

"The Road to Rome"

Part 7

Acts 22-28

Introduction: Tonight, in our study of Acts we have now come to Acts 25. This chapter is very important because it is in this chapter where Paul's appeals to Caesar. There are two years that pass between Acts 24 and 25.

Notice Acts 24:24-27

Paul preached to Felix on three subjects, righteousness, temperance, and the judgment to come. Felix was convicted but made the choice to put off salvation until a more convenient time which most likely never came. One reason he decided to hold Paul captive was because he was hoping to receive money from Paul or his friends in an attempt to buy freedom. He also was set on pleasing the Jews. There was no money given and so Felix kept Paul as a prisoner for two years. During these two years Felix moved out of power and Porcius Festus moved in. It has been said that Felix was a procrastinator and Festus was a mover. Festus therefore hit the ground running as we shall see as we move on. It was his mission to keep the peace in his region.

➤ **Paul before Festus and Agrippa**

➤ **Part 1**

Notice Acts 25:1

Festus goes to Jerusalem because there was often trouble in Jerusalem and Festus wanted to meet it head on.

Application:

I believe it necessary for us to pause here and consider a thought. How do we do when it comes to dealing with problems or potential problems? I ask this because many people will do all kinds of spiritual gymnastics to avoid dealing with problems that arise in their lives or in the lives of their families. Let us understand that we must be willing to deal with issues when they arise. Many have avoided problems in the family only to see the problem take root and grow into something much bigger. Let us be reminded of something that we considered a while back.

Acts 6:1-3

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.

² *Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.*

³ *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.*

When this problem arose in the church it was met head on because the Apostles knew that there was the potential for this to grow and to cause division. We must not be fearful of dealing with problems. God has promised to be with us.

Isaiah 41:10

¹⁰ *Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*

Notice Acts 25:2-3

Here we see that the Sanhedrin after two years are still set on killing Paul. As soon as there is a change of power they go directly to Festus and they do their best to get him to send Paul to Jerusalem so that THEY can lay in wait and kill him. These men are to be the spiritual leaders but they are wicked and evil men. Let me show you how God would view these men.

Proverbs 6:16-19

¹⁶ *These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:*

¹⁷ *A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,*

¹⁸ *An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,*

¹⁹ *A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

Let us get back to the men set on killing Paul. For two years they had carried this chip on their shoulders concerning Paul. That is a long time to carry a grudge and we can only

imagine how they were tormented within their minds because that is exactly what happens to people who will not forgive someone.

Application:

There are believers today who have been offended in the past and they have refused to let it go. They therefore are tormented within even if they do not admit it.

Matthew 18:34-35

³⁴ *And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.*

³⁵ *So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.*

What tormentors? The hidden tormentors of anger and bitterness that eat your insides out, the tormentors of frustration and malice that give you ulcers and high blood pressure and migraine headaches and lower back pain, the tormentors that make you lie awake at night on your bed stewing over every rotten thing that happens to you. The tormentors of an unforgiving heart who stalk your trail day and night, who never leave your side, who suck every bit of joy from your life.

Notice the words of one teacher on forgiveness:

"So many of us need to give forgiveness. We've been living for years under the burden of remembered hurts. Some of the things that bother us go back to our childhood. Some of them involve people we haven't seen for a long time. It may be a brother or a sister, a close friend, a husband, or a wife, or perhaps someone who mistreated us at work. What we need is to become great forgivers. Why? Because forgiveness will save your marriage when nothing else will. Forgiveness will restore your family when nothing else will. Forgiveness will repair a broken heart when nothing else will. Forgiveness is the key that can open a closed heart."

Notice Acts 25:4

The word "BUT" here speaks of a contrast. The contrast was that the Jews desired to kill Paul BUT God in His providence would work through Festus to preserve the life of Paul. God would use this man who was now in power to carry out His will for Paul's life.

Application:

Just a reminder to each of us that God can use anyone He desires to carry out His purpose for our lives. I point this out because there may be a time when we find ourselves in a situation where we think we have no chance to overcome the obstacle before us, but let us then remember that God can use people who we do not know and He works behind the scenes when we are not aware to make sure that His will is carried out. Let us also keep in mind that Fetus was not a believer therefore God often works through unbelievers to bring about His will.

Notice Acts 25:5-7

The Jews had two years to get a plan together but they had nothing against Paul that would stick. In these verses we see that the Jews went down to Caesarea and this is because Jerusalem was elevated so leaving Jerusalem was always downhill. This is also a reminder that as these Jews went down to Caesarea they were also going down spiritually. They were on a path that was leading them straight to hell and from there to the Lake of Fire. These men would suffer a greater degree of punishment in the Lake of Fire because of the Truth which they had been exposed to.

Luke 12:42-48

⁴² *And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?*

⁴³ *Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.*

⁴⁴ *Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.*

⁴⁵ *But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;*

⁴⁶ *The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.*

⁴⁷ *And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes.*

⁴⁸ *But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.*

How great will be the suffering of these men if they died in their sins? What about Judas? What about people who have attended church or funerals where the Truth was proclaimed and they pushed it away? The degree of punishment in the Lake of Fire will be absolutely terrible for those who had the knowledge of Jesus Christ but chose to reject it.

Notice Acts 25:8

We must wonder if Paul is thinking of the Words of Jesus here in this setting?

Matthew 5:11-16

¹¹ *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

¹² *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

¹³ *Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

¹⁴ *Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

¹⁵ *Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

¹⁶ *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Notice Acts 25:9-12

Paul knew he could not get a fair trial in Jerusalem before the Sanhedrin. Therefore, he claimed the right that belonged to every Roman citizen and that was to stand before Ceasar. The Ceasar that he appealed to was Nero. Notice the words of Arnold.

"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.

Application:

In all of what Paul is going through we can clearly see the hand of God from our perspective. God has used the Jews, the governors, and the Roman law as means to get Paul to Rome. In all of this we can see the fulfillment of the Words of Jesus.

Acts 9:13-15

¹³ Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

¹⁴ And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

¹⁵ But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

Notice Acts 25:13

Here we are introduced to king Agrippa. This is Herod Agrippa. His dad killed James. His grandfather killed John the Baptist. His great grandfather killed the babies when Jesus was born. We also see that Bernice was with him. She was his sister and also his lover.

Notice Acts 25:14-22

Agrippa was one of the kings Paul would stand before.

Conclusion:

I just want to leave you tonight by reminding you that all of God's Word will be fulfilled. Not one prophecy will go unfulfilled.