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Acts 25

In our modern day society, there is such a cry about the unfairness of life and the concept of being a victim through circumstances, at the expense of escaping personal responsibility for one's actions and decisions.

This has been carried over into the church and many Christians are living under the philosophy of the world.

1. Blaming their home life for the way they turned out in life.
2. Blaming their conduct on what their parents were, be it anger, alcohol, etc.

This is nothing but humanistic psychology, the Bible tells us, that if a person is in Christ they are new creatures, old things pass away and all things become new. 2Cor. 5:17

It is an insult to the cross and the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, once you have come to Christ.

Each person as a sinner has a choice to be and do like their parents did or not to, they have a free will, this is clearly taught in the book of Ezekiel to teach

that God will not hold a person responsible for another's sins but their own. Ezk. 18

The environment does not make you a sinner, it only provides an opportunity to be a worst sinner or to not be, after the example of others.

Paul the apostle spent two years in jail because of political advantage and he was in the Lord's will.

1. He could have become bitter, cynical and sarcastic.
2. He could have turned from preaching the gospel.

But instead we see a seasoned warrior who understands spiritual warfare and knew Who he serves and that Jesus was able to make him stand.

Paul has made his defense before several people.

1. The Jewish crowd in the temple.
2. The Sanhedrin at Jerusalem.
3. The governor Felix.
4. Paul preached the gospel to Drusilla, the wife of Felix and Felix about righteousness, self-control and judgment to come. Felix trembling said, "Go away for now; when I have a more convenient time I will call for you." Acts 24:25

* Making the mistake of thinking there would be another time to repent and yet he called Paul often to talk with him, hoping he would be offered a bribe by Paul, to release him. vs. 26

5. He will give his defense before Festus that will lead to his appeal to Caesar. Acts 25

6. Paul will then will preach the gospel to King Agrippa and Bernice, Festus and many others present, pleading for their souls. Acts 26

The twenty-fifth chapter is a sharp contrast of men in bondage to sin and a man who had been saved from sin.

25:1-22 The apostle Paul's defense before Festus.

25:1-5 *The Jews plotted again to kill Paul.*

25:1 The arrival of Festus to Caesarea.

- 1) Festus come to the province as the successor of Felix.
 - a) A province was a country conquered by the Romans and then a governor was placed over it.
 - b) Festus came to office around 58-60 A.D. and died in 62 A.D.
- 2) Festus after three days, went up to Jerusalem. vs. 1b
 - a) The customary visit was to get acquainted with the political and religious authorities.
 - b) To get updated on the situation at hand.

25:2-3 The visit of Festus to Jerusalem.

1) Festus was approached by the Sanhedrin. vs. 2

- a) The high priest and chief men of the Jews informed Festus against Paul, demonstrating that the two years had not dissuaded their hate for Paul but in fact had increased. vs. 2a
 - 1)) The chief men were the elders or leading men.
 - 2)) The high priest was no longer Ananias but Ishmael, son of Phabi who was appointed by king Agrippa II, at the close of Felix's rule.

b) They made a petition of Festus. vs. 2b-3

- 1)) The word petitioned "paralaleo" is in the imperfect tense suggest urgent and persistent. vs. 2b
- 2)) The commentary of Luke is that they were asking a favor against Paul. vs. 3a
- 3)) The wanted Paul to be referred back to Jerusalem for trial so they could ambush him on the way and kill him. vs. 3b-c

25:4-5 The refusal to concede to their petition.

1) Paul was to be kept at Caesarea. vs. 4a

- 2) Festus was going to go there shortly. vs. 4b
- 3) The decision of Festus was to invite them to return with him to Caesarea to accuse Paul, to determine if Paul was guilty. vs. 5

25:6-12 *The Jews attempted again to accuse Paul.*

25:6 Festus returned to Caesarea.

- 1) Festus spent about ten days in Jerusalem and then went down to Caesarea. vs. 6a-b
 - a) Perhaps visiting the Fortress of Antonia.
 - b) The Roman officers, etc.
- 2) Festus on the following day sitting on the judgment seat commanded that Paul be brought before the court. vs. 6c-e
 - a)) The judgment seat “bema” was the raised platform, mounted by step that Festus as judge sat upon.
 - b)) This is the very same word when Pilate judge Jesus.
 - c)) It is the same word used for the judgment seat of Christ for the believer. 1Cor. 3:14-?

25:7 The Jews had also come and were present at Caesarea.

- 1) The Jews at their arrival stood around Festus and laid man serious complaints against Paul. vs. 7a-c
 - a) As the manner of the council to accuse.
 - b) But in reality, they were being judged by God, who knew the truth.
- 2) But they could not prove the charges. vs. 7d

25:8 The apostle Paul gave a defense for himself, denying the charges.

- 1) He denied breaking the law.
- 2) He denied defiling the Temple.
- 3) He denied doing anything against Caesar, he had not led no insurrection against Rome.

25:9 The governor Festus cross-examined Paul.

- 1) Festus attempting to side with the Jews and do them a favor. vs. 9a-b
- 2) Festus asked Paul if he would go to Jerusalem to stand trial before the Jews? vs. 9c-d
* Pilate did the same thing with Jesus!

25:10 The defense of Paul was that he was under the proper authorities.

- 1) Paul affirms his rightful place at Caesar's judgment, under Festus, it is emphatic in the Greek. vs. 10a-c
- 2) Paul challenged Festus integrity, telling him, he very well knew Paul had done nothing too the Jews. vs. 10d-e
 - a) The word know "epiginoslo" means thoroughly acquainted and knew fully.
 - b) Paul had already been tried at Jerusalem before the Sanhedrin.

25:11 The concluding argument of Paul.

- 1) Paul did not object to dying if he were guilty to charges worthy of death. vs. 11a-c
- 2) Paul seeing clearly that the charges were false said no one could deliver him to them, not even Festus. vs. 11d-e
- 3) Paul appealed to Caesar. vs. 11e
 - * This was the right of every Roman citizen who thought he was being unfairly judge by one of Rome's judges.

25:12 The deliberation of Festus.

- 1) Festus conferred with his council at the appeal of Paul. vs. 12a-b
 - a) Without taken back, not expecting Paul to appeal.

- b) So he no doubt wanted to see if he had any recourse or way out. vs. 12a-b
- 2) Festus answered Paul, "You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!" vs. 12c-e
 - a) To present the decision, as if it was under his authority, to save face before those present.
 - b) The truth of the matter was, that he had no authority, as Paul stated, to alter Paul's request.
 - c) Festus, in attempting to favor himself with the Jews, as he came into office, did not have any charges to send with Paul to Rome.
 - d) This was not good, as his first case as governor.

25:13-22 *The visit of Agrippa to Festus.*

25:13 The visit was customary and political.

- 1) The visit took place after some day, the number is not specified.
 - a) The
- 2) King Agrippa and Bernice traveled to Caesarea to greet Festus.
 - a) Agrippa was a descendant of the Herod's, a Jew, educated in Rome and the emperor Claudius had given him I A.D. 50 the government of the temple in Jerusalem. (27 A.D- 100 A.D.)

- b) Herod the Great massacred the infants.
- c) Herod Philip I, was the father of Herodias.
- d) Herod Antipas, ruled Galilee and Peraea, the second husband of Herodias, who beheaded John and sent Jesus to Pilate.
- e) Herod Archelaus, ruled Judea, Samaria and Idumea, succeeding Herod the Great.
- f) Herod Philip II, ruled Iturea and Trachonitis, founded Caesarea Philippi and named it after himself.
- g) Aristabulus, was killed by Herod the Great.
- h) Aristabulus had a son, Herod Agrippa I, who was eaten by worms. Acts 12
- i) Agrippa II is the son of Agrippa the I, which is before us in our text and the following chapter.
- j) Bernice was his sister, who had married her uncle Herod Chalcis and at his death she married Polemon, king of Cilicia but deserted him and came to lived with her brother Agrippa II in a incestuous relationship, later became he mistress of Vespasian and Titus.
- k) Drusilla was her sister, the wife of Felix. Acts 24:24

25:14-22 The governor Felix took advantage of the visit of Herod, to see if charges could be formulated against Paul, to accompany him to Rome.

- 1) Festus allowed some days to pass and then mentioned that Felix had left a certain man prisoner. vs. 14
- 2) Festus also related the petition of the Jews asking judgment against him. vs. 15
- 3) Festus pointed out his invitation for them to accuse Paul at Caesarea, face to face, according to Roman law. vs. 16
- 4) Festus communicated that they came, without delay and sat in judgment of Paul. vs. 17
- 5) Festus told Agrippa the accusations were not what he expected, but religious in nature. vs. 18-19
 - a) A question about their religion “deisidamonia” meaning superstition, appearing only this time in the New Testament.
 - b) About a man named Jesus, who had died, but Paul affirmed he was alive. vs. 19
- 6) Festus presented himself to Agrippa as naive and innocent of the Jews motives and intentions by stating he was uncertain of such questions, so he asked Paul if he was willing to go to Jerusalem

and there be judged concerning these matters. vs. 20

- 7) Festus then revealed that Paul had appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, therefore he commanded Paul to be kept till I could send him to Caesar. vs. 21
- a) The term Augustus was the title first taken by Octavius, the grandnephew of Julius Caesar and it became the title for his successors.
 - b) Augustus “sebastos” means worthy to be revered, later used for emperor worship. vs. 21, 25
- 8) Festus heard what he was hoping to hear, “Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I also would like to hear the man myself.” “Tomorrow,” he said, “you shall hear him.” vs. 22
- * Like Herod Antipas who desired for a long time to see Jesus and see Him do some miracle. Lk. 23:6-12

25:23-26:32 The apostle Paul before Agrippa.

25:23-27 *The formal introduction of Paul by Festus to Agrippa.*

25:23 The impressive entry of Agrippa.

- 1) Agrippa and Bernice came in with great pomp. vs. 23a-b

- a) Great pomp “phantasia”, means pageantry and show, in Arabic for procession.
 - b) The amphitheater is the one we visit on our trips to Israel.
- 2) They entered into the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city. vs. 23c
- a) The commanders were the military tribunes, five in number, representing the five auxiliary Roman cohorts stationed at Caesarea.
 - b) The prominent men, being the dignitaries, etc.
- 3) At Festus command Paul was brought in. vs. 23d
- a) Paul was in chains but he was the one in authority. Acts 26:29
 - b) They were slaves of sin, Paul was free from sin.
 - c) The woman by Agrippa’s side was a wicked person, the Lord was by Paul’s side always.

25:24-25 The general charges are repeated by Festus repeats to Agrippa.

- 1) The Jew had petitioned Festus against Paul, in Jerusalem and Caesarea, saying he was not fit to live. vs. 24

- 2) That Festus had found nothing against Paul deserving of death, stated emphatically. vs. 25a
- 3) Since Paul appealed to Caesar, he decided to sent him. vs. 25b-c

25:26-27 The dilemma of Festus was expressed to King Agrippa.

- 1) He had not charges to accompany Paul before Caesar. vs. 26a
- 2) He was hoping Agrippa might be able to formulate some charges. vs. 26b-e
 - * Festus flatters King Agrippa,
“Especially you, King Agrippa”
- 3) Festus thought it against reason to send Paul without formal charges. vs. 27
 - * That would make him look bad before Caesar!