.*”

Also, notice the word “sedition.” Governments and churches define “sedition” as: *insurrection; inciting rebellion against government.* However, this definition does not square with Paul or the writer of the book of Acts. The Greek word is “*stasis*,” which means “*a stand*” or “*a stationary position.*” “Sedition” (stasis) is merely the act of settling upon a conclusion and standing by it. Paul’s opinion was his stand: his “stasis.” From government’s viewpoint there are favorable *stands* and unfavorable *stands*. If someone takes a stand for the government’s agenda it is “patriotism.” But an unapproved stand is called “sedition” ... with their own definition.

Paul told people about Christ, and that led them to **stand** for truth ... even in the face of persecution. For this, Jerusalem’s rulers charged Paul with sedition. The truths Paul was giving people dealt with the nature and meaning of GOVERNMENT. These truths led people to form conclusions and opinions not approved by Jerusalem’s rulers. These truths taught them about the Ecclesia. The Ecclesia stood for the Kingship of Jesus, and for freedom. Jerusalem’s rulers called this “sedition.”

So, now you know what sedition really means: TO SETTLE UPON AN OPINION, TO BELIEVE IN SOMETHING, AND STAND FOR IT. I find it exceedingly revealing that government chose to use a word that means “to have an opinion” for their definition of a crime. That, in Orwellian terms, would be called “thought-crime.”

Believing in Christ and taking a stand for him is SEDITION from the government’s point of view. Yet most people claim they can take a stand for Christ without offending the government. They know neither Christ nor the government.

Standing for truth is usually a crime in the eyes of government. Government demands we comply with government standards and government agendas, and that we have no other opinions or stands.

Man’s governments require blind, spineless citizens. As an institution it is a collection of unprincipled political-opportunists and low-class employees willing to compromise anything necessary – to lie, cheat, steal and murder – in order to pursue their own security and comfort. They are faithless cowards with situation ethics.

Benjamin Franklin once said this about the quality of the man attracted to government (and he should know, because he was one):

*“There are two passions which have a powerful influence in the affairs of men. These are **ambition** and **avarice**: the love of power, and the love of money. Separately, each of these has a great force in prompting men into action; but when united in view of the same object, they have in many minds the most violent effects.*

Place before the eyes of such men a post of honor, that shall at the same time be a place of profit, and they will move heaven and earth to obtain it.

And what kind of men will strive for this pre-eminence...? It will not be the wise and moderate, the lovers of peace and good order, the men fittest for the trust. Instead it will be the bold and the violent, the men of strong passion and indefatigable

*activity in their selfish pursuits. These will thrust themselves into your government and will be **your rulers**.”*

Despite noble-sounding, poetic and patriotic rhetoric about the glories of governments, wars, and patriots, the truth is that a “patriot” is devoid of principles. He must be an unprincipled “yes man” or an ignorant sycophant who sides with bullies. Otherwise he would grow tired of lies, crime and tyranny and could not pledge his allegiance to it. Christians who read the Bible should know about powers in government (i.e., “*rulers in high places*” (Eph. 6:12).

A principled man can be neither patriot nor politician. Principled men cannot uphold offices or rules that compromise truth. Principled men cannot ignore wrong for the sake of power, comfort, or profit. Principled men will not voluntarily submit themselves, their families, and their futures to politicians, bankers and lawyers.

Principled men take a stand for what they believe is right, even if they are hated for it. Rulers demand that we have no stand of our own, and that we thoughtlessly accept whatever agenda they hand us.

Paul was encouraging Judeans to hear Jesus, and to stand for principles they knew to be right. Thus, Paul was branded a “*leading seditionist in the sect of the Nazarenes*” (Jesus’ followers were sometimes called “Nazarenes” because Jesus was from Nazareth).

Jesus’ Kingship and its laws were foreign to the Judean system. The two systems were at enmity ... destructive to one another. These two systems – man’s and God’s – are incompatible and hostile to one another.

The Judean government had systematically eliminated truth, justice and liberty. It is what governments do. They must! If they don’t, their power and control will dissolve. Rulers think of Jesus’ Kingship as an outside competing power; a political threat to be resisted and ultimately destroyed.

Jesus taught life and liberty.

Governments teach death and slavery. Governments cannot tolerate such things as life and liberty. They hire orators and poets to speak and write of the glories of war, patriotism and such things. They wrest the words so that “freedom” becomes “slavery.” The rulers hated Paul as they hated Jesus. The “Gospel” was NOT good news to the rulers! It undermined their plans for power and wealth.

Now, with this in mind, look at the accusation against Paul. According to the Sanhedrin, Paul had “profaned the temple.” This dramatic statement proves, among other things, that Paul’s God was not the Jews’ god. It proves that Paul believed and taught a different philosophy and a different law than did the rulers of Jerusalem. Think about it!

The Jews condemned Paul according to their law. So, what was “their law”? Churches today tell us that Jewish law was the Old Testament - the laws of Moses. The churches convince churchgoers that the Jewish priests and lawyers were following the Old Testament, and that Paul was rejecting them and their Old Testament law. But that is nonsense. This calculated lie overlooks the obvious fact that the high priest and his court were ignorant of God’s law, and were in violation of the LAW and the PROPHETS (The Old Testament)!

Jesus had not violated the Law of God, yet the Judeans executed Him. Jesus stated plainly that He came not to abolish the Law and the Prophets, but to consummate them (Matt. 5:17).

By the same token, Paul believed and obeyed the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament). Yet, the Jews wanted him dead.

Obviously, the Jews were in a different law system ... one that was foreign to the Old Testament, and foreign to both Jesus and Paul. The Judean law system was anti-Christ and anti-Bible. Consider the origin of the religion called “Judaism.” It NEVER was the faith of the Old Testament, and it did NOT come through Moses or from Yahweh.

QUESTION: You make broad generalizations about man's governments, including the United States Democracy - the best government in the world – as if it is structured in such a way as to attract only a criminal element. How could the United States Government attract only criminals when it is “of the people, by the people and for the people,” and has roots founded in Christianity, has a Bill of Rights, free elections, and promotes freedom through these noble ideas?

his accusers, the Sanhedrin, whose ways were known to Felix since he had judged Judea many years. He explains that it had been only twelve days since he had gone to Jerusalem. It was there, in Jerusalem, that the Jews attacked him in the temple ... although he had done nothing that could be construed as disorderly or disruptive.

Now let's take a closer look at the accusation and the statements, because the accusers and the defendant both profess to believe in law. Remember, in verse six the high priest said they (the Judeans) wanted to deal with Paul according to “*their law.*” – that is, the law of the Judeans. Their law is also mentioned in the letter that was written to Felix by Claudias Lysias, the Roman officer who arrested Paul in Jerusalem. Claudias Lysias said he perceived that the Judeans had something against Paul according to “*questions of their law.*” So, apparently Paul had offended or broken the Judeans' law.

Thus, the Sanhedrin's accusations against Paul were based upon Judean law held by the high priest.

It is of peculiar interest that churches today teach that the Judeans' law at that time was the law of the Old Testament. By teaching this, the churches accuse Paul of offending or breaking the law of the Old Testament. And yet, here Paul declares plainly that he believes in all things that are written in the Law and the Prophets (meaning the whole Old Testament).

Thus here is an obvious conflict. Either Paul is a liar and he did NOT believe in the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament), or else the Judeans' laws were not the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament). Both could not follow the same law system. They had to be different. One side was lying – either Paul or the Sanhedrin. Clearly, the Judeans law system was in opposition to Paul's law system, witnessed by the great contention between Paul and the Judean priests and lawyers!

Paul declared plainly that he believed “*the Law and the*

ACTS 24:10-16 EXPOSING THE JUDEAN RELIGION AND LAW SYSTEM

When the governor signaled for him to speak Paul answered, “I know well that you have been judge to this nation many years, therefore I readily speak in defense of myself:

That you may understand, that for me it has been no more than twelve days from the day I went up to Jerusalem intending to worship.

And they found me neither in the temple disputing anyone, nor was I inciting a crowd in the synagogues or down in the city:

Neither are they able to prove to you the things of which they now accuse me.

But this I confess to you, that according to the way which they call heresy, I thus worship the God of my fathers, believing all things that were written in the Law and in the Prophets;

Having hope in God that there is a raising of the just and the unjust, which also they themselves accept.

And in this I strive at all times to have a good conscience toward God and men.

THIS passage contains remarkable statements that must be examined. These remarkable statements should stand out to the reader, but all too often they go unnoticed because translators have disguised them, and because people's eyes have been shut by churches.

Felix signaled for Paul to speak, and Paul said that he was ready to answer

Prophets,” and that the Sanhedrin considered them “*heresy.*” Thus, the Judean law system was NOT “the Law and the Prophets” (the Old Testament) notwithstanding Jewish claim to them. Jerusalem had adopted a different law system.

If Paul’s words mean anything, then we must trust that he believed in, and obeyed, the Law of God as revealed in the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament) for he plainly declares it. That leaves us with the unavoidable conclusion that the “law” of the Judeans (and of the high priest) was NOT the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament).

What, then, was the established law system in Judea in that day? What ever it was, it was anti-Christ. And that explains why the Judeans murdered Jesus, and were now going about to systematically murder his disciples. The Judeans had already murdered John the Baptist (Mk. 6: 27) and Stephen (Acts 7). The Judeans were the foremost persecutors and murderers of Christ’s followers.

The enmity between the law system of the Judeans and the Law of God is well documented.

37. *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent to her,*

38. *Behold, your house is left to you desolate ...*

Mtt. 23:37-38

Jerusalem’s government and religion was from Babylon ... not old Israel. Jews laid claim to the Old Testament while inserting and applying the doctrines of Zoroaster (i.e., Babylon’s religion). Jerusalem had left off following God’s law system over 700 years earlier, before she went into captivity under Assyria and Babylon. In fact, that was the reason God allowed their captivity to take place. They continued to claim that their Persian law system was Yahweh’s, but in fact it was not. Unfortunately, over the centuries most people have accepted the Jewish lie.

The Babylonian religion and political system became fully established in Jerusalem during Israel’s “captivity” (721 BC – 536 BC). During this time both Assyria and Babylon established governments and cultures there. Then later, when Jerusalem was repatriated (under the Persian kings), some 50,000 captives returned from Babylon ... bringing their Babylonian mental programming with them.

This phenomenon is not uncommon. For instance, I remember living in southern Oregon where the majority of new residents were imports from California. These imports were moving to Oregon in record numbers to escape the California environment with its big government, crime, and rising population of foreign immigrants. Before long, southern Oregon was becoming just like California because the Californians brought their California ways with them. It is ironic. They moved north to escape California, and right away began pushing California-type regulations and ordinances. Soon, they had destroyed the environment to which they had escaped.

They had converted Southern Oregon to California.

Now, I live in Idaho. Here, we see an influx of people from California, Oregon, Washington, and other states where big government and minorities have destroyed the native environment. These imports to Idaho are doing the same thing the Californians did to Oregon. It seems inevitable. Thus, the Babylonians brought Babylonianism with them into Jerusalem. The body of law and protocols that kept the Pharisees and Sadducees in power in Jerusalem were from Babylon, not from Israel. Jerusalem became a daughter of Babylon. This explains why Jesus said,

3. *Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?*

6. ... *Thus you have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.*

7. *You hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying,*

8. *This people draws near to me with their mouth, and honors me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.*

9. *But in vain they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”*

Mtt.. 15:3-9

Judean law was far from being God’s law. Jerusalem of that day was modeled after Babylon, not after Israel or the Jerusalem of old. The Judean priests and lawyers used Babylonian law in their attack against Paul. The true law of God was officially considered “heresy” (Acts 24:14) in the Jerusalem of Paul’s day.

This truth has been here in these passages all along, but the churches have covered it up.

But that’s not all. Paul makes another revealing statement. In verse 15, Paul begins to explain about a doctrine that churches never understand: that is, both he and the Judeans believed in a “*raising of the just and the unjust.*” In this, Paul is setting the stage for his defense in which he intends to expose the hypocrisy of the Sanhedrin and the folly of their charges against him.

So here we must set straight an issue concerning Paul’s reference to a “*raising of the just and unjust,*” for this passage has been used by the churches to create untold confusion. A “*raising of the just and unjust*” is mentioned more than once in scripture.

In Daniel 12 we read of some who were to awake out of the “*dust of the ground.*”

1. *And at that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who stands up for the sons of your people, and there will be a time of distress, such as has not been since there has been a nation till that time, and at that time your people shall be saved, every one who is found written in the book (of life) – (they have “life”).*

2. *And the multitude of those sleeping in the dust of the ground will awake, some to life of the age, and some to shame and contempt of the age.*

3. *And those teaching will shine as the brightness of the expanse, and those bringing justice to the multitude (shall shine) continuously as stars of the age.*

This prophecy, penned some 600 years earlier, spoke of a salvation for Israel. This clearly referred to the spiritual raising for Israel out of the dust of spiritual death.

Churches teach that this “raising” is a future biological resurrection of dead corpses from their physical graves. Daniel’s statement leaves churchgoers to wonder why God would resurrect condemned corpses back to life so He could kill them or torture them. To do so seems to imply that God has motives that would call in to question his fairness, if not his sanity. To raise the dead back to life only to kill them again certainly casts God in a sadistic, confused light. This mistranslation and interpretation of Scripture has been used by churches to create imagined scenes of future terror and vendetta. Churchgoers are taught that sinners cannot be left dead in their graves, but must be raised back to life to undergo extended torture and punishment, each at a level commensurate to their particular insult to God. Their torture then serves to satiate the ego of an angry God who is not satisfied that the sinner is merely dead. He insists that sinners must undergo extended – perhaps unending – punishment and torture for insulting God’s ego by rejecting Him.

Once the churchgoer is sufficiently programmed with this absurd theological myth, each subsequent reading of Biblical passages that refer to “judgment” or “raising” causes images in his mind of an “end time judgment” and horrible scenes of torture. And these compelling scenes tend to block more rational thought and the sensible realization that Paul was speaking of a cultural event that affected Judea at that present time.

The “life” that Jesus was infusing into Israel at that time was a dramatic awakening. Daniel predicted that it would be an “*awakening out of the*

dust of the ground” (Dan. 12:1-3). Ezekiel had predicted a great “raising” of the dead bones of Israel (Ez. 37:1-14). Life (i.e., awareness, spirit), like fire, was spreading from house to house, from man to man, and was affecting both the just and the unjust. The rain (i.e., “blessing”) was falling upon the just and the unjust. Both received light, and both would be responsible for the way they responded to the light.

Thus, we observe, through New Testament history, an opportunity for life ... for both the just and the unjust. As Israelites received “life” they were also being JUDGED according to how they responded. As in the parable of the talents, those who received were judged by how they responded. The just were rewarded with more light, and the unjust were

condemned and lost their light. The judgment was based upon how the people responded after receiving the light.

Paul was living in the era of the fulfillment of that judgment. Jesus was giving “life” to Israel, and God was judging each one as to how he responded to that “life.” The just who responded positively were given more, and they shined like stars in the heavens. In contrast, the unjust who responded negatively lost what light they had, and received shame and contempt. Both “the just and the unjust” were being raised and judged. Both were given “life.” The “just” remained “alive.” The unjust suffered “the second death” (Jude 1:12; Rev. 2:11; 20:6 & 14; 21:8) (Heb. 6:4-8).

ACTS 24:17-21 JUDEAN HIEARCHY HATES AND FEARS “THE RAISING”

Now after many years I was in my nation intending to make contributions and offerings.

At which time they found me in the temple, having been purified, and with no crowd or tumult, but with some of the Asian Jews;

Who ought to be here before you, accusing me if they have anything against me.

Or let these themselves say what wrong they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin.

Except this one utterance which I cried out standing among them, that “I am being condemned by you this day because of the raising of the dead.”

PAUL continued explaining to Felix that he had gone to Jerusalem with the intention of helping the ecclesia there. While there he also went into the temple but had caused no trouble. The proof of his claim was in the fact that they could produce no witnesses to testify otherwise.

It was obvious that Paul was not guilty as they claimed. Then Paul gives another explanation as to why they were attacking him. Their hatred of him had

nothing to do with defiling their temple. The reason they were mad at him was because of his teaching about *“the raising”*... which he called *“the hope of Israel.”*

This was not the first time Paul had revealed this. In chapter 23, verse six, Paul stated that the reason behind the attack upon him was nothing other than his teaching concerning *“the raising of the dead.”*

Paul also pointed out that the Pharisees profess their own version of *“the raising of the dead.”* But, the Pharisee’s *“raising”* was different than Paul’s *“raising,”* because when Paul taught his version of *“the raising of the dead”* the Pharisees determined to kill him.

So we find that not only was Paul’s law system different from the Judeans’ law system, but also *“the raising”* that he taught was different from *“the raising”* taught by the Judeans. Because of those differences the Jews hated him. Both conflicts carried extensive political ramifications for Jerusalem.

As we discovered in Lesson 23, *“the raising”* to which the Judeans objected was the *“new birth”* that came from the presence of Jesus.

Indeed, Paul was teaching a **“first raising”**: a *“raising”* that was occurring right then, at that present time. It was a SPIRITUAL *“raising”* – an awakening – out of spiritual graves. People who had been *“dead”* spiritually (*“dead in sin”*) were being raised to new life - born anew in Christ. This was also called *“entering into the Kingship of Heaven”* for that present generation.

Paul did not dispute that there would also be a future physical raising. But he taught that God had also ordained a *“first raising”*; a new birth that was already working in them.

6. Blessed and holy are they that are joining in the first raising; upon these the second death is having no authority, ...

Rev. 20:6

This *“first raising”* that Paul was teaching was expressed in familiar terms: *“the new birth,” “born again,”*

“the life,” “eonian life” (wrongly called *“eternal life”* in the KJV), *“holy spirit,” “born from above,” “life in Christ,”* and the gift of *“eyes to see and ears to hear.”* That *“new life”* (i.e., *“the raising”*) was already working in the hearts and minds of many Israelites throughout the Roman Empire. It began in Jerusalem and then spread as the gospel was carried to the far ends of the empire.

This new birth (the first raising) was a gift from God (*“unless you are born from above you cannot perceive the Kingship of God”* – Jn. 3:3); (*“For God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”*– 2 Timothy 1:7). This gift of *“light”* (*“life”*) gave men an elevated awareness of reality and a desire to pursue truth. It changed their lives. This was *“the first raising”* (Rev. 20:5-6).

But why did the teaching of new *“life”* upset the rulers in Judea and make them want to kill Paul? We addressed this question in chapter twenty-three, but for the sake of clarity let’s restate it.

Jewish rulers condemned the new

life because from their point of view it varified what Jesus had claimed! It gave credence to Jesus and his claim of being the Son of God. It gave credence to Him being raised from the grave and ascending to the Throne of David. If these things were proven to be true it would mean that the Sanhedrin priests were guilty of killing the Son of God. It meant that Jesus was the King of Israel ... and that Old Jerusalem was not New Jerusalem. It meant that the priests of Jerusalem had misled everyone, and Jesus had come to save men from the death and blindness of Jerusalem. The rulers were not ignorant of what God was doing. They were knowingly fighting against it. How could this be if Jerusalem (and its rulers) were truly the seat of God’s throne ... as they claimed? Paul’s teaching, if left unchecked, would undermine the Judean religion and the political power of Jerusalem.

To admit that a contemporary spiritual rebirth was occurring would force Jerusalem to admit fatal error, and that their greatest enemy, Jesus, was truly King.

QUESTION: What good does it do people to awake spiritually to the Kingship of Christ in a world where they are outnumbered by anti-Christ, Atheists, Politicians, Lawyers, Tax Collectors, Reprobates, False Prophets, Murderers, Thieves, etc.? What good did it do Paul? How can the Kingdom of God exist today in such a world with only a tiny minority seeking truth? Can’t God do better than this with His Kingdom?

QUESTION: By claiming that the Holy Spirit is a spiritual rebirth rather than a supernatural entity, aren’t you denying what Scripture says about The Comforter in Jn. 16:7?

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

John 16:7

ACTS 24:22-27 JUDGEMENT CLOSE AT HAND

But Felix, being more informed about the way, put them off and said, "When Lysias the chief captain arrives I will inquire more thoroughly into these matters concerning you."

And he ordered the centurion to watch him, but to go easy, and to not forbid Paul's friends to minister to him.

And after some days Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewish woman, and he sent for Paul and listened to him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus.

And as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and imminent judgment, Felix feared and answered, You may go for the time being; but when I have time I will call for you.

Meanwhile he was hoping that Paul might give money to him; thus he also sent for him more often, and talked with him.

But after two years Felix received Porcius Festus as his successor, and Felix, wanting to keep favor with the Judeans, left Paul bound.

AS FELIX learned more about Paul's case he began to suspect it was not a matter for Roman law, but rather a matter of Judean law and local religious discord. Thus he deferred making a judgment, opting to wait until he heard from Claudias Lysias, the Roman officer who had arrested Paul in Jerusalem.

Felix tells the centurion to go easy on Paul. So Paul remained under guard but was allowed to see his friends.

Later, Felix had opportunity to talk with Lysias and was ready to talk to Paul again. Also, in verse 24 we learn that Felix's wife was a Jew, no doubt a factor in his soft

treatment of the Jews.

Felix doesn't want to upset the Judeans, but neither can he breach Roman law and procedure, for to do so might bring his office in question. He was under considerable pressure between Paul, the Judeans, and the law of Caesar.

Again, we must correct the translation. In verse 25, the KJV translation seems to indicate that Felix's "fear" stemmed from a fear that he would be condemned at a "final" judgment day in the far distant future. But that was not what Paul said, and that was not what caused Felix to fear. The KJV translators were notorious for changing verb tenses to fit their Futurist theologies. The KJV phrase "*judgment to come*" is a case in point. In the Greek text, the phrase "*tou krimatos tou mellontos*" actually means "*the current or imminent judgment.*" Paul was talking to Felix about a judgment that was already upon THEM.

It is important to understand God's judgment. Judgment is an on-going part of God's Kingdom. Churches prefer a future judgment – one great event in the distant future after they are dead. But that is not the way God works.

Judgment is an intrinsic part of a viable kingdom, including God's Kingdom. And as it is today so it was back then: the people who can't see the current judgment can't see the kingdom. A kingdom automatically brings judgment. To recognize a kingdom is to acknowledge judgment. It was this threat of present judgment from God that put fear into Felix.

Felix then answers, "*You may go for the time being; but when I have time I will call for you.*" In other words, "*I need some time to think about this and figure it out.*"

In verse 26 Felix hopes Paul will offer him money to bribe (bail) his way out of prison. Felix sends for Paul often, giving him opportunity to offer money. If Paul had bailed himself out with money Felix could have let him go, and it would have taken pressure off Felix.

But Paul did not pay the bribe. He knew Jesus wanted him to be there. He remained under restraint by Felix for two years! Felix left Paul incarcerated as a political favor to the Jews, then Festus replaced Felix in the office of governor.

We'll continue to follow Paul's trial in the next chapter. Paul still has a long way to go before this ordeal is fully played out. In Chapter 25, Paul will appeal to Caesar and his trial will be moved to Rome. From then on he will no longer be facing the Judeans. The Sanhedrin will see no more of him.

END OF CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

FOR ANSWERS AND NOTES, SEE ENCLOSED "ANSWER SECTION."

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. In this chapter it is especially important that we read between the lines ... because a large part of the story will be missed if we don't. On its face, this is an account of Paul getting arrested and tried. But if we look deeper we'll find much more.
2. Paul's accusers, the Judeans, were prone to fits of rage and riot, but when his trial was moved to Roman courts the Judeans were forced to control themselves. That afforded Paul protection against the kind of mobbery he had faced earlier in Jerusalem.
3. Paul was accused of "sedition" because he encouraged people to take a stand and form an opinion. The word "*sedition*," in verse 5, is from the Greek word "*stasis*," which means "*a stand*," "*a static or stationary position*." Also, the English word "*sedition*" is related to "*sediment*" (as in settling and solidifying). In water it is "*sediment*." In thought process it is "*sedition*."
4. Ideally, having an opinion is a good thing. But under religious and political oppression it becomes a "thought crime" (1984 – Orwell).
5. The Sanhedrin and the Jews were not followers of the Old Testament laws as most churches claim. They followed a mixed religion based upon the Persian religion of Zoroastrianism (Babylonianism) and parts of the Old Testament twisted and misapplied.
6. Paul, on the other hand, did believe in the Law and the Prophets (the Old Testament) as he states in verse 14, and the Jews called it "heresy."
7. Paul also made it clear during his trial that the biggest issue hated by the Jews was his teaching about "the raising" which he called "the hope of Israel."
The Pharisees espoused a "raising" too, but theirs was a different "raising" from the one that Paul was

teaching. Paul proclaimed a "raising" that was occurring at that present time. The Jews rejected it.

Paul explained that this teaching was the true bone of contention between him and the Sanhedrin.

8. Not only was "the raising" occurring at that present time, but also God's judgment was falling upon them as well. In verse 25, Paul spoke to Felix concerning the "imminent judgment" that was appearing along with "the raising" and the eonian Reign of Christ.

ANSWERS:

pg.2

The office of "lawyer" or "attorney" is sanctioned by government. Without lawyers there would be no courts, and thus no Judicial Branch. Lawyers are essential to this Beast System of government.

It is ironic. Law claims to be the tool to rout out crime in a society. But in America, the law and the courts are used to cover up crime in high offices. It is a sad legacy. In the United States, citizens are not allowed to use law. All matters having to do with law are decided by licensed liars called judges and lawyers.

It is a classic case of the foxes guarding the hen house.

pg.4

Your reaction is curious. You claim the government is "of, by, and for the people," "is founded on Christianity," "has free elections," and "promotes freedom" ... and then you accuse me of making broad generalizations?

That's rich! Governments are NEVER "of, by, or for the people." Governments are of criminals, by lawyers, and for bankers."

pg.7

a) The existence of Yahweh, his Kingdom, and his Son Jesus is reality. It is fact. Awakening to reality

and truth is its own reward ... regardless of how many reject it.

Truth sets men free if they want to be free. Truth is always there for those who are awake ... and only those who are awake can find it. The Reign of Christ is truth. Those who are awake can enter it. The advantages of being "raised" and awake are obvious.

Reprobates and criminals always exist in the land, but they have no access or power in Christ's Reign. Their power only comes from godless followers who seek slavery.

Godless society creates positions of power monopolized by wicked men, and they enslave everyone they can. That is reality!

God's blessings depend upon our accepting the light (life) He offers, and rejecting the ways of the Beast.

b) The Greek word "*paraklytos*," of John 16:7, was rendered "Comforter" by the KJV translators in accord with the Church of England's teaching of an entity called "The Holy Ghost." They capitalized the word as if it were a proper noun ... but it really isn't.

"*Paraklytos*" means: "that which is called beside" (*summoned or evoked*). Its specific application is defined a few verses earlier, in 15:26, "When the paraklytos (that which is summoned) arrives (the spirit of truth which I shall send to you of the Father, and which proceeds from the Father) it will bear witness about me; ..."

The "spirit of truth" is NOT an entity. It is a motivation; a disposition. Jesus was giving Israel a motivation: the spirit of truth. It was also called "holy spirit" (no caps).

There are many spirits: holy spirit, spirit of truth, spirit of prophecy, spirit of fear, spirit of gladness. Spirits are not beings. Spirits are motivations, moods, dispositions.

Bible translators hired by the churches have twisted and perverted the Word of God to support pagan theology. Most church doctrine is false and should be discarded. All doctrine must be questioned and proven.