

RUSSELL SANDERS

8-18-2021

THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 48

THE JOURNEY TO ROME – PART 2

FIRST TRIAL BEFORE FELIX

Felix had Paul in the judgment hall five days awaiting the accusers' arrival from Jerusalem. The high priest Ananias came with the elders of the Sanhedrin and a silver-tongued orator named Tertullus. (Acts 24:1-23.)

Tertullus was the first to address Governor Felix at Paul's trial. His accusation all related to Jewish law and custom. The other witnesses confirmed what Tertullus said.

Felix then bade Paul to give his defense. Paul started by complimenting Felix. He denied causing any trouble or disturbance. He pointed out that these men were unable to prove any of their accusations. He acknowledged that they regarded his faith as heresy, but that was purely a religious matter. His faith was between him and God. He then spoke of how his trip to Jerusalem was to bring offerings. His real accusers, the Asian Jews, were absent from this trial, so they could bring no charge.

Paul then told Felix that their real issue was his belief in the future resurrection of the dead, and that was the only cause of the Jews of the Sanhedrin fighting. They were fighting each other. That was the only real disturbance.

Felix was knowledgeable of both Jewish custom and of the Followers of the Way, so he deferred the matter until Jerusalem's chief captain Claudius Lysias could come to consult with Felix.

In the meantime, Felix placed Paul in the custody of a centurion with instructions to give Paul liberty to come and go and to be allowed to receive visitors and minister with them.

Felix had given favor to Paul but had not cleared him. Why not? Perhaps he had an ulterior motive. Tomorrow we shall see!