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Acts 24:1-25:27

THE ACCUSATION AGAINST PAUL

¹Five days later Ananias the high priest came down with some elders and a lawyer named Tertullus. These men presented their case against Paul to the governor. ²When Paul was called in, Tertullus began to accuse him and said, “We enjoy great peace because of you, and reforms are taking place for the benefit of this nation because of your foresight. ³We acknowledge this in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with utmost gratitude.

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⁴But, so that I will not burden you any further, I request that you would be kind enough to give us a brief hearing. ⁵For we have found this man to be a plague, an agitator among all the Jews throughout the Roman world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. ⁶He even tried to desecrate the temple, and so we apprehended him. ⁸By examining him yourself you will be able to discern the truth about these charges we are bringing against him.” ⁹The Jews also joined in the attack, alleging that these things were true.

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PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE FELIX

¹⁰When the governor motioned for him to speak, Paul replied, "Because I know you have been a judge of this nation for many years, I am glad to offer my defense in what concerns me.

¹¹You can verify for yourself that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem. ¹²They didn't find me arguing with anyone or causing a disturbance among the crowd, either in the temple or in the synagogues or anywhere in the city. ¹³Neither can they prove the charges they are now making against me.

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¹⁴But I admit this to you: I worship the God of my ancestors according to the Way, which they call a sect, believing everything that is in accordance with the law and written in the prophets. ¹⁵I have a hope in God, which these men themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection, both of the righteous and the unrighteous. ¹⁶I always strive to have a clear conscience toward God and men. ¹⁷After many years, I came to bring charitable gifts and offerings to my people.

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¹⁸While I was doing this, some Jews from Asia found me ritually purified in the temple, without a crowd and without any uproar. ¹⁹It is they who ought to be here before you to bring charges, if they have anything against me. ²⁰Or let these men here state what wrongdoing they found in me when I stood before the Sanhedrin, ²¹other than this one statement I shouted while standing among them, 'Today I am on trial before you concerning the resurrection of the dead.' "

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THE VERDICT POSTPONED

²²Since Felix was well informed about the Way, he adjourned the hearing, saying, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case." ²³He ordered that the centurion keep Paul under guard, though he could have some freedom, and that he should not prevent any of his friends from meeting his needs.

²⁴Several days later, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and listened to him on the subject of faith in Christ Jesus.

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²⁵Now as he spoke about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix became afraid and replied, "Leave for now, but when I have an opportunity I'll call for you." ²⁶At the same time he was also hoping that Paul would offer him money. So he sent for him quite often and conversed with him.

²⁷After two years had passed, Porcius Festus succeeded Felix, and because Felix wanted to do the Jews a favor, he left Paul in prison.

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APPEAL TO CAESAR

¹Three days after Festus arrived in the province, he went up to Jerusalem from Caesarea. ²The chief priests and the leaders of the Jews presented their case against Paul to him; and they appealed, ³asking for a favor against Paul, that Festus summon him to Jerusalem. They were, in fact, preparing an ambush along the road to kill him. ⁴Festus, however, answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea, and that he himself was about to go there shortly.

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⁵“Therefore,” he said, “let those of you who have authority go down with me and accuse him, if he has done anything wrong.” ⁶When he had spent not more than eight or ten days among them, he went down to Caesarea. The next day, seated at the tribunal, he commanded Paul to be brought in. ⁷When 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.

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⁸Then Paul made his defense: “Neither against the Jewish law, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I sinned in any way.”

⁹But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, replied to Paul, “Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem to be tried before me there on these charges?”

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¹⁰Paul replied, "I am standing at Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as even you yourself know very well. ¹¹If then I did anything wrong and am deserving of death, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is nothing to what these men accuse me of, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar!"

¹²Then after Festus conferred with his council, he replied, "You have appealed to Caesar; to Caesar you will go."

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KING AGRIPPA AND BERNICE VISIT FESTUS

¹³Several days later, King Agrippa and Bernice arrived in Caesarea and paid a courtesy call on Festus. ¹⁴Since they were staying there several days, Festus presented Paul's case to the king, saying, "There's a man who was left as a prisoner by Felix. ¹⁵When I was in Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews presented their case and asked that he be condemned. ¹⁶I answered them that it is not the Roman custom to give someone up before the accused faces the accusers and has an opportunity for a defense against the charges.

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¹⁷So when they had assembled here, I did not delay. The next day I took my seat at the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought in. ¹⁸The accusers stood up but brought no charge against him of the evils I was expecting. ¹⁹Instead they had some disagreements with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, a dead man Paul claimed to be alive.

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²⁰Since I was at a loss in a dispute over such things, I asked him if he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there regarding these matters. ²¹But 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.”

²²Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear the man myself.”

“Tomorrow you will hear him,” he replied.

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WHAT IS LUKE SHOWING US?

- Fulfillment of Prophecy

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Luke 21:7-19

⁷“Teacher,” they asked him, “so when will these things happen? And what will be the sign when these things are about to take place?”

⁸Then he said, “Watch out that you are not deceived. For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am he,’ and, ‘The time is near.’ Don’t follow them. ⁹When you hear of wars and rebellions, don’t be alarmed. Indeed, it is necessary that these things take place first, but the end won’t come right away.”

¹⁰Then he told them, “Nation will be raised up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. ¹¹There will be violent earthquakes, and famines and plagues in various places, and there will be terrifying sights and great signs from heaven.

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Luke 21:7-19

¹²But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you. They will hand you over to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. ¹³This will give you an opportunity to bear witness. ¹⁴Therefore make up your minds not to prepare your defense ahead of time, ¹⁵for I will give you such words and a wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. ¹⁶You will even be betrayed by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends. They will kill some of you. ¹⁷You will be hated by everyone because of my name, ¹⁸but not a hair of your head will be lost. ¹⁹By your endurance, **UNSTOPPABLE** gain your lives.

WHAT IS LUKE SHOWING US?

- Fulfillment of Prophecy
- God's Sovereignty over Rome and Israel

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- Boldness in Evangelism

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WHAT IS LUKE SHOWING US?

- Fulfillment of Prophecy
- God's Sovereignty over Rome and Israel
- Boldness in Evangelism
- Patience in Hardship
- Truth is the Enemy of Evil

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WHAT IS LUKE SHOWING US?

- Fulfillment of Prophecy
- God's Sovereignty over Rome and Israel
- Boldness in Evangelism
- Patience in Hardship
- Truth is the Enemy of Evil
- Convenience is the Enemy of Conviction

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