

2. *His answer to the charge of sedition.* This accusation he met by alleging (a) That his stay in Jerusalem was too short to make the charge credible. (See "Exposition" on v. 11.) (b) The judge could readily ascertain by taking evidence how peaceably he had conducted himself during the time thus accounted for, and he appeals to him to do so. The innocent need not fear the sifting of facts. But when an innocent man is falsely accused of being a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, a ringleader of a despised sect, and a profaner of sacred places, he can only declare the statement false, and demand thorough investigation. This was the apostle's attitude, which he assumed with a calmness and absence of all vindictiveness which must have impressed the judge.

3. *His answer to the charge of being the ringleader of a sect.* (a) He admits that he belonged to the sect or party of the Nazarenes, but says nothing about being a leader of them. Up to this point he made denials; he now makes a confession, not to the Jews, but to Felix, v. 14. The transition is exquisite. As if he had said, "I have nothing to confess to them, yet to thee I own that one charge is true, but not in the sense in which it is urged. I am a Nazarene; but this does not mean that I relinquish the religion of my fathers." Hence, (b) He repels the accusation of schism. He shows that Christianity was not a new religion, but the full and true development of the Jewish faith. He held fast and taught all things which were written in the law and the prophets. (c) He instances the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead as taught in the Hebrew scriptures and generally accepted by the nation, and certainly by one class of his accusers, the Pharisees, v. 15. (d) Because of his unhesitating and unqualified belief in the Old Testament scriptures and especially in the resurrection, he exerted himself to live a life of purity, of integrity, to do nothing towards God and men which conscience would condemn, v. 16.

4. *His answer to the charge of sacrilege.* (a) He challenged his accusers to prove that during his last visit to Jerusalem he had been guilty in the temple, in the synagogues, or elsewhere in the city, of any profanation

or disorderly conduct. On the contrary, he had gone to the temple as a devout worshipper of the God of his fathers. (b) He referred to his visit of more than four years ago, when he had come to Jerusalem bringing alms to his nation, ch. 18: 21; Rom. 15: 25. While thus engaged certain Jews from Asia found him in the temple, not profaning it, but taking part in the services of the Nazirites, v. 18. These should be present as witnesses, v. 19.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The first thing to do is to link this lesson to the previous one. Recall the plan of the chief captain for Paul's safety, the ordering out of 470 men and the hasty night journey to Caesarea. Thither the apostle was followed by his accusers, and the third day after his arrival in Caesarea he was brought before Felix, while Tertullus was employed by his enemies to state their charges against him. In the lesson we have:

1. *Paul's defence.* Note the apostle's perfect courtesy in addressing Felix. There was no fulsome flattery like that of Tertullus, but the governor was addressed in the most respectful manner. The first charge is that of sedition. This charge is met with a flat and emphatic denial and a demand for proof. The second charge is that of being a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes." Paul will not deny that he is a Christian, but he will not admit that Christians have separated themselves from the Jews. He is still a Jew, believing in God, the scriptures, and the resurrection, like other Jews. The third charge is that of sacrilege, or profaning the temple, which is answered in vs. 17-23 by a simple narration of what actually occurred. After this defence the court was adjourned by Felix.

2. *Paul's sermon.* This second scene was some days after the former. The apostle has been sent for to appear before Felix and his wife Drusilla. These two were his hearers and to them Paul boldly told his message. For the effect of that message see v. 25. How much better and wiser it would have been for Felix if he had yielded to the better impulses that were stirred within him! But he was not ready to give up his evil life and so