

“THROUGH THE BIBLE”

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ACTS 23-24

Acts 23 reminds of the day in 1975 when Hank Aaron came to town wearing a Milwaukee Brewers' uniform. *It was shocking.* For the previous 21 seasons “Hammering Hank” had been the pride of the Braves – the face of the franchise. The all time home run king was a Brave – not a Brewer. But there he was... #44... at Atlanta Stadium in the visitor's dugout. And every long time Braves fan like myself felt just a little twinge of betrayal.

But it was true, Hank Aaron changed teams... *as did the Apostle Paul.* There were Jews who studied alongside Paul in Jerusalem – offered Temple sacrifices with him – saw him supervise the stoning of Stephen... It now must've felt surreal to see their former hero on the other team. A once devoted Jewish zealot was now a follower of Jesus. He preached a salvation that was offered to Gentiles. The Jews seethed with anger and betrayal. They rushed Paul. The crowd mobbed him and began to beat him.

If a Roman garrison hadn't been dispatched, Paul would've been dead. As Acts 21 closes he's on the steps of police headquarters. The mob is demanding a lynching. There's so much bedlam the chief of police can't even reconstruct what's happened. That's when Paul steps up to preach. His goal for 20 years had been to preach the Gospel of Jesus to his Jewish peers. *Never in his wildest dreams did he think it would be like this, but who's to argue with God's methods.* He's focused on the opportunity. In chapter 22 he shares his testimony. And the crowd listens, until he says the word “Gentiles” – which sets off another firestorm of animosity.

The Roman in charge wants to know why the Jews are so hostile toward Paul He decides a more formal encounter with his accusers is in order. Which brings us to chapter 23... We'll actually begin in Acts 22:30... “The next day, because he wanted to know for certain why he was accused by the Jews, he released him from his bonds, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear (This council was the Sanhedrin, the Jewish Supreme Court. It was the same body that had condemned Jesus to death.), and (he) brought Paul down and set him before them. Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council...” What a moment this must've been! The last time Paul eyeballed these men he was on their side. He was their heavy hitter - *their hit man.* Now he's in the visitor's dugout.

And look at how he opens... he's brimming with courage! “Men and brethren...” Normally, a defendant would address the Sanhedrin as “Rulers of the people.” To call them “men and brethren” was to put yourself on their level. Paul viewed these men as peers. At one time he'd been one of them. But you can bet his language angered them further. Almost as much as what he says next, “Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” The Jews probably ripped their clothes again. They considered his claim to be blasphemous. Without any knowledge of the grace and righteousness that come through Jesus any talk of a “good conscience” was arrogant at best, and heretical at worst. How dare Paul claim to be right with a holy God?

In fact, the high priest orders a crony to pop Paul in the mouth. Verse 2, “Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.” Then Paul said to him, “God will strike you, you whitewashed wall! For you sit to judge me according to the law, and do you command me to be struck contrary to the law?” Wow, Paul strikes back. He counterpunches. In my opinion, Paul may've lost his cool. His goal is to preach the Gospel. Starting out by calling the High Priest a hypocrite is probably not a good introduction to an evangelistic sermon. It seems even Paul lost it at times. He rebukes Ananias for punishing him before he's even convicted.

Verse 4, “And those who stood by said, “Do you revile God’s high priest?” Then Paul said, “I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, ‘*You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.*’” Here Paul quotes Exodus 22:28. And his rebuttal can be taken a couple of ways. He could be speaking sarcastically, “I didn’t know a guy like this could be High Priest.” Paul was referring to Ananias’s poor priestly record. He was a miserable Priest. He served for 12 years and used his Temple oversight to pad his own pockets. He was eventually murdered by the Jews. Or Paul might not have actually seen that it was the High Priest to which he was spoke. We talked earlier about the problems Paul had with his eyes. Inflammation may’ve flared up and impaired his vision. Whatever the reason Paul dug himself a hole with the Jews, and looks for a way out...

“But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, “Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am being judged!” And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. For Sadducees say that there is no resurrection (Of course, that’s why they’re sad-you-see) - and no angel or spirit; but the Pharisees confess both.” At the time there were two main division of Judaism, and here Paul diverts attention off himself by pitting the two factions against each other.

The Sadducees were the liberals. They denied the existence of angels - the immortality of the soul – the resurrection of the body. They believed that only the first five books of Moses were inspired. They were the materialists. Whereas the Pharisees were the super-naturalists. They believed in angels, and eternal life, and the resurrection. They held the whole Bible as inspired by God – the Law, and the Poetry, and the Prophets... *And Paul knows these groups are rivals...* Paul had once been a proud Pharisee. Now he appeals to Pharisee pride - *and there was a lot of it!* Everyone was angry Paul preached the resurrection of Jesus, but didn’t the Pharisees believe in the resurrection of the body. Paul shrewdly reframed his trial as an attack on Pharisee-ism.

“Then there arose a loud outcry. And the scribes of the Pharisees’ party arose and protested, saying, “We find no evil in this man; but if a spirit or an angel has spoken to him, let us not fight against God.” In a roundabout way Paul’s doctrine actually substantiated the Pharisees, so they back off Paul... But a heated debated arises with the Sadducees. “Now when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the barracks.” The commander was afraid Paul would become a pulley-bone. They would tear him in two. So once more he dispatches a garrison to save his skin.

And imagine, Paul’s discouragement. Three times now he’s tried to preach the Gospel to the Jews, but with little success. *He’s sunk into a funk.* But *the God of all comfort* comes to him in verse 11, “But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome.” I’m sure Paul considered his trip to Jerusalem a failure. I’ll bet he wondered, “*Maybe I should’ve heeded all the warnings, and stayed away.*” But that’s not God’s opinion. He commends Paul’s efforts... “*Be of good cheer... as you have testified of Me in Jerusalem...*” God speaks of Paul’s efforts toward the Jews in a positive light. Remember, our responsibility is to simply share the Gospel. How people respond is between them and God.

Recall last week we discussed whether Paul was right or wrong to visit Jerusalem at this time. God had called Paul to be “the apostle to the Gentiles.” Everywhere Paul preached to Gentiles, people got saved. But whenever he tried to preach to Jews, he narrowly missed getting *slayed*. Prior to this visit to Jerusalem, believers and prophets alike had warned him of danger... When he arrived, James suggests a questionable move - perform a ritualistic vow to court Jewish sympathies... His effort failed. Paul’s visit to Jerusalem got him into deep trouble. On the surface we might call it a mistake... It was born out of stubbornness, not the will of God.

But not so fast... Earlier in Acts 19:21 we’re told Paul “purposed in the Spirit” to go to Jerusalem. He said in chapter 20 that none of the warnings moved him. He was ready not only to be chained, but to die for Jesus’ sake. In Romans 9:3 Paul even said he would go to hell if it meant the Jews could go to heaven. I’m not sure I could honestly say that about anyone. How do you argue with such a heart – with such a passion for the lost? In fact, review Paul’s calling at the time of his conversion. Jesus said Paul would “bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.” Obviously, favorable results aren’t the only sign you’re walking in God’s will.

Here’s my answer to the question, was it God’s will for Paul to visit Jerusalem and enter the Temple at this particular time? *Who knows!* To me, here’s a

classic case, where *the will of God* seems as *clear as mud*. If you've been a Christian for any length of time you realize when it comes to subjective decisions discerning God's will isn't an exact science. What college do I attend? Who do I marry? Where do I buy a house? Do I go to Jerusalem at this time? Do I join with other Jews in taking a vow? You can't open your Bible and get a definitive answer to those questions. As Paul did... you listen to your heart - seek advice from friends - stay open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit... *but what if you're still unclear?*

Here's what you need to realize about God and His will... God is experienced in working with frail and fallible people. I have a hard time discerning my wife's desires, and we can talk and text. How much more difficult will it for me to pick up on the spiritual nuances of the Spirit? God understands. He knows I'm dense. That's why He includes some latitude in His will for me. There's always a plus or minus margin of error. Walking in God's will seldom requires me to stop on a dime. I don't have to hit the bull's eye from 1000 feet. God makes room for my humanness.

I believe this is what David meant in Psalm 18:36 when He prayed, "*You enlarged my path under me, so that my feet did not slip.*" He's saying, as long as my heart was right, God made sure my feet didn't lead me astray. When I stumbled or staggered God enlarged the path under me. Even if we get out of step with God - and veer a little right or left - He won't abandon us. He'll stretch out of the white lines to keep us in His will. At times God will enlarge the lane to keep us moving in the right direction. Here God may've broadened his will to accommodate Paul's zeal.

I believe God loves us, and He won't let us forfeit the blessings of His will just because we miss a cue, or there's a little play in the steering wheel of our lives. God is big enough to accommodate His children's weaknesses. Here's the point... Did Paul do everything right? I doubt it. But in the end God got him to where He wanted him to go. God fulfilled His will for Paul. And He'll fulfill His will in your life if your heart is right and you trust Him.

Verse 12, "*And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. Now there were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. They came to the chief priests and elders, and said, "We have bound ourselves under a great oath that we will eat nothing until we have killed Paul."* Here's the zeal of a terrorist. These guys are serious. They go on the "*Kill A Christian Weight Loss Program.*" No matzo balls, or falafels, or lamb chops until Paul is dead meat. Forty men take the oath.

"*Now you, therefore, together with the council, suggest to the commander that he be brought down to you tomorrow, as though you were going to make further inquiries concerning him; but we are ready to kill him before he comes near.*" The 40 hungry assassins set up an ambush. "*So when Paul's sister's son heard of their ambush, he went and entered the barracks and told Paul.*" Uncle Paul had a nephew within earshot of the conspirators. *What do you think the odds were of this nephew walking past these Jewish thugs just as they were devising their plot against Paul?* This was obviously, God's providence at work. God performed a miracle. He made sure *the right boy* was in *the right place at the right time!*

"*Then Paul called one of the centurions to him and said, "Take this young man to the commander, for he has something to tell him."* So he took him and brought him to the commander and said, "*Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to bring this young man to you. He has something to say to you.*" Then the commander took him by the hand, went aside, and asked privately, "*What is it that you have to tell me?*" And he said, "*The Jews have agreed to ask that you bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more fully about him. But do not yield to them, for more than forty of them lie in wait for him, men who have bound themselves by an oath that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him; and now they are ready, waiting for the promise from you.*" So the commander let the young man depart, and commanded him, "*Tell no one that you have revealed these things to me.*" And he called for two centurions, saying, "*Prepare 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night...*" which was around 9:00 pm. They'll move Paul just after dark. "*And provide mounts to set Paul on, and bring him safely to Felix the governor.*" We'll talk more about the Roman Governor Felix in chapter 24... Remember Caesarea-by-the-Sea was the Roman headquarters in Israel. The governor would come to Jerusalem only on special occasions.

The Roman commander knows Paul is a high value target for the terrorists, so he puts together a military detail to transport him the 65 miles from Jerusalem to Caesarea. And along with the prisoner, he sends along a letter of explanation... Verse 25, "*He wrote a letter in the following manner: Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor Felix: Greetings. This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them. Coming with the troops I rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. And when I wanted to know the reason they accused him, I brought him before their council. I found out*

that he was accused concerning questions of their law, but had nothing charged against him deserving of death or chains. And when it was told me that the Jews lay in wait for the man, I sent him immediately to you, and also commanded his accusers to state before you the charges against him." And he closes, "Farewell."

"Then the soldiers, as they were commanded, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris." This was a city half-way from Jerusalem to Caesarea. The road from Jerusalem to Antipatris was narrow and mountainous. It was perfect for the ambush. But the road north toward Caesarea was flat and open. The dangerous part of the journey was over. That's why, "The next day (the 200 foot soldiers and 200 spearmen) left the horsemen to go on with him, and returned to the barracks." The troops returned to Jerusalem, and the cavalry finished the escort to Caesarea.

Verse 33, "When they came to Caesarea and had delivered the letter to the governor, they also presented Paul to him. And when the governor had read it, he asked what province he was from. And when he understood that he was from Cilicia, he said, "I will hear you when your accusers also have come." And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium."

Chapter 24, "Now after five days Ananias the high priest came down with the elders..." Notice, even though Caesarea to Jerusalem is north, we're told the High Priest's entourage "came down." Jerusalem is in the mountains, thus to go anywhere from Jerusalem you always go downward. At the time, Ananias was 80 years old. That he was willing to make a 65 mile trip over rugged terrain is proof of just how much he hated Paul.

And coming with Ananias was "a certain orator named Tertullus." Once the Stanford Research Institute tested how various professions effected a person's perspective. The first interviewee was an engineer. He was asked, "What does two plus two make?" Trained in the exactness of mathematics the engineer responded, "In absolute terms, four." The second interviewee was an architect. He was asked, "what does two plus two make?" Due to the creativeness of his craft his response was a little more elaborate. "Well, there are several possibilities: 2 + 2 make 4, but so do 3 and 1, even 2½ + 1½ make 4. You have several options." The final interviewee was a lawyer. The researcher asked him, "what does 2 + 2 make?" The attorney gets up, shuts the door, pulls the blinds, leans into the researchers, and whispers, "Well, tell me what would you like it to make?" Sad to say, lawyers have the reputation for bending the truth. And such was the case with the lawyer we meet in Acts 24.

Tertullus was a wizard of rhetoric, a master of verbal deception. He was a high-priced lawyer bought by the Sanhedrin to send Paul up the river. Tertullus could flatter a judge, and obscure the facts, and dress up a lie. He was slick and shrewd - a real truth bender. He came with Ananias...

And "These gave evidence to the governor against Paul. And when he was called upon, Tertullus began his accusation, saying: "Seeing that through you we enjoy great peace, and prosperity is being brought to this nation by your foresight, we accept it always and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness." Here is where you need to reach under your seat and pull out the air-sickness bag. This is nauseous! Tertullus claims that Felix was responsible for peace and prosperity. To the contrary, Governor Felix authored brutal attacks and corrupt politics.

Marcus Antonius Felix was the only Roman procurator to ever rise to his position from the ranks of a slave. But though he'd climbed in *status*, he remained the same in *stature*. Felix was a brutish man. Tacitus, the Roman historian says of Felix, "he had the power of a king and mind of a slave." Felix was anything but what Tertullus calls him, "noble." It's flattery.

"Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us. For we have found this man a plague (literally, a pest), a creator of dissension among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." He makes Paul sound like a gang leader. There's the Bloods and Crips and "Nazarenes." Here's another first century name given to the followers of Jesus. They were called "Nazarenes" after Jesus' hometown. But this was also a derogatory term. Since Nazareth was a hick town, a backwoods place, this was like calling the Christians a "group of rednecks" - or "swamp people." Tertullus presents his case, verse 6, "(Paul) even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him-and wanted to judge him according to our law." Tertullus starts with an outrageous lie. Rather than profane temple protocol, Paul wanted to placate the Jews. He observed a Jewish ritual.

“But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands...” Talk about rewriting history - the Romans were trying to stop the violence of the Jews... Tertullus goes on to blame Lysias for forcing this trip to Caesarea. The Jewish leaders could've taken care of these matters, but now he's "commanding his accusers to come to you." He goes on in verse 8, "By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." And the Jews also assented maintaining that these things were so." Tertullus didn't want the facts to get in the way of a good argument. Here was a slime ball lawyer in action.

Verse 10, "Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a judge of this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself..." Felix had been the Roman governor over Palestine for seven years – from 52-59 AD. Paul is thankful for his longevity "because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd, either in the synagogues or in the city. Nor can they prove the things of which they now accuse me." Tertullus was long on *style*, but short on *substance*. He had an argument, but no evidence to back it up.

Now the defense is going to present its case. "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers..." Note the Jews at the time considered the Christians "a sect" or "a branch of Judaism." A heretical branch of Judaism, but Jewish nonetheless. Paul on the other hand referred to Christianity as "the Way." Jesus isn't just one sect among many sections - or a small slice of something bigger. Jesus is "the Way" – the only Way for man to get to God.

Paul goes on to explain his faith, "believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Paul would not have labeled himself "a former Jew," but rather "a fulfilled Jew." Nothing he believed nullified or contradicted the OT, or his Hebrew heritage. His faith in Jesus as the Messiah fulfilled Judaism. Jesus said as much in Matthew 5:17, "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill." Jesus didn't contradict Judaism, He simply took it a step further. The work of Jesus completed the OT imagery and symbolism. Jesus is the new Temple, the perpetual priesthood, the ultimate sacrifice, the author of a better covenant. Jesus is the fulfillment of all the prophet's predictions.

Verse 16, "This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men." This is how he opened his defense before the Sanhedrin in 23:1, before Ananias punched him in the mouth. Paul had never done anything to offend true, biblical sensibilities.

Paul begins to recount his version of the Temple riot... "Now after many years I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation, in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult. They ought to have been here before you to object if they had anything against me." What caused the mob were false accusations made by the Asian Jews who said Paul brought a Gentile into the Temple. In light of possible cross-examination Paul's accusers had vanished.

Verse 20, "Or else let those who are here themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council, unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, 'Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.'" Here's where Tertullus realizes he's met his match. Paul had a shrewd legal mind himself. A good number of the Jewish delegation were Pharisees, who believed in the future resurrection of the body. Here Paul insists that he's being condemned for the very same belief held by his accusers. It's hypocrisy! Of course, the charge against Paul wasn't his belief in *the resurrection of all*, but *the resurrection of One*, Jesus of Nazareth. Yet he shrewdly frames his case in the general, rather than in the specific, so it becomes impossible for the Pharisees to condemn him without condemning themselves. This is how Paul got off the hook in chapter 23, so he goes to the well one more time. He's gaining experience at getting out of tight squeezes!

Verse 22, "But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way..." It's interesting that Felix had some prior knowledge of Christianity. His wife was Jewish. It might've come from her. Luke continues, "He adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case." Felix wanted to hear from the commander who initially dealt with the disturbance. Sadly, there's no record that Lysias ever made it to court.

“So (Felix) commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him.” In other words, Paul was placed under house arrest. For the next two years he’ll live in Caesarea. He’ll entertain friends, and disciple believers. Rather than a cold, dank prison – Paul is given a 2 year all expense paid stay in the beautiful coastal town of Caesarea. After three long, rigorous missionary journeys, God was supplying Paul some rest and relaxation. This was a siesta on Paul’s journey, before his final lap to Rome.

And these two years in Caesarea provided Paul’s buddy, Luke, an opportunity to do important research. Remember, Luke was a talented man. He was a doctor and a historian. And from Caesarea he could visit Nazareth, Galilee, Jerusalem, Bethlehem. He could run down the stories. All over the countryside Luke was able to interview folks who’d seen firsthand the life and miracles of Jesus. It was just 25 years after the fact. Many of the eyewitnesses were still alive. Luke was able to speak to Mary, the shepherds, Jesus’ brothers, Peter, John, Nicodemus, even officials in Pilate’s court. Imagine, the interview Dr. Luke had with Lazarus.

Luke compiled his research into two volumes. He wrote two letters to a rich sponsor named Theophilus. We call them the books of Luke and Acts. In the opening of Luke’s Gospel he refers to Theophilus by the title, “*most excellent.*” This was a common title given to Roman officials. It’s possible that Luke’s Gospel, and its sequel, Acts, were actually written as part of Paul’s legal defense before the Caesar in Rome. That would mean that two of the New Testament’s *longest books* were actually *legal briefs*.

To me this is all a wonderful example of God’s undeniable faithfulness. At first Paul’s trip to Jerusalem must’ve seemed like a disaster, yet God used it to buy Paul some needed refreshment and provide the church two of its greatest treasures – Luke and Acts. It’s just proof of what Paul wrote to the Romans. “*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*” Here’s a provocative thought... If Paul had not been detained for two years in Caesarea we might not be reading the book of Acts tonight.

Verse 24, “*And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ.*” This Drusilla was the great-granddaughter of Herod the Great, who tried to kill Jesus by slaughtering all the male babies in Bethlehem. Her great-uncle, Herod Antipas, beheaded John the Baptist and stood trial over Jesus. In Acts 12, her father, Herod Agrippa I beheaded the Apostle James. This was the fellow who allowed the people to praise him as God, and was judged for his arrogance when worms ate out his intestines. You could say Drusilla was one of ancient Israel’s Kennedys. She was a debutante - a member of the ruling class - a Herodian. Over the years she’d heard and seen and read a lot about Jesus. Now to have Christianity’s leading spokesman in her palace - what an opportunity! She wanted to visit with Paul and learn more. She also brought along Felix.

“*Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.”* Notice, the content of Paul’s sermon. He deals with three topics: *victory from yesterday’s sin, victory over today’s temptations, and victory at tomorrow’s judgment.* I wish the sermon had been recorded and put on YouTube. How many internet hits would Paul’s sermon have gotten? I’m sure it would’ve gone viral.

But note Felix’ sad reply. He delayed a decision to a more convenient time... *Hey, it’s never more convenient to come to Jesus than right now.* Statistics show that 82% of all Christians come to Jesus before the age of 19. Here’s why... the more you say “no” the harder it is to say “yes.” Resist the Spirit and it causes a hardening of the spiritual arteries. Often the effects are irreversible. In a sense, *commitment is never convenient*, but it’s imperative. Verse 25 tells us Felix was “*afraid.*” Like a lot of folks, Felix was afraid to relinquish his pride and surrender his life to the will of another.

But Felix had another motive. “*Meanwhile he also hoped that money would be given him by Paul, that he might release him.*” Felix never filed formal charges against Paul. He held him in hopes of extorting a bribe. “*Therefore he sent for him more often and conversed with him.*” It’s interesting, Paul and Felix talked on numerous occasions, *yet apparently a more convenient time never came up!* That’s why the most convenient time to commit your life to Jesus is always right now! The chapter ends, verse 27, “*But after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.*” Paul will remain in chains, but soon he’ll say “*enough is enough,*” and force the hand of the new governor to book him a trip to Rome.