

## THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

### SESSION 73 ACTS 24:16-27

#### ACTS 24:1-27 | PAUL BEFORE FELIX

- Verses 1-15 – see Session 72
- Verse 16 –
  - Paul notes that he has made it his practice to live in such a way as to **have a conscience void of offence**. This does not say, “to never offend,” but that he does not do what he does *for the sake of offence*.
  - All of us would do well to ask, before we act or speak, “can I do this and have a good conscience, regardless of any consequences.
- Verses 17-18 –
  - This **pestilent fellow** and **ringleader** points out that he had not even been in Jerusalem for **many years** (Bullinger estimates five years). When he did arrive, it was not to cause trouble but **to bring alms to my nation, and offerings**.
  - While he was there, **certain Jews from Asia** saw him in the Temple. Paul points this out because it was not the Jerusalem religious leaders, but these Jews from Asia (specifically, Ephesus). Paul further notes that he was **purified in the temple**. This certainly involved adherence to the Jewish laws and rituals and is yet another proof that Paul was living as a Jew, under the Law.
  - While he was in the temple, he was **neither with multitude, nor with tumult**. This was to claim innocence of the charge found in verses 5-6, including being a **mover of sedition** and profaning the temple.
- Verse 19 -
  - If those Asian Jews who actually saw him had charges to bring, then those Asian Jews should have brought the charges.
  - Paul has a keen legal mind and is one of the few who does well giving his own defense. Paul insists these Asian Jews **ought to have been here before thee** because he knows that there are no witnesses to the “crimes” to which he has been charged.
- Verses 20-21 –
  - Since the Asian Jews are not bringing charges, Paul insists that the members of the Sanhedrin (i.e.: **the council**) bring some evidence to the charges.
  - Once again, Paul skillfully brings the matter down to being a charge concerning **the resurrection of the dead**.
  - He knows that the Jews would not be unified in bringing such a charge, and that the Romans would not hear such a case (on the grounds of religious liberty).
- Verses 22-23 –
  - Felix had gained **more perfect knowledge of that way** (i.e.: the way of the Nazarenes, those Jews who recognized Jesus as Messiah). It appears that this knowledge caused him to consider that this was a religious matter, but he wanted to wait for **Lysias the chief captain** (who had Paul arrested) to find **the uttermost of your matter**.
  - Paul was kept under some type of house arrest, with no restriction on visitors. This certainly indicates that Felix did not consider Paul to be a threat to the government.
- Verse 24 –

- Drusilla was the granddaughter of Herod the Great, daughter of Herod Agrippa I, and sister of Herod Agrippa II. She had divorced her husband to marry Felix.
- Drusilla and Felix had a son, Markus Agrippa. Both Drusilla and Markus Agrippa were killed in the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius on October 25, 79 AD.
- Verse 25 –
  - We have been arguing that Paul has been speaking of the Kingdom Gospel throughout his Jerusalem ordeal. This verse aligns with that hypothesis. **Righteousness** is to behave in such a way as to be found innocent at judgment. **Temperance** is to be in control of yourself. Judgment to come is certainly a reference to the judgment at Messiah’s arrival. That this was not a “good news” message of grace is seen in the response: **Felix trembled**. The word **trembled** is ἔμφοβος [emphobos], which is *to be filled with fear*. The message of grace is so much a *good news* message while the message of the Kingdom is a *fearful* message.
  - Even with Paul’s reasoning (enough to bring Felix to fear), he was not willing to do anything about it.
  - The hymn “Almost Persuaded” was based on this verse.
 

“Almost persuaded” now to believe;  
 “Almost persuaded” Christ to receive;  
 Seems now some soul to say,  
 “Go, Spirit, go Thy way,  
 Some more convenient day  
 on Thee I’ll call.”
- Verse 26 –
  - In the end, Felix was intrigued by the message and seemed to genuinely enjoy Paul’s company, but was a crooked politician through and through. His big desire was to receive a bribe.
- Verse 27 –
  - Porcius Festus took the office of Felix, who was removed by the Caesar for injustices (imagine that).
  - It is possible that he **was willing to shew the Jews a pleasure** because he needed all the political favors he could get.