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THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 50

THE JOURNEY TO ROME – PART 4

AGRIPPA VISITS FESTUS

After Paul rejected Governor Festus' request to be tried in Jerusalem, he told Festus that he had done nothing worthy of death. However, Paul clearly had reservations of getting any real justice after two years there in Caesarea. Therefore, he appealed his case to Caesar in Rome.

After consulting with his advisors, Festus agreed to send his trial to Caesar. However, the trip was delayed a few days while Governor Festus received the company of King Agrippa and Bernice. Agrippa's royal visit had gone on for "many days" before Festus brought Paul's case to the King's attention and asked for his help with it.

Agrippa agreed to hear Paul's case. Festus told Agrippa that he had found no cause for the death penalty demanded by the Jews. Festus was concerned about sending Paul to Rome without any legitimate charges. Perhaps Agrippa's examination could help.

Tomorrow will cover Paul's defense to Agrippa. First, I wish to look at who these rulers were that were trying Paul.

Little is known about Festus. This rather obscure Governor of Caesarea was there from 60-62 A.D.

King Agrippa was Herod Agrippa II. His father was Herod Agrippa I who 16 years earlier had killed the Apostle James, the first Apostle to be martyred. His grandfather was Herod Antipas who had mocked Christ and beheaded John the Baptist. His great grandfather was Herod the Great who had built the new temple in Jerusalem and ordered the execution in Bethlehem of all boys aged two years and under at the time of Jesus' birth which was determined from the Wise Men's visit.

And there is Bernice who was with King Herod Agrippa II living as his wife, although she was actually his sister (incest). She had quite a licentious lifestyle. She had already been married previously to two kings, Marcus and then her uncle, Herod of Chalcis. Now, the "wife" of her husband's brother Herod Agrippa II, she was yet to marry once more to King Ptolemy of Sicily. After that she became the mistress of Roman Emperor Vespasian and then mistress to Emperor Titus who finally cast her aside. Wow!

These are the three people who would now sit in judgment of Paul. Tomorrow we shall hear what Paul said to them and the response to it.