

Acts 24: 22-27. *Thursday*. Appeal to Caesar. Acts 25: 1-12. *Friday*. Object of the journey. Rom. 15: 25-33. *Saturday*. An answer given. Mark 13: 5-13. *Sabbath*. Fear not. Isa. 41: 8-16. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections*).

EXPOSITORY NOTES.

INTRODUCTORY. Paul was tried before the council, of which he was at one time a member. He stood where Stephen stood and must have recognized the same hatred and pride in his prosecutors as once glowed in his own bosom. The trial broke up in confusion and Paul was again rescued and safe within the walls of the castle of Antonia. A conspiracy to kill him was discovered, and the chief captain sent away his prisoner by night to the Roman governor, Felix, at Cæsarea. Time—latter part of May, A. D. 58. Place—Cæsarea.

LESSON PLAN. I. Paul before Felix. vs. 10-21. II. Felix before Paul. vs. 22-25.

10. Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself. The governor, or *procurator*, Antonius Felix, had been a slave, but was freed by the Emperor Claudius and made ruler over Galilee, Samaria, Judæa and Peræa. He "wielded the power of a king with the character of a slave." He had filled his office for about seven years, a long time in that age, when positions of emolument were the spoils of imperial courtiers and the rewards of successful intrigue. He had a better opportunity than most governors of learning the customs and prejudices of the Jews.

11. Because that thou mayest understand (R. V. seeing that thou canst take knowledge) that there are yet but (R. V. that it is no more than) twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship (R. V. to worship at Jerusalem). Paul was charged, first, with *sedition*: To this he replied—(a) Felix knew that for "many years" back at least he had been unknown as a turbulent person; (b) in twelve days he could not have hatched many plots; (c) he had come to perform religious and benevolent duties, as could be proved. He had stirred up no tumult, had not even engaged in heated discussion with anyone. Second, with *heresy*: He answers that he believes the Bible as firmly as his accusers. What they call heresy he claims to be the true teaching of the law and the prophets. Third, with *sacrilege*: He denies the charge. He was engaged in an act that testified to his reverence for the temple and the law. He challenges proof and demands that his accusers confront him and substantiate their charges. The twelve days

are thus reckoned: (1) Arrival in Jerusalem; (2) interview with the elders; (3) beginning of the seven days of purification; (4-7) ending with the arrest; (8) trial before the Sanhedrim; (9) sent to Cæsarea; (10) arrival there; (11, 12) awaiting trial; (13) trial on the fifth day from leaving Jerusalem (ch. 24: 1). Six of these days he had been a prisoner.

12. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people (R. V. stirring up a crowd) neither in the synagogues nor in the city. Paul had given no ground of offence whatever. His presence in the temple was a proof of his devotion to the ancient worship and its ritual.

13. Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. Something more than "railing accusations" should be required when the life or liberty of a Roman citizen is at stake.

14. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship (R. V. serve) I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets (R. V. all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets). "The Way" was the common term for the doctrines preached by the Apostles before the name "christian" came into use (ch. 11: 26). "Heresy" is the same word as "sect" in verse 5. Paul will not admit that christians are a "sect" of the old religion; he claims that they alone truly keep the faith of Abraham, and are not "heretics" (ch. 26: 22; 28: 23). The phrase, "the law and the prophets," means the whole Old Testament (Matt. 5: 17; Luke 24: 27, 44). The Apostle insists that in becoming a christian he had not been disloyal to Moses, or the law or the prophets, or to the