



**Becoming Issachar
Iran, Elam, and the Church
Ezekiel 38 & 39
Jeremiah 49:35-39**

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I have had this discussion several times this week, and as I put this together, the end game may still be in motion. But what happens if Iran falls? How will that affect what we see in Ezekiel 38 & 39.

First of all, there is more than just a single prophecy that is in play here. Secondly, we need to divorce ourselves from the popular prophecy press which has been strongly communicating a message here that



some may think is now at risk. As always, what does the Bible say. And finally, let God be God and stop trying to do His job for Him.

First, Ezekiel 38

Ezekiel 38:1–9

“The word of the LORD came to me: “Son of man, set your face toward **Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal**, and prophesy against him and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. And I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws, and I will bring you out, and all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed in full armor, a great host, all of them with buckler and shield, wielding swords. **Persia, Cush, and Put are with them, all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer and all his hordes; Beth-togarmah from the uttermost parts of the north with all his hordes—many peoples are with you.** Be ready and keep ready, you and all your hosts that are assembled about you, and be a guard for them. After many days you will be mustered. In the latter years you will go against the land that is restored from war, the land whose people were gathered from many peoples upon the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste. Its people were brought out from the peoples and now dwell securely, all of them. You will advance, coming on like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your hordes, and many peoples with you.” (ESV)

Of course, timing is key, when will this take place and that is where it is hard to get dogmatic about the when.

There are six, possibly seven nations referenced here to include Persia. Modern day Iran, at least that is what the nation has been called since just prior to World War II, consists of what was Persia, as well as Elam with some elements from Assyria thrown in as well.

I do not want to get bogged down into a discussion today on who all of the nations are that are part of the coalition that will attack Israel.

Because there are so many moving parts prophetically taking place, don’t fall into the trap of being overly fixated on one prophecy without considering others as well as. Remember, God just may not fulfill it the way you and I think it should be. He is God after all.

Suffice it to say, this invasion force will be coming from the north and the south streaming in from the area around the Black and Caspian Seas as well as from some areas of Africa. To include portions of what we know today as Iran, Libya and Sudan as members of the coalition being led by Gog from the far north.

The coalition is led by Gog who is possibly from Rosh, or that may be another of his titles. There is some disagreement there, but the geographical area is what we identify as portions of Russia today. I am including additional info in the notes.

Notes

We have six nations mentioned

Magog which is ruled by Gog. He is also the chief prince ruling over Meshech and Tubal. Magog is a people north of Israel and the name comes from one of the sons of Japeth (Genesis 10:2). “Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians.” (Josephus and Whiston 1987, 36)



Tubal is a son of Japeth as well and originally settled south of Israel but moved north and have been identified as the Scythians, who at one time held Asia Minor (Turkey).

Meshech is also a son of Japeth. "Meshech was a region in central Anatolia (Asia Minor), located to the west of Tubal." But Josephus places them in possibly in Greece. (Mongé-Greer 2016)

The preferred identification is that Meshech and Tubal are the ancient Moschoi and Tibarenoi in Greek writings, or Tabal and Musku in Assyrian inscriptions. These ancient locations are in present-day Turkey. This identification is best understood as referring to modern Turkey. (Hitchcock 2012, 298)

Persia also known today as Iran or since 1979 as the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Cush – A son of Ham (Genesis 10:6) "Secular history locates Cush directly south of ancient Egypt, extending south past the modern city of Khartoum, which is the capital of modern Sudan. Thus, modern Sudan inhabits the ancient land of Cush." It could also include portions of Ethiopia as well. (Hitchcock 2012, 298)

Put – a son of Ham also. "His descendants are generally identified as the inhabitants of a region in Africa, perhaps part of LIBYA (KJV, Ezek. 30:5; 38:5; Jer. 46:9; cf. LXX Gk. Libyes; O.Pers. Putāyā). Renowned for their skill in battle (Jer. 46:9), warriors from Put are cited (perhaps as mercenaries) in the service of Tyre (Ezek. 27:10; KJV "Phut"). (Myers 1987, 863)

Gomer – This has been recently mistranslated as Germany, but Josephus identifies where they were located. "Gomer founded those whom the Greeks now call Galatians [Galls], but were then called Gomerites." Turkey again. (Josephus and Whiston 1987, 36)

Beth-togarmah or literally the house of Togarmah. Ancient Togarmah was also known as Til-garamu (Assyrian) or Tegarma (Hittite), and its territory is in modern Turkey, north of Israel. (Hitchcock 2012, 299)

Assyrian documents from the 9th-7th centuries B.C. mention a group of Rosh people living in Mesopotamia to the east of the Tigris River. These Assyrian documents mention a people called the "Rashu/Rashi" who then dwelt in the Zagros Mountains just north of ancient Elam in what is today eastern Iraq and western Iran. Besides mentioning Rashu/Rosh, they also mention Tubal and Meshech. (Billington 1992, 170)

It must be stressed that the Meshech, Tubal, and Rosh peoples mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions were not the only bands of these three peoples. While it is beyond the scope of this series of articles, it should be noted that there were also bands of Meshech, Tubal, and Rosh peoples living in or north of the Caucasus Mountains in what is today Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. (Billington 1992, 171-172)

The people who are called Tiras in Genesis ch. 10 are called Rosh in Ezekiel 38-39. The name Rosh/Rashu is itself probably only an Akkadian version of the name Tiras. And, the Tiras/Rosh people of the Old Testament are to be identified with the Indo-Aryan rulers of the Kingdom of Mitanni, the Rsi of northern India, the Turus/ Tursha Sea People, the Etruscans of Italy, the Reshym of northwest Mesopotamia, the Ruisha People of the Caucasus Mountains, the Rashu of eastern Mesopotamia, and the Aorsi people of the Caucasus Mountains. (Billington 1992, 173-174)

Let's just stick with the "remote parts of the north" in verse 6 to include Russia or elements from it for now. The prophecy of Ezekiel 38 and 39 will indeed be fulfilled. But there are others to consider as well. Modern day Iran also includes Elam. Judgment is called on Elam by the Lord in Jeremiah 49.



Jeremiah 49:35–39

“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Behold, I will break the bow of Elam, The foremost of their might. Against Elam I will bring the four winds From the four quarters of heaven, And scatter them toward all those winds; There shall be no nations where the outcasts of Elam will not go. For I will cause Elam to be dismayed before their enemies And before those who seek their life. I will bring disaster upon them, My fierce anger,’ says the LORD; ‘And I will send the sword after them Until I have consumed them. I will set My throne in Elam, And will destroy from there the king and the princes,’ says the LORD. ‘But it shall come to pass in the latter days: I will bring back the captives of Elam,’ says the LORD.”” (NKJV)

So what has been going on in Iran? “The protest movement was initiated by merchants and shopkeepers in Tehran in late December 2025 in response to Iran’s deteriorating economic conditions, including the fall of the value of the Iranian rial to a record low of 1,432,000 rials to one US dollar on December 28. The value of the rial has since further depreciated to 1,482,500 rials to one US dollar on January 6 before depreciating slightly to 1,429,500 rials to one US dollar on January 15. The regime has not introduced any economic reforms during the protest movement and is unlikely to fundamentally transform its economic policy in response to the protests. It is conceivable that the regime’s brutal crackdown has deterred Iranians from protesting for the time being, but the regime’s unwillingness to implement meaningful reforms creates the conditions for further protests. (Institute for the Study of War 2026)

There is also now a real question as to whether the current regime will remain in power.

The June 2025 12-Day war with Israel, and US participation, wiped out much of the Islamic Republic’s military equipment, nuclear plants, and many leaders. This has left Iran weak and unable to defend itself. Losing proxies in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, and Venezuela have also weakened the regime’s evil influence and ability to threaten others. (Amirizadeh 2026)

There are some who point to the Elam prophecy as possibly being in play with what is going on. But at present, we still have no clue of the end game and what the Lord is doing prophetically.

The assessment of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism is as follows. “Over the past decade, developments in the Middle East have proven difficult to predict, and Iran is no exception. Even if the regime succeeds in withstanding the current wave of protests, its overall stability and the authority of its senior leadership are unlikely to return to pre-protest levels. The erosion of perceived regime stability, combined with the expanding scope of protest participation, points to a significant shift in the relationship between Iranian society and the ruling establishment.” (Eitan 2026)

But prophetically speaking, are we beginning to see the Elam prophecy in play?

Iranian-American Christian Marziyeh Amirizadeh, who at one time was on death row in Iran for becoming a follower of Jesus Christ believes the Lord spoke to her while she was in prison. Her view of Jeremiah 49:34–39, a prophecy against Elam is as follows. “The Lord declared He would shatter Elam’s military power, scatter its people, and remove its kings and officials, setting His own throne there. She believes God is now allowing Iran’s leaders time to repent, but that judgment is already in motion. Even more striking, many Iranians are openly rejecting the Islamist regime and embracing their Persian identity, invoking Cyrus the Great—the king who freed the Jews from Babylon and honored the God of Israel—as their true heritage. (Prophecy Recon 2026)

And then there is this, the Lord has been doing a magnificent work in Iran for some time now. “Christianity is experiencing unprecedented growth in Iran, making it the fastest-growing religion in the country despite severe government crackdowns and the risk of harsh penalties for converts. Recent studies and reports from both religious organizations and independent researchers confirm that the number of Christians in



Iran has surged over the past decade, with estimates now ranging from 800,000 to as many as 3 million believers, many of whom are converts from Islam. (Bolanle Media Staff 2025)

Mohammad Abolghassem Doulabi, a senior cleric for Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, delivered a speech to a group of religious students in which he stated that 50,000 of Iran's 75,000 mosques have closed their doors.

In his speech, which took place last June 2023 during the celebration of Imam Reza – a descendant of the Muslim prophet Muhammad – Doulabi primarily laid the blame for the mosque closures on a lack of government funding. However, he also indicated that Muslims were deserting mosques for other reasons.

The question is, are Iranians seeking the truth and, if so, where?

Unofficial reports indicate that a growing number of Iranians are seeking the truth in Jesus. (All Arab News Staff 2023)

Iran (biblical Persia) plays a major role in end-times prophecy, especially in its hostility toward Israel and its alliance in the coming Ezekiel 38 war. Yet Jeremiah also foresaw a day when God would judge Persia's rulers and restore His authority there. The growing resistance inside Iran, the people's support for Israel, and the spiritual awakening among former Muslims point to divine intervention behind the scenes. These events suggest not just political change—but prophetic positioning. (Prophecy Recon 2026)

As we watch what is going on in Iran, continue to pray for those who are followers of Jesus there. Many more are coming to Christ due to the utter bankruptcy of the current regime. It is obvious to me that the prophecies of Ezekiel are still in play as is the prophecy of Jeremiah regarding Elam. It is hard to be dogmatic on timing, but prophetically, we continue to watch and pray and keep on looking up.

**Head Knowledge vs. Heart Knowledge
The Difference of Being an Acquaintance of, or Believer in, Jesus
Acts 24**

James 2:19

“You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.” (NASB 2020)

Here in Acts 24, I believe, is one of the saddest stories we see in the New Testament. The story of a man, a politician, who knew about Jesus and most of the things connected with what He did while He was here on this planet, yet never quite came to the place of belief in Jesus.

This is the story of the Roman Governor, Felix. Felix was not a very popular man and even the historian Tacitus, is less than kind while talking about him. He married into his station in life, and this was only one of his three marriages per Suetonius.

His position was due to his brother being a favorite of the Emperor Claudius and yes, fraud and graft were involved. Thomson says:

It appears that two of these wives of Felix were named Drusilla. One, mentioned in Acts 24, and there called a Jewess, was the sister of king Agrippa, and had married before, Azizus, king of the Emessenes. The other Drusilla, though not a queen, was of royal birth, being the grand-daughter of Cleopatra by Mark Antony. Who the third wife of Felix was, is unknown. (C. Suetonius Tranquillus 1889)



Antonius Felix, practised every kind of cruelty and lust, wielding the power of king with all the instincts of a slave; he had married Drusilla, the granddaughter of Cleopatra and Antony, and so was Antony's grandson-in-law, while Claudius was Antony's grandson. (Tacitus 1925-1937, 191-193)

Roman aristocrats disliked him because they considered him simply a freedman, not someone born into his position. Yes, he had been a slave most likely freed by Claudius.

We will discover, before we are done, that Felix is the consummate politician also wanting to do the politically correct thing.

He is also on the take. Most likely a learned ability from his brother Pallas who was the comptroller of the accounts for the Empire and had sticky fingers as well. "When the senate voted Pallas 15 million sesterces for loyalty and service to his patrons, he declined the money (he had 300 million already, some by corrupt means) but retained the honor." (Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*: 15:1-23:35 2014, 3329)

Here in Acts, we have now had a rather rushed trip from Jerusalem, at night and then another day as well to get to Caesarea. Paul is safe under Roman protection and he is not free, but he is being treated respectfully and guarded in Herod's Praetorium. "The Praetorium is more popularly known as the Promontory Palace, constructed by Herod the Great between 19 and 10 BCE on a sandstone promontory jutting out into the sea." (Taylor 2017, 63)

Acts 24:1–9

"Now after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and an attorney named Tertullus, and they brought charges against Paul to the governor. After Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began accusing him, saying to the governor, "Since we have attained great peace through you, and since reforms are being carried out for this nation by your foresight, we acknowledge this in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. But, that I may not weary you further, I beg you to grant us a brief hearing, by your kindness. **For we have found this man a public menace and one who stirs up dissensions among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. And he even tried to desecrate the temple, so indeed we arrested him.** By interrogating him yourself concerning all these matters, you will be able to ascertain the things of which we are accusing him." **The Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were so.**" (NASB 2020)

Once the leadership of the Temple realized that they would not be able to be rid of Paul as they had anticipated, most likely when they discovered from the Romans that he had been transferred suddenly overnight, they conspired with a different plan.

How determined were they to make this stick? The High Priest himself, Ananias, did the unthinkable, he traveled personally all the way to see Felix in Caesarea. And there must have also been a discussion about next steps so they hired and brought along an attorney to attempt to press charges against Paul, a man by the name of Tertullus. Non-romans bringing charges in a Roman court would need some type of professional advocate. We do not know much more about him than this.

This is not a cheap trip. The Sanhedrin are all in with wanting Paul gone and some of the comments which will flow from their counsel point to that.

Acts 24:2–3

"After Paul had been summoned, Tertullus began accusing him, saying to the governor, **"Since we have attained great peace through you, and since reforms are being carried out for this nation by your**



foresight, we acknowledge this in every way and everywhere, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness.” (NASB 2020)

Lies, all of it. He is following protocol by being brief, but he also has added in almost as much schmooze as he has charges.

The lies that we hear though and the willingness of the Sanhedrin to kill Paul remind us that not a lot has changed in 2000 years.

U.S. District Judge Cathy Bencivengo, who is based in San Diego, remarked, “We have reached a point in our culture where the appropriate response to ‘I don’t like your opinion’ seems to be ‘You should die.’” (Erick 2025)

So, how bad is the schmooze being piled on here?

During Felix’s rule insurrections and anarchy had increased throughout Palestine. His brutal attempts to put down popular uprisings had only further inflamed the people. Most Jews living at that time would have been horrified to hear what the high priest’s mouthpiece had to say to Governor Felix though it certainly was politically expedient. The land hardly knew peace; Felix demonstrated no foresight; no significant reforms took place during his jurisdiction; he did not deserve the title most excellent; and most Jews had no intention of expressing gratitude. (Gangel 1998, 402)

What we will see with the charges being levelled at Paul, as well as the great expense being undertaken by the Sanhedrin to prosecute this case, is the lengths the enemy will go to to oppose the work of the Lord and His church. And, as always, religion is okay lying and gaslighting those who are followers of Jesus Christ to achieve the goals of who they are really following, Satan. The charges.

Acts 24:5–6

“For we have found this man a public menace and one who stirs up dissensions among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. And he even tried to desecrate the temple, so indeed we arrested him.” (NASB 2020)

The first charge, Paul is a plague, literally that is what the word means. He is anti-peace as what he says infects people. The Sanhedrin is trying to present Christianity as a danger for the empire. They are assuming that Felix has zero knowledge of “the way.” And it is interesting that “the charge brought was precisely the charge to bring against a Jew during the reign of Claudius or the early years of Nero. ‘The accusers of Paul were putting themselves on the side of the government.’ And doing so in a manner not in their own interests. (Peterson 2009, 632)

Recall though the the Jews had already been kicked out of Rome. Paul ran into the results of that in his ministry in Corinth when he met Aquila and Priscilla. But religion siding with the government to get rid of the followers of Jesus, that has been a common tactic of the enemy over the centuries. Also, asserting things in the assumption that the one you are talking to has no knowledge of the topic, that too. Never make assumptions about the knowledge of who you are talking to.

The second charge is that he is one who stirs up the Jews to revolt against Rome, that would mean sedition, a capital crime. He is a political agitator. He is alleged to be doing this worldwide. In other words, lets throw things against the wall and see if anything sticks.

This is more in your face than what we see here in this country. Here, we see those who do not “seek to directly deprive Christians of their rights, but they are comfortable with restricting the rights of Christians to express their values in the public sphere as long as there are symbolic “non-bigoted” justifications for



this. Regulating how Christians can worship is hard to justify unless one is overtly bigoted." (Yancey 2015, 43)

The reality then as well as now, those who are against Paul and against Christianity are the ones who instigate the riot. But no, blame the Christian, again classic Satanic gaslighting.

The third charge, Paul is the ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. Christianity was not yet considered separate from Judaism and was considered a sect. This is the only place in the Bible we see this term used.

And then comes the final charge, he was disruptive in the temple. He profaned the Temple. Actually, it was the Jewish leadership who did that as well as those who were part of the conspiracy to do in Paul. But again, truth has never been an important factor for those who are wanting to stop, slow or end ministry. Gaslighting is in the playbook and has never left.

Acts 24:8–9

"By interrogating him yourself concerning all these matters, you will be able to ascertain the things of which we are accusing him." The Jews also joined in the attack, asserting that these things were so." (NASB 2020)

In attempt to take control of the proceedings, Tertullus lays out how he thinks Paul should be made to answer for these charges. But Felix is aware of what had happened earlier in Rome and why the Jews were kicked out of Rome, Paul had nothing to do with it. Oh, and they never did arrest Paul, the Roman guard did as a means to protect him. And there is also the issue of Paul being Roman.

Obviously, all that was said had been agreed on earlier as once he was done with the charges, the Sanhedrin members who were there, agreed and also condemned Paul. But it was not all of them. They still may not be unified in what they believe needs to happen.

Was Tertullus lying, yes, but so is the High Priest and those elders who are there as well. But there was also a thread of truth in there too. "Ancients understood the principle that falsehood appears more credible when mixed with some truth." Those who gaslight others today hold to the same idea. A thread of truth with a lie or a question leading to the presumption of guilt based on a lie. (C. S. Keener 2015, 3373)

Some of the relevant text has been left out by the NASB translators here. And when you add it in, it gives you a broader understanding of the picture and why Felix reacts the way he does.

The NKJV has it in the text.

Acts 24:6–8

"He even tried to profane the temple, and we seized him, and wanted to judge him according to our law. **But the commander Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come to you.** By examining him yourself you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." (NKJV)

The NKJV has a section that has been left out of the NASB due to alleged textual reasons. I tend to believe this should be left in the text because of the response of Felix simply nodding to Paul. Felix has Lysias' letter and he has also chatted with Paul. The Temple leadership is anti-Roman biased, and Felix knows it as they are essentially blaming Rome for not letting them kill Paul.



Whereas Lysias claimed to have “rescued” Paul from Jewish violence (23:27), Paul’s accusers now attribute the only real violence to Lysias. Therefore Felix should now put this offense right. (Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*: 24:1-28:31 2015, 3384)

Paul, a Roman and a Jew, has been recued by a Roman commander and now the Roman commander is accused of violence because he prevented them from killing Paul when they wanted to. Unique argument, but hearing some of the nonsense in our culture today passing for wisdom, it makes sense. The enemy will twist what they want whenever they want. Another reason Isaiah had to speak out.

Isaiah 5:20

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” (NKJV)

I am reminded of the conversation that took place recently in the US Senate when a US Senator asked an OB-GYN point blank, can men get pregnant and the response was not a yes or no, but a redirect and prevarication. (Skinner 2026) One more term and action directly out of the enemies play book.

Acts 24:10–16

“And when the governor had nodded for him to speak, Paul responded: **“Knowing that for many years you have been a judge to this nation, I cheerfully make my defense**, since you can take note of the fact that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship. And neither in the temple did they find me carrying on a discussion with anyone or causing a riot, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city itself. **Nor can they prove to you the things of which they now accuse me. But I confess this to you, that in accordance with the Way, which they call a sect, I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and is written in the Prophets; having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.** In view of this I also do my best to maintain a blameless conscience both before God and before other people, always.” (NASB 2020)

Not only does Felix totally ignore the recommendation to interrogate Paul, he simply makes a nod to Paul and Paul thanks him. Paul is Roman, the Sanhedrin, not so much; they were belittling a Roman commander, Paul didn’t. One of the things I have learned over the years is this, know your audience. Paul does. Oh, and Paul has the Holy Spirit too.

The way he begins his defense changes the tone of the hearing dramatically. Paul knows that the accusers have no evidence, none at all. They cannot even come close to proving any of their assertions other than Paul’s belief in the resurrection. But Paul points out, they believe that as well. This is not political but theological.

One of the things Felix knows, Paul is from Cilicia meaning the appropriate location for a hearing is Rome, not Caesarea. Rome is closer to that location. He knows Paul is not from around here, so Paul backs up to add some context as to why he is there in Jerusalem in the first place. And it is not as a rabble rouser.

Acts 24:17–21

“Now after several years I came to bring charitable gifts to my nation and to present offerings, in which they found me occupied in the temple, having been purified, without any crowd or uproar. But there were some Jews from Asia—who ought to have been present before you and to have been bringing charges, if they should have anything against me. Or else have these men themselves declare what violation they discovered when I stood before the Council, other than in regard to this one declaration which I shouted while standing among them, ‘For the resurrection of the dead I am on trial before you today! ”” (NASB 2020)



Paul came back to Jerusalem to provide charitable gifts from others to the people living there. He hasn't been in Jerusalem for over 5 years at the conclusion of his second missionary journey and it has been even longer since he has spent any extended time there, over a decade.

Paul was simply in the temple after delivering those funds completing a purification ritual, which he also paid for. Then he throws down those who have been doggedly trying to kill him for some time now, "some Jews from Asia."

The fact that those who originally made these false accusations are not present at this hearing suggests they abandoned their case. The real issue for Paul is that his accusers fault him for a belief he shares with the Pharisees, namely, the resurrection of the dead. (Malina and Pilch 2008, 164)

Again, not political, but theological. Just like it has been over the centuries. Men and women have been executed by religious people over the centuries for their insistence on following what the Bible says, rather than what religion says. John Wycliffe would be one of those.

John Wycliffe trained "poor preachers" who lived a simple life and traveled around the countryside teaching the Word of God to the common folk of England in their own tongue. John Wycliffe was responsible for the very first translation of the entire Bible into the English language. (Christian History Magazine 1983)

Pope Gregory XI condemned 18 of Wycliffe's statements in 1377, calling Wycliffe "The Master of Errors," and in 1378 Wycliffe was forced to retire from public life. After the Peasants' Revolt in which Wycliffe's disciples were implicated, Wycliffe withdrew to Lutterworth and continued writing until his death in 1384. (Got Questions Ministries 2014-2021)

He was condemned because he taught Biblical truth and wanted the Bible in the language of those he ministered to. He used the word as the standard, not the Pope or any other religious leader.

Religion did not forget him even though he died in 1384, the Church exhumed his body in 1428 and then burned it.

What was it that Felix heard though in the testimony of Paul here, he had money. Politicians being opportunistic thieves is not a new concept; it has been around for thousands of years. The impact of the alleged and now demonstrated abandonment of charges though was actually something that was of Imperial interest at this time.

"Roman law took very seriously those who were guilty of *destitutio*, the abandonment of their charges against someone. Claudius had himself worked on legislation to prevent this from happening, and shortly after this time in A.D. 61 the legislation was completed and passed." (Witherington III 1998, 712-713) Paul had just noted a reason why everything should be dismissed immediately. Yes, the Holy Spirit is at work and bringing things to his remembrance, and that includes non-Biblical stuff too that would be useful to his cause.

The only thing those who were making accusations had, was a theological point regarding the resurrection. The Holy Spirit, in the defense of Paul, led him as he provided his defense turning it away from anything political, reminding the Governor of an issue his patron is interested in, and it is all a theological issue only, which Rome has not dog in the hunt over.

We hear nothing at this point as the defense rests about the ones bringing charges, I am sure they were having great difficulty controlling their emotions at this time. They had been briefed about appropriate conduct though and kept silent. Unlike many today.



Acts 24:22–23

“But Felix, having quite accurate knowledge about the Way, adjourned them, saying, “When Lysias the commander comes down, I will decide your case.” He gave orders to the centurion for Paul to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from providing for his needs.” (NASB 2020)

No decision, just an adjournment. Why? He heard that Paul had money could be one reason. Politics could be another. Yes, the Sanhedrin spent a bundle of bucks on this, and most likely included palm greasing as well for Felix which might be why there was not out and out dismissal. He was all about the money and keeping the peace. I just added the peace thing, he was really all about the money.

Felix, contrary to the hopes of Tertullus, knew quite a bit about the Way. This is the beginning of an incredibly sad story. Here is a man who is familiar with what Paul is teaching, enough to know that the accusations are totally bogus. His wife at the time was Jewish, not real observant, but she knew enough to keep him informed as to what was taking place religiously in the province.

He uses the dodge of waiting for the in-person testimony of Lysias but that is not the real reason. Here is a man, who knows of the Way, but has done nothing with the truth taught by the Way. And he will indeed hear much more.

This is a cautionary story for us today. You see, God is going to hold Felix at the Great White Throne to a higher level of accountability because he does know and did not act on what he knew. We live in a nation where most know about Jesus, Christmas makes that hard to ignore. And, about His resurrection, Easter tends to do that as well. I do meet those from time to time who say they had no idea, but in our culture, as rotten as it is, that is tough to come by these days.

Where do you get off on saying there is higher accountability at the judgement for those who know and rejected? Jesus.

Matthew 11:20–24

“Then Jesus began to denounce the towns where he had done so many of his miracles, because they hadn’t repented of their sins and turned to God. “What sorrow awaits you, Korazin and Bethsaida! For if the miracles I did in you had been done in wicked Tyre and Sidon, their people would have repented of their sins long ago, clothing themselves in burlap and throwing ashes on their heads to show their remorse. I tell you, Tyre and Sidon will be better off on judgment day than you. “And you people of Capernaum, will you be honored in heaven? No, you will go down to the place of the dead. For if the miracles I did for you had been done in wicked Sodom, it would still be here today. I tell you, even Sodom will be better off on judgment day than you.”” (NLT)

Felix worships money and he worships power. He would do well in our culture today as a politician as most worship the same. They know of God, and will use Him to make decisions and remain on the side of good, if it is politically expedient to do so, but how many actually follow Jesus and have a Biblical worldview? They are indeed there, but the numbers are not large.

1 Corinthians 1:26–29

“For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (NKJV)



When we are told Felix had a more accurate understanding, that means he knew more than the Jewish leadership.

His own hubris, his graft and corruption had so exposed him to what he really thought he wanted out of life, to maintain that, he made decisions that made no sense. Paul should have been freed, nope. Felix had to placate the authorities in some way, and simply dismissing the case would not accomplish this end. “We know of the tenuousness of his position from the fact that during the two years of Paul’s stay in Caesarea, probably in A.D. 58, violence broke out between Gentiles and Jews, and Felix entered the fray on the side of the Gentiles, which led to a strong Jewish protest going to Rome against Felix’s policies. This led to his removal from office but not to his punishment. (Witherington III 1998, 713-714)

Now, when Porcius Festus was sent as successor to Felix by Nero, the principal of the Jewish inhabitants of Cesarea went up to Rome to accuse Felix; and he had certainly been brought to punishment, unless Nero had yielded to the importunate solicitations of his brother Pallas, who was at that time had in the greatest honor by him. (Josephus and Whiston 1987, 536-537)

Did Felix learn more from Paul about what being a follower of Jesus meant? Yes, he did.

Acts 24:24–27

“Now some days later Felix arrived with Drusilla his wife, who was Jewish, and he sent for Paul and heard him speak about faith in Christ Jesus. **But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and responded, “Go away for now, and when I have an opportunity, I will summon you.”** At the same time he was also hoping that money would be given to him by Paul; therefore he also used to send for him quite often and talk with him. **But after two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul imprisoned.**” (NASB 2020)

For some reason, Felix wanted his third wife, Drusilla, to hear Paul’s testimony. Why, we are not certain. But Paul used each opportunity to present the gospel to them. And the Holy Spirit was busy doing His work and unfortunately for Felix, he listened to Satan.

Acts 24:25

“But as he was discussing righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and responded, “Go away for now, and when I have an opportunity, I will summon you.”” (NASB 2020)

Felix knows the whole story, he knows what he must do to be saved, he was so moved spiritually that Luke tells us he became frightened.

Conviction of sin tends to do that. In this case the three topics of conversation were what are sometimes called the ‘three tenses of salvation’, namely, how to be justified or pronounced righteous by God, how to overcome temptation and gain self-mastery, and how to escape the awful final judgment of God. It is not surprising that, as these solemn subjects were opened up and pressed home, Felix was afraid (‘alarmed’, RSV, NEB) and declared that he had had enough for the time being. (Stott 1994, 364)

The first time Paul talks to them, Felix is scared and asks Paul to go. But the text tells us he and Drusilla had quite a few sit downs with Paul. Questions were asked, the gospel was clearly presented and unfortunately, it appears to have also been rejected.

As I said, this is a cautionary tale for our day and age. Felix was hoping at some point Paul would tire of this and offer a sum of money to bribe himself into freedom, but Paul did not do so. He took this as an opportunity to share the gospel and did so, frequently.



At the Great White Throne, there is something that Felix cannot say, I did not know. He knew and as such, he has accountability to what he knew. Who made sure he knew, Paul himself. But Felix put off the decision thinking, as we all did before we came to Christ, that we had more time, at some point we either realized we did not have more time, or the burden of our sin was too great and we believed.

Paul was consistent with Felix and most likely even used the same reasoning that he had used with the folks in Corinth.

2 Corinthians 6:1–2

“As God’s partners, we beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God’s kindness and then ignore it. For God says, “At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you.” Indeed, the “right time” is now. **Today is the day of salvation.**” (NLT)

That is still the message today.

Paul was left in custody for two years and then Felix was recalled, as we have seen, back to Rome. And Paul, is still in custody.

As Paul explained the gospel to Felix, he would have also told him the following.

Romans 3:21–24

“But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.” (NLT)

Romans 10:9–13

“If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved. As the Scriptures tell us, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced.” Jew and Gentile are the same in this respect. They have the same Lord, who gives generously to all who call on him. For “Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved.”” (NLT)

ABC's of Salvation

- A. Acknowledge that you are a sinner, tell Him that.
- B. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sin and that He rose from the dead.
- C. Confess that Jesus is Lord. Tell someone about what you have done.

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