

**PLEASE NOTE** - The references below are taken from the 86-18 Index. Many verses have additional references that have not been included due to time & space. We are encouraged to do additional personal research.

(Acts 25:9) 9 Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, said in reply to Paul: "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be judged before me there concerning these things?"

\*\*\* bt chap. 25 pp. 197-198 pars. 5-6 "I Appeal to Caesar!" \*\*\*

The apostle was innocent and deserved to be freed. How would Festus decide? Wanting to gain favor with the Jews, he asked Paul: "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be judged there before me concerning these things?" (Acts 25:6-9) What an absurd proposal! If Paul were remanded to Jerusalem, his accusers would become his judges and he would face certain death. In this instance, Festus was choosing political expediency over true justice. An earlier governor, Pontius Pilate, had acted similarly in a case involving an even more important prisoner. (John 19:12-16) Modern-day judges may also give in to political pressure. Therefore, we should not be surprised when courts decide contrary to evidence in cases involving God's people.

6 Festus' desire to indulge the Jews could have put Paul in mortal danger.

\*\*\* w01 12/15 pp. 23-24 "I Appeal to Caesar!" \*\*\*

Paul was clearly innocent of any political charge, but in the religious dispute, the Jews likely argued that theirs was the only competent court. Would Paul go to Jerusalem for judgment of these matters? Festus asked Paul if he would do that, but really it was an inappropriate proposal. A remand to Jerusalem where accusers would become judges meant that Paul would be surrendered to the Jews.

(Acts 26:3) 3 especially because you are an expert on all the customs as well as the controversies among the Jews. Therefore, I beg you to hear me patiently.

\*\*\* w03 11/15 pp. 15-16 Help Others to Accept the Kingdom Message \*\*\*

### Persuasion That Appeals to the Heart

10 Let us now take a closer look at Paul's words of defense in Acts chapter 26. Notice how he began his discourse. To introduce his subject, Paul found a legitimate basis on which to commend Agrippa, even though the king was in a scandalous relationship with his sister Bernice. Paul said: "Concerning all the things of which I am accused by Jews, King Agrippa, I count myself happy that it is before you I am to make my defense this day, especially as you are expert on all the customs as well as the controversies among Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently."—Acts 26:2, 3.

11 Did you notice that Paul acknowledged Agrippa's high office by addressing him by his title, King? This showed respect, and by his wise choice of words, Paul accorded Agrippa honor. (1 Peter 2:17) The apostle recognized Agrippa as an expert on the complex customs and laws of his Jewish subjects and said that he was happy that he could make his defense before such a well-informed ruler. Paul, a Christian, did not act as if he felt superior to Agrippa, who was not a Christian. (Philippians 2:3) Rather, Paul begged the king to hear him patiently. Thus, Paul created an atmosphere in which Agrippa, as well as the other listeners, would be more likely to accept what he was about to present. He was laying a foundation, a common ground on which to build his arguments.

12 Like Paul before Agrippa, from the introduction to the conclusion of our presentation of the Kingdom message, let us make an appeal to the heart. We can do this by displaying sincere respect for the person to whom we are preaching

and by showing genuine interest in his or her particular background and thinking.—1 Corinthians 9:20-23.

(Acts 26:14) 14 And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice say to me in the Hebrew language: ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? To keep kicking against the goads makes it hard for you.’

\*\*\* w11 8/1 p. 23 Did You Know? \*\*\*

### Did You Know?

What did Jesus mean when he said to Saul: “To keep kicking against the goads makes it hard for you”?—Acts 26:14.

- In Bible times, farmers used goads to guide their draft animals while plowing. The goad was a pointed stick, perhaps eight feet (2.5 m) long. One end of the stick contained a sharp metal spike. If the animal pushed against the goad, it would injure itself. The other end often held a chisel-like blade that could be used to remove dirt, clay, or vegetation from the plowshare.

At times, goads served as weapons. The Israelite judge and warrior Shamgar slew 600 Philistines “with a cattle goad.”—Judges 3:31.

The Scriptures also mention this instrument in a metaphoric sense. For example, King Solomon wrote that the words of a wise person can be “like oxgoads,” prodding a companion to make the right decision.—Ecclesiastes 12:11.

The resurrected Jesus painted a similar word picture. He advised Saul, a persecutor of Christians, to stop “kicking against the goads.” That expression evokes the image of a stubborn animal that resists the proddings of its owner. Wisely, Saul responded to Jesus’ counsel and changed his course of life, becoming the apostle Paul.

(Acts 26:29) 29 At this Paul said: “I wish to God that whether in a short time or in a long time, not only you but also all those who hear me today would become men such as I am, with the exception of these prison bonds.”

\*\*\* km 8/91 p. 4 par. 19 Planting and Watering—Steps Toward Making Disciples \*\*\*

Our attitude and feelings should be like those of the apostle Paul when witnessing to King Agrippa: “I could wish to God that whether in a short time or in a long time not only you but also all those who hear me today would become men such as I also am.” (Acts 26:29) Paul wanted his hearers to become genuine disciples of Christ, whether it required a short time or a more extended period of personal assistance.