

STUDY GUIDE

for the week of 1/26-2/1
Acts 25-26



WHATS THE STORY?

Paul appears before Festus and shares his story before Festus consults with Herod Agrippa. Recounting his testimony to both of them, their confusion at his commitment to the way of Christ prompts them to finally send him on to Rome.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What keeps your faith strong in the face of trials?
- What was the hardest position you've been put in because of your faith?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: What do you think Paul felt while in prison for 2 years?

How long did it take you to decide to put your faith in Christ?

A Deeper Look

In our next block of scriptures, Paul is still on trial, but this time in front of a man named Porcius Festus. Festus, after succeeding Felix, arrives in town and wants to tie up Felix's loose ends. Naturally, Paul's lengthy imprisonment is on this list. So Festus takes a trip to Jerusalem to get more statements from the Jewish leaders. Shockingly, these leaders are still searching out ways to ambush Paul and murder him even after two years. Festus keeps their request to send Paul back to Jerusalem in mind and first heads back to Caesarea where he will hear Paul's plea. Paul is brought to the court and claims he has "done nothing wrong against the Jewish law or against the temple or against Caesar." (v8) Festus asks if he is willing to go back to Jerusalem and Paul denies this. He again calls on his Roman citizenship and appeals to Caesar. (v11) Festus grants Paul his appeal to Caesar and makes plans for Paul to stand trial in Rome. Before this takes place Festus sought advice from King Agrippa, the last king of Judea and son of the Herod Agrippa that had Peter arrested and James killed in chapter 12. King Agrippa asks to hear Paul for himself and a hearing is scheduled.

Luke tells us that King Agrippa made a show of their arrival, bringing with them an entourage of powerful men. Festus gives a speech informing Agrippa, the crowd, and us that he has nothing definite to send with Paul as he goes in front of Caesar, and Festus is hoping Agrippa can help him come up with something of substance. Paul leans into the 'pomp' as Luke put it, and begins his defense. He rehashes a lot of what he spoke about to the Jewish crowd in chapter 22, adding a more in depth monologue of his interaction with a resurrected Jesus. When Paul makes his crystal clear statement that Christ, "would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would bring the message of light to his own people and to the Gentiles" (ch26v23) Festus interrupts and claims that he is out of his mind. Paul then leans on Agrippa's knowledge of the Jewish prophecies and asks him if he understands the connections. Agrippa, seemingly impressed by Paul's boldness asks Paul if he is really trying to convert him, the ruler of Judea, in such a short amount of time. Paul responds that it doesn't matter how much time it takes, his hope is that everyone might be like him, "except for the chains." (ch26v29) Agrippa and his posse leave, and said that there is no case to be had, and he does not deserve death or even imprisonment.