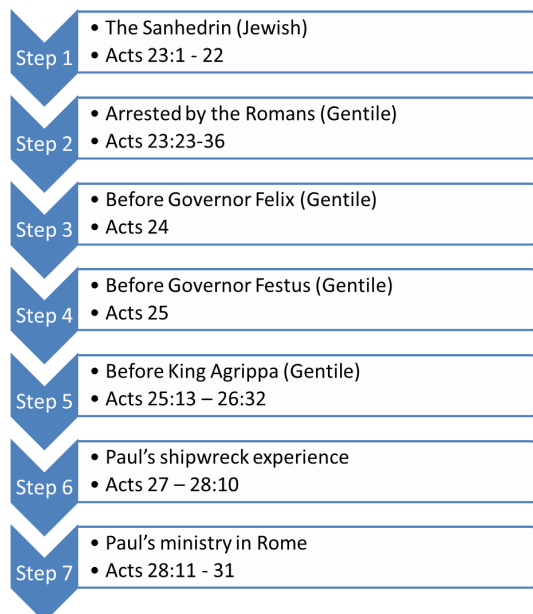


God's Vision for Paul

Acts 9:15 - But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel.

Acts 23:11 -The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, “Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”

Paul had no idea HOW that vision was going to be realized!



I don't imagine he thought it was going to take this long or go this way.

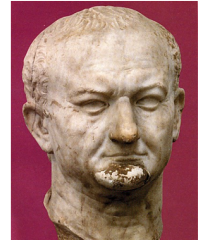
I. Accusations Before Festus (25:1 - 5)

Verse 1

Three days after arriving in the province, Festus went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem,

Verse 2

where the chief priests and the Jewish leaders appeared before him and presented the charges against Paul.



Porcius Festus

Unlike Antonius Felix, who was considered generally a bad person, Porcius Festus is considered by historians as a good leader and a good person.

Even though it has been TWO YEARS, the religious leaders were still adamant that he be put to death by the Roman Government.

Verse 3

They 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.

Religion that supports lying and murder is a religion that God will not honor.

Verse 4

Festus answered, *“Paul is being held at Caesarea, and I myself am going there soon.*

We don't know if Festus knew of the plot or not, but God used him to protect Paul further from the Jews.

Verse 5

Let some of your leaders come with me, and if the man has done anything wrong, they can press charges against him there.”

Festus was willing to give Paul a hearing once again and he demanded that they Jews come to him rather than him coming to them.

II. Paul Before Festus (25:6 - 12)

Verse 6

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



Verse 7

When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him. They brought many serious charges against him, but they could not prove them.

Verse 8

Then Paul made his defense:

“I have done nothing wrong (hamartano = sin against)

- 1) *against the Jewish law* (nomos = Torah)
- 2) *or against the temple* (hieros = sacred worship)
- 3) *or against Caesar.*” (kaisar = Roman Emperor)

Verse 9

[but]

Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, [Festus is still a politician]

said to Paul,

“Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and stand trial before me there on these charges?”

Paul’s Roman citizenship gave him the right to determine his venue.

Verse 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.

Verse 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!” [Emperor Nero]

Verse 12

After Festus had conferred with his council, he declared:

“You have appealed to Caesar. To Caesar you will go!”

Holman Bible Dictionary states:

Citizenship bestowed certain rights. These included the right to vote for magistrates, the right to be elected as a magistrate, the right to contract a legal marriage, the right to hold property in the Roman community, and the right to appeal to the people, and in later times to the emperor, against the sentences passed by magistrates or other officials of rank.

III. Festus Consults Agrippa (25:13 - 22)

Verse 13

A few days later
King Agrippa and Bernice [his sister]
arrived at Caesarea
to pay their respects to Festus.



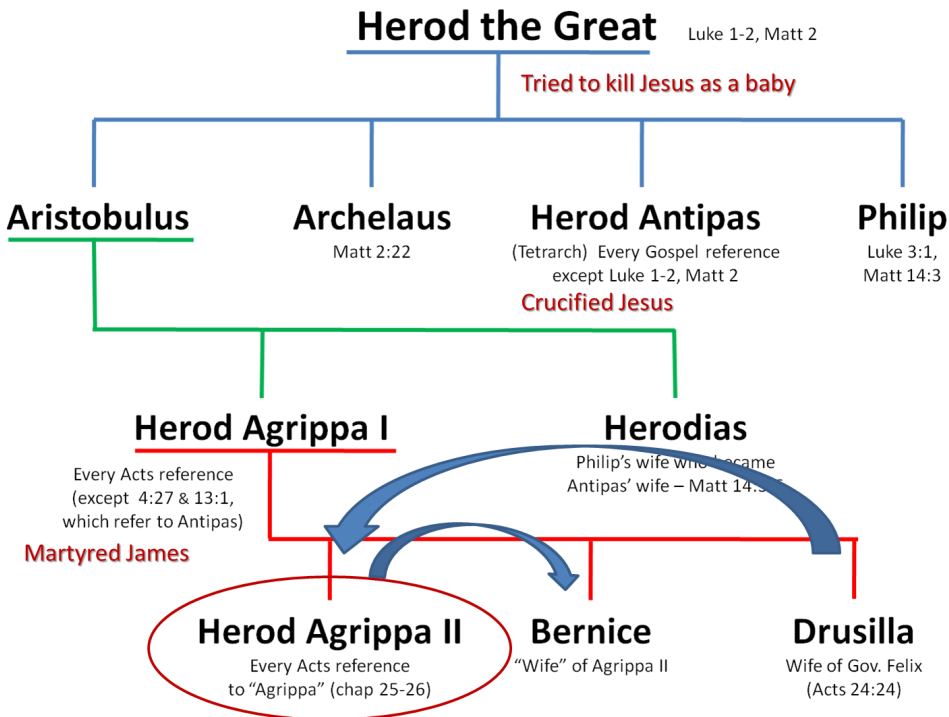
Herod Agrippa II

Verse 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.*

Agrippa was known as an expert in Jewish customs and religious
matters, so his input would be helpful.



Verse 15

When I went to Jerusalem,
the chief priests and the elders of the Jews
brought charges against him
and asked that he be condemned. (katadike = damnation)

Verse 16

*"I told them that it is not the Roman custom
to hand over anyone*

- 1) *before they have faced their accusers*
- 2) *and have had an opportunity to defend themselves against the charges.*

Verse 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.*

Verse 18

*When his accusers got up to speak,
they did not charge him with any of the crimes
I had expected.*

I'm sure Festus expected a crime against the state rather than a
crime against a local religion.

Verse 19

*Instead,
they had some points of dispute (zetema = debate) with him*

- 1) *about their own religion (deisidaimonia = superstitions)*
- 2) *and about a dead man [fact] named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. [fact]*

Festus shows his disdain for the Jewish faith and religion

Verse 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.*
- 3

Verse 21

*But 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."*

Verse 22

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

IV. Paul Before Agrippa (25:23 - 27)

Verse 23

The next day
1) Agrippa and Bernice came
with great pomp [a big event]
and entered the audience room (akroaterion = auditorium)
2) with the high-ranking military officers
3) and the prominent men of the city.
At the command of Festus,
Paul was brought in.
Paul's opportunity to stand before the entire leadership of the
Caesarea area.

Verse 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.

Verse 25

*I found he had done nothing
deserving of death, [innocent]
but because he made his appeal
to the Emperor
I decided to send him to Rome.*

Verse 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.*

Verse 27

*For I think it is unreasonable
to send a prisoner on to Rome
without specifying the charges against him."*

From this point, in the next chapter, King Agrippa cross
examines Paul and Paul is able to share his testimony and his
faith with those listening.