



**Acts Book Study Chapters 24-26**  
**Sunday August 18, 2024**

**ACTS CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR (57-59 AD)**

**A Little Bit of Political History**

The political landscape of Judea during the first century AD was shaped by Roman emperors, Roman governors (also called procurators), Jewish kings (called Herod's) who served under the Roman emperor, and high priests. Their policies and actions directly impacted the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and the early Christian church, often creating the backdrop for the events recorded in the New Testament.

***Roman Emperors***

The title "Caesar" during Bible times was initially a family name but evolved into a title used for Roman emperors. By the time of the New Testament, "Caesar" was a generic title used to refer to the reigning Roman emperor, regardless of their actual family lineage. The title "Caesar" became synonymous with the emperor's authority and was widely recognized throughout the Roman world. Two Roman emperors that were there during the time of the book of Acts:

**Claudius (41 - 54 AD):** Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2) and his reign saw continued unrest in Judea. He also oversaw significant administrative changes in the provinces.

**Nero (54 - 68 AD):** Nero is infamous for his persecution of Christians, especially following the Great Fire of Rome in 64 AD. Both Peter and Paul are traditionally believed to have been martyred during his reign.

***Roman Governors (Procurators) of Judea***

**Pontius Pilate (26 - 36 AD):** Most notable for presiding over the trial and crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 27, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 19).

**Antonius Felix (52 - 60 AD):** Notable for his role in Paul's imprisonment (Acts 23:24-26:32).

**Porcius Festus (60 - 62 AD):** Succeeded Felix and continued dealing with Paul's case (Acts 24-26).

***The Herod's (Jewish kings) in the New Testament***

Herod was the surname of a series of rulers who served under the Roman emperor.

**Herod the Great (37 BC – 4 BC)** is the one who was ruling when Jesus was born.



**Herod Antipas (4 BC – 39 AD)** one of the sons of Herod the Great, was the one who beheaded John the Baptist because he took his brother Herod Philip I's wife (Luke 3:19). He was in charge during Jesus' ministry, trial and death and during the Day of Pentecost. **Herod Agrippa 1 (37 AD – 44 AD)** the grandson of Herod the great was the king in Acts 12:1-2, who began to harass some of the believers, and then killed the apostle James. **Herod Agrippa II (50 AD - 93/100 AD)** the great grandson of Herod the Great, was the one before whom the apostle Paul gave his defense in Acts 26.

Now let's investigate Acts 24-26.

### **Felix, Ananias, Tertullus and Paul**

Antonius Felix, commonly known as Felix, was the Roman governor (procurator) of Judea, serving from approximately 52 to 60 AD. He was a key figure in the trial and imprisonment of the apostle Paul as described in Acts 23-24. His administration was characterized by corruption, cruelty, and a lack of moral integrity. Historical accounts by Tacitus and Josephus corroborate the New Testament depiction of Felix as a harsh and unscrupulous ruler. In Acts 23:23-24, Paul was sent by the Roman commander Claudius Lysias to Antonius Felix in Caesarea to ensure his safety from a Jewish plot to kill him.

### **The Charges Presented By Tertullus (Acts 24:1-9)**

Tertullus was skilled orator and possibly a professional lawyer/advocate hired by the Jewish high priest Ananias and the elders to present charges against the apostle Paul in a formal legal setting before the Roman governor Antonius Felix in Caesarea. Tertullus accused Paul of several serious offenses: being a troublemaker, stirring up riots among the Jews throughout the Roman empire (a serious charge in Roman law as it suggested sedition), being a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes (Christians) and, attempting to desecrate the temple.

### **Pauls' Defense – The Resurrection from the Dead (Acts 24:10-21)**

Paul refuted their accusations and pointed out that they could not prove any of the charges they brought (vs 13). Instead, he emphasized that he worshipped God according to the Law and the Prophets (vs 14). He believed in the resurrection from the dead just as the Jewish priests (vs 15). Paul stated that he lived with a "a conscience without offense toward God and men" (vs 16). He clarified that he had not stirred up any crowd, had come to Jerusalem to worship, and had not desecrated the temple. If there was any wrongdoing, it would be his proclaiming the resurrection of the dead (vs 20-21).



### **Challenge: What Will Your Confession Of Faith Be?**

Paul was falsely accused and ridiculed as a troublemaker. He stood unwavering in his faith in Jesus. If you were under trail, ridiculed, or even persecuted (in any way), what would your confession of faith be?

Remember what the Lord Jesus said:

#### **Matthew 10:32-33**

**32 Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.**

**33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.**

You are empowered by the Holy Spirit to stand unashamed of the testimony for our Lord:

#### **2 Timothy 1:7-8**

**7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**

**8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,**

### **Paul's Friends Who Visited Him At Caesarea (Acts 24:22-23)**

Governor Antonius Felix deferred deciding on Paul's case to a later time. Paul was held as a prisoner in Herod's Praetorium (palace) in Caesarea.

While specific individuals are not named, Acts 24:23 mentions that Paul's friends were allowed to visit him and provide for his needs. Here is a probable list of people who visited and assisted Paul when held for two years in Caesarea Acts 24:

**Luke:** Luke went to Jerusalem with Paul at the end of his third missionary journey.

It is likely that Luke, the author of Acts, was with Paul during some of this period. Luke was a close companion of Paul and would later be with him during his imprisonment in Rome (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11). Luke's detailed account of Paul's trials in Acts suggests that he was an eyewitness, which implies his presence during Paul's time in Caesarea. When Paul was arrested in Jerusalem and imprisoned in Caesarea, Luke in addition to being with Paul in Caesarea (Acts 24:23) must have used this time to meet



people including Mary and the apostles, visit places, and gather information which he later released when he wrote the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts (70-85 AD).

**Philip the Evangelist:** Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven deacons mentioned in Acts 6, lived in Caesarea (Acts 21:8). Paul stayed with Philip on his way to Jerusalem before his arrest. It is possible that Philip continued to support Paul during his imprisonment.

**Other Local Believers:** Caesarea had a Christian community, as evidenced by the presence of Philip and his daughters (Acts 21:9). It is possible that other local believers, whose names are not recorded, provided support to Paul during his imprisonment.

**Trophimus:** Trophimus, an Ephesian believer who was with Paul in Jerusalem and whose presence there had contributed to Paul's arrest (Acts 21:29), may have been involved in supporting Paul during his imprisonment, although there is no direct evidence of this.

**Aristarchus:** We read about Aristarchus from Thessalonica in Acts 27:2, travelling with Luke and Paul as they begin their voyage to Rome. Therefore, it is likely that Aristarchus must have spent some time with Paul, while he was held in prison at Caesarea.

### **Can We Care For Those In Prison?**

Can we do practical things for those who have been imprisoned for the preaching of the Gospel and serving Jesus?

#### **Hebrews 13:1-3**

**1 Let brotherly love continue.**

**2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.**

**3 Remember the prisoners as if chained with them—those who are mistreated—since you yourselves are in the body also.**

#### **Felix and Paul (Acts 24:24-26)**

Governor Antonius Felix heard Paul's case and decided to keep him in custody, partly to please the Jewish leaders and partly in hopes of receiving a bribe from Paul for his release. Felix and his Jewish wife, Drusilla, frequently sent for Paul and listened to him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. Felix's interactions with Paul reveals a man with a complex personality, one who was essentially corrupt (trying to please the Jews, trying to get a bribe) and yet quite interested and intrigued by the message of Jesus Christ.



### **Paul, A Prisoner in Caesarea for Two Years (58-60 AD)**

Paul remained in prison for two years. During this time there was a change in Roman governors assigned over Judea. Porcius Festus (60-62 AD) took over from Antonius Felix (52-60 AD) as governor of Judea.

Interestingly, Paul did not write letters during these two years at Caesarea. He must have spent time with the disciples who came and met him and been a blessing to the community of believers in Caesarea. He must have coordinated the work across Asia and Europe. Herod's Palace in Caesarea was a significant administrative center. Paul may have had the opportunity to influence those in political power and influence over Judea and other places in the Roman empire.

What would Paul have been going through emotionally and spiritually during the two years of imprisonment in Caesarea? Here was someone who had been on the move and doing powerful ministry. Now to find himself confined to a space inside a walled compound, what would Paul have struggled with emotionally and spiritually? How would he have stayed strong emotionally and spiritually during this time?

### **ACTS CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE (57-59 AD)**

#### **Porcius Festus (Acts 25:1-8)**

The new Roman governor Porcius Festus after a brief visit to Jerusalem, held another trial for Paul in Caesarea, with the Jewish high priest and others. It was a repeat of the previous trial.

#### **Paul: "I Appeal To Caesar" (Acts 25:9-12)**

The new governor Porcius Festus seemed no different from his predecessor. He was more interested in pleasing the Jews, and courting favor with the Jewish king Herod (as we will see shortly), than in administering justice to a Roman citizen who was being held against false charges. Festus wanted to move Paul's trial back to Jerusalem. This did not sit well with Paul. Paul was aware how the Jews wanted to kill him, and the plots to ambush escorts in the past. He exercised his right as a Roman citizen. He appealed to Caesar.

At this time Nero (54 – 68 AD) was the Roman emperor and held the title Caesar.



### **King Agrippa (Acts 25:13-27)**

**Herod Agrippa II (50 AD - 93/100 AD)** the great grandson of Herod the Great, was the Tetrach (king) over Judea at this time. He and his wife came to Caesarea to meet governor Porcius Festus. Festus presented Paul's case to king Agrippa, perhaps to please him. Festus had the court seated and brought Paul out before king Agrippa, with the supposed intent to determine legitimate charges against Paul.

### **ACTS CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX (57-59 AD)**

#### **Paul's Defense Before King Agrippa (Acts 26:1-23)**

Paul recognized that king Herod Agrippa II, being a Jew is familiar with Jewish teaching and customs. Paul recounted his upbringing in Judaism and his persecution of Christians. Paul detailed his powerful encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus.

#### **A Light from Heaven Brighter Than The Midday Sun**

The apostle Paul, Saul the pharisee at that time, had a spectacular and unusual encounter with the risen Jesus, that led to his powerful conversion. A light brighter than the midday sun, had to be something supernatural!

#### **The Conversion of Paul Attests To The Resurrection of Jesus Christ**

Among much other evidence to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the conversion of Saul is a powerful testimony to the risen Christ. His conversion stemmed from his direct, personal, unmistakable, unquestionable, encounter with the resurrected Jesus Christ. Nothing else. There is no other reason that this man Saul, a staunch follower of Judaism, a pharisee of the highest order, would turn to faith in Jesus Christ.

#### **A Call: Purpose, People, Assignment, Obedience (Acts 26:16-19)**

How do we define a call of God or what we often refer to as "calling"? The Call of God (a)expresses clear purpose, (b)is to serve people, (c)has a specific assignment and (d)requires full obedience.

##### **(a) Purpose**

*"I have appeared to you for this purpose" (vs 16).*



**(b) People**

Sent to Jews and Gentiles. *“to whom I now send you”*(vs 17).

**(c) Assignment**

*“to open their eyes.....”* (vs 18)

**(d) Obedience**

*“I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision”* (vs 19)

God has a call on each of our lives. The call of God is a journey that has many seasons, stages, and destinations along the way. There is a purpose, a people we are to serve, an assignment to complete and God’s call requires obedience.

**From Darkness To Light (Acts 26:18)**

This is a powerful verse that describes what we are really engaged in when we proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and lead people to encounter the Lord.

We are not in an effort for social transformation.  
Ours is not a cultural reformation.  
Ours is not a journey into intellectual accentuation.

We are here to see spiritual redemption – people brought out from darkness to light, from the power of satan unto God. So that people can experience forgiveness of sins and the rich inheritance that God gives to His people. Once a person experiences this powerful spiritual redemption in Jesus, they become agents for God’s Kingdom to replicate this in other people’s lives. This will lead to us being “salt and light”, bringing changes in other spheres: intellectual, cultural, social. But our call is to first bring about spiritual (eternal) redemption through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Things Which Moses And The Prophets Said Would Happen (Acts 26:22-23)**

The apostle Paul ended his defense, stating that all he was proclaiming and doing was what Moses and the Prophets had already spoken of. In essence, he was still in line with the Law and the Prophets, when proclaiming Jesus and His resurrection.

**Words of Truth And Reason (Acts 26:24-25)**

Governor Porcius Festus could not control himself and yelled out that Paul had lost his mind. Paul remained calm and replied that he simply spoke words of truth and reason.



The message of Jesus Christ is truth and reason (wisdom).

The message of Jesus Christ is truth. It is true in all senses. It can be verified. But people must be willing to embrace truth.

The message of Jesus Christ is wisdom. It can be understood, reasoned and explained. But people must be willing to embrace spiritual wisdom.

### **You Almost Persuade Me To Become A Christian (Acts 26:26-32)**

Paul knew that king Agrippa believed in the Prophets. And Paul stated that all he preached and did was simply what the Prophets had foretold and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Paul's testimony and preaching about Jesus, had a profound effect on king Agrippa, as he confessed that he was almost persuaded to become a follower of Jesus Christ.

### **He Will Bear My Name Before Kings**

While in prison in Caesarea, Paul had the opportunity to proclaim Christ before the governor Antonius Felix, his successor governor Porcius Festus, to king Herod Agrippa II, and to important political leaders of Caesarea and Judea. He had appealed to Caesar's court, which meant he would be brought to Rome and could present his testimony before the Roman emperor Nero. This was part of God's call on Paul's life.

Paul had a desire to minister in Rome and beyond in regions west of Rome including Spain (Romans 15:24-28; Acts 19:21). The Lord Jesus had assured Paul that he would bear witness in Rome (Acts 23:11).

The question that does cross our mind is would it have been better for Paul to go to Rome as a freeman or as a prisoner? Would Paul have been able to influence soldiers and even bear his testimony before the Roman emperor as a freeman? We cannot rule out this possibility. As a freeman Paul could have gone to regions beyond Rome as well. What if Paul had not appealed to Caesar? Would he have been freed by Herod Agrippa II? We do not have answers to these questions. Our confidence lies in the fact that as we make our best decisions, God leads, guides and works all things out for our good, for His purposes and for His glory.





### Key Insights

1, Challenge: What will your confession of faith be? Paul was falsely accused and ridiculed as a troublemaker. He stood unwavering in his faith in Jesus. If you were under trail, ridiculed, or even persecuted (in any way), what would your confession of faith be?

2, Care for those imprisoned for the faith

3, Stay strong emotionally and spiritually through the hard times.

4, The resurrection of Jesus Christ is unquestionable. The conversion of the apostle Paul attests to this.

5, The call of God (a)expresses clear purpose, (b)is to serve people, (c)has a specific assignment and (d)requires full obedience. What is your calling? What steps of obedience does God want you to take?

6, Our primary goal is the eternal redemption of people. All other changes are secondary and flow out of this.

7, The message of Jesus Christ is truth and reason (wisdom). Share it unashamedly.

### SUMMARY

#### GOSPEL AND SALVATION CALL

#### SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads



Acts – Book Study – Chapters 24-26  
Sermon Notes, Sermon Outline and Small Group Study Guide



**Acts Book Study Chapters 24-26**  
**Sunday August 18, 2024**

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

**Preparation**

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full-length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at our [sermons page](#). Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

**Welcome**

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship, and a fun activity.

**LISTEN to God's Word**

Read the following Scripture references: *Please request Life group members to read Acts 24-26, before the Life Group Meeting. This can help save time.*

**INVESTIGATE God's Word Together**

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

*1, Challenge: What will your confession of faith be? Paul was falsely accused and ridiculed as a troublemaker. He stood unwavering in his faith in Jesus. If you were under trail, ridiculed, or even persecuted (in any way), what would your confession of faith be?*

*2, What are some practically ways we can stay strong emotionally and spiritually through the hard times.*



*3, The call of God (a)expresses clear purpose, (b)is to serve people, (c)has a specific assignment and (d)requires full obedience. What is your calling? What steps of obedience does God want you to take?*

*4, The message of Jesus Christ is truth and reason (wisdom). Discuss this. Are you really convinced about this so you can share it unashamedly, as opportunities arise?*

If time permits, each one can take a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

**FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey**

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

**ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another**

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

*1, families to be protected and strengthened*

*2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*

*3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for all details to go well as we plan and build our Bible college and church facilities to serve the Lord and people.*

Close by thanking God together.



## Acts – Book Study – Chapters 24-26 Sermon Notes, Sermon Outline and Small Group Study Guide



### USEFUL RESOURCES

Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

**YOUTUBE:** <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

**WEBSITE:** <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

**CHURCH:** <https://apcwo.org>

**FREE SERMONS:** <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

**FREE BOOKS:** <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

**DAILY DEVOTIONALS:** <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

**JESUS CHRIST:** <https://examiningjesus.com>

**BIBLE COLLEGE:** <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

**E-LEARNING:** <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

**WEEKEND SCHOOLS:** <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

**COUNSELING:** <https://chrysalislife.org>

**MUSIC:** <https://apcmusic.org>

**MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP:** <https://pamfi.org>

**CHURCH APP:** <https://apcwo.org/app>

**CHURCHES:** <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

**WORLD MISSIONS:** <https://apcworldmissions.org>

### SERMON OUTLINE

The book of Acts records the first 40 years of the Early Church. This is a book study of the Acts of the apostles, or more correctly, the acts of the Holy Spirit through the early believers. As we study the book of Acts there are two compelling perspectives that we develop: (A) the Church's DNA – what a Spirit filled church would look like and (B) how the Church would go about fulfilling the Great Commission empowered by the Holy Spirit. We glean spiritual and practical insights from each chapter and share ways we can apply these in our lives. In this sermon we cover Acts chapters 24-26. We journey with Paul as he is imprisoned in Caesarea for two years. He presents his testimony and defense before the Roman governors Antonius Felix, Porcius Festus and king Herod Agrippa II. We consider how Paul was bold to present his faith - words of truth and reason - to those in authority, friends who would have supported him during these two years, and how Paul would have stayed spiritually and emotionally strong while held as a prisoner. And other insights from these chapters.



Acts – Book Study – Chapters 24-26  
Sermon Notes, Sermon Outline and Small Group Study Guide

**KEYWORDS**

Acts of the apostles, book study of Acts, Gospel preaching, Spirit filled church community, sermons, sermon notes, sermon outline, free sermon notes, free sermon outlines, Bible study resources

**REFERENCES/CITATIONS**

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