#### Acts 24 notes

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All passages from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.

#### Acts 24:5 - "sect of the Nazarenes"

- αἴρεσιν hairesin: Noun feminine singular accusative: "faction," "sect," "school"; "heresy"
- Ναζωραίων Nazoraion. Noun masculine plural genitive (proper): Nazarene
- ναζιοαĵον nazirajon. Adjective neuter singular nominative no Degree: Nazarite
  - This word is used in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew scriptures in Judg. 13:5, 7; 16:17; 1st Macc. 3:49; Lam. 4:7, referring to those who were under the vow of a Nazir.
- The Syriac translation of this passage uses יולפנא דנצריא or "teaching of the Notsroi."
  - I נצראל: MHeb.; personal name on Heb. inscr. נצראל (Vattioni Siqilli 102); Ug. nġr (Gordon Textbook §19:1670; Aistleitner 1811; vSoden in Fschr. Baumgartner 291ff), Can. Taanach 2, 35:3 lissur; ענר; Ph. OArm. (Jean-H. Dictionnaire 185); נטר Pehl. EgArm. Nab. Palm. (Jean-H. Dictionnaire 178), JArm. CPArm. Sam. (Ben-H. 2:654b), Syr. Mnd. (Drower-M. Dictionary 295b, נצר 306a); Arb. nzr to perceive with the eyes, to see and to look after, to care for, Arb. and OSArb. nsr to help; Eth. nasara to see (Dillman 701); Akk. nasāru to watch over, protect, keep (AHw. 755); Sem. basic meaning "to look at" cf. vSoden AnOr. 47:22; Gramm. §102b. qal: pf. אָצרָתּם, וָצְרַתָּם, וַצְרַתּן (Sept.E $\beta$ p θεσαρ, Sperber 242), יְנַצֵּרוּ, יָצֵרוּ, אָצַרָה/צִרָה, וְצָרוּ, וָצָרַתִּי (Bauer-L. Heb. 363c), וּצְרָה ,תְּצִרְנָי ,תְּצְרָנִי ,תְּצְרָנִי, Ps 32-, תַנְצְרָנִי Ps 140-, (Bauer-L. Heb. 198 l) יצרָנהוֹ, (Bauer-L. Heb. 198 l) יצרָנהוֹ, ווֹ (Bauer-L. Heb. 198 l) ווּצרָני אָנְרָנִי אָרָנוֹ ינצרוהו (on forms like ינצר cf. Fitzgerald ZAW 84 (1972):90–2); impv. גצְרָה, נְצִר and נְצְרָה (daghesh dirimens Bauer-L. Heb. 368t); inf. שמר synonym גָצְרוֹת, נְצִרָר, וְצָצִרת, נְצִרָר, וְצִרָר, וְצִרָר, נְצִרי, נוֹצְרִים (נוֹ) ווי Is 49, Is 49, Is 49, Is 368t); inf. שמר keep watch, watch over, keep from Nah 2, Dt 32,0; Is 426 and 498 (alt. root יצר); Ps 128 25,1 31,4 32, 40,2 618 64,2 140<sub>21</sub>-5 Pr 2<sub>11</sub> 4<sub>613</sub>-2<sub>3</sub> 5<sub>2</sub> 13<sub>3</sub>-6 16<sub>17</sub> 20<sub>28</sub> 22<sub>12</sub> 23<sub>26</sub> 27<sub>18</sub> Sir 7<sub>24</sub>, with כֶּרֶם Is 27<sub>3</sub>, with לַצְרִים Ps 34<sub>14</sub>; נצְרִים watchman 2K 17<sub>9</sub> 18<sub>8</sub> Jr 31<sub>6</sub> Jb 27<sub>18</sub> (:: Fisher *Parallels* 1: p. 155 no. 132); God is נצר הָאָדָם Jb 7<sub>20</sub>; cj. נצר (:: Fisher *Parallels* 1: p. 155 no. 132);  $\mathbf{preserve}$ : חָסֶד ל Ex 34,, חָסֶד Ex 34,, תוֹרָה Ps 26 $_3$ ; -3. to observe, comply with: מצות Ps 78 $_7$  119 $_{_{115}}$  Pr 3 $_1$  6 $_{_{20}}$ , מצות Pr 105 $_{_{45}}$  119 $_{_{34}}$  Pr  $28_{7}$ , עדותיו Ps אַרְחוֹת הָקִּים, 119 $_{22^{\circ}33^{\circ}129^{\circ}145}$ , פָּקְדִיךְ, אַרְחוֹת מְשְׁפָט Pr  $28_{7}$ , אָרְחוֹת מִשְׁפָט Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחוֹת מִשְׁפָּט Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחוֹת מִשְּבָּט Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְּיִינְיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְּיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְּיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְייִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְייִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְייִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְייִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אָרִבְּיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְייִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְייִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְחִיבְיי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְרִיבְיִי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְרִיבְי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְרִיבְי Pr  $28_{10}$ , אַרְרִיבְיי in regard Dt  $33_9$  Ps  $25_{10}$ ; -4. נְשִׂאָר spared (parallel with נְצָרוֹת, Ezk  $6_{12}$  Is  $49_{60}$ , נְצָרוֹת, something set apart Is  $48_6$ ; נְצֵרָת לֶב (Gesenius-K. §128x) with a cunning heart Pr 7,0; —Is 1,8 (besieged ?; Dahood JBL 80:271) גַצוֹרָה (ווי (וֹבָי בּוֹרָה (ווי יוֹבָי בּוֹרָה (ווי יוֹבָי בּוֹרָה בּוֹבָי בּוֹרָה (ווי יוֹבָי בּוֹבָּה (ווי יוֹבָּי בּוֹבְּי בּוֹבְּי בּוֹבְּי בּוֹבְּי בּוֹבְּי בּוֹבְּי בּוֹבְי בּוֹבְי בּיִבְּי בּוֹבְּי בּיִבְּי בּיִבְּי בּיִבְּי בּיִבְּי בּיִבְּי בּיִבְּי בּיִבְיּ בְּבִּי בְּבִּי בְּיִבְּיִבְּי בְּיִבְיּ בְּיבְיּ בְּבִּי בְּיִבְיִּ בְּבִּי בְּיִבְּיִבְּיִבְּיִם בְּיבִּי בְּיִבְּיִבְיִם בְּיבִּים בְּיבִּים בּיִבְּיִבְיִם בְּיבִּים בּיִבְּיִבְּיִם בְּיבִּים בּיִבְּיִבְיִם בְּיבִּים בְּיבִּים בּיבּים בּיִבְּיִם בְּיבִים בּיבּים בּיִבְּיִבְּים בּיבּים בּיִבְּים בּיבּים בּיבְיבִים בּיבּים בּבּים Wildberger BK 10:19); Jr 4,6 for נצרים prp. נמרים r נמרים: : Rabin Textus 5:44ff: noisy crowd (Arm. !); —Nazareth (Reicke-R. Hw. 1291f), Ναζαρά, Ναζαρέτ/θ, Ναζαρηνός: צרת; Heb. \*LYCH. 1915; Heb. inscr. Σ'24ff; Albright JBL 65:397ff; E. Schweizer BZNW 26 (1964):90ff; Naζωραĵος Matthew 2,,; Mnd. נצוראיא (Drower-M. Dictionary 306a, KRudolph *Mandäer* 1:112ff). † Der. מצור (?), נצורים. . נצר\* Arb. nadura to shine, thrive; OSArb. personal name nzrn "beautiful". Der. נצר

נצר\* II (צובא" , MHeb., JArm. נְצְרָא; Arb. *naḍrat* **blossom: sprout, offshoot**; (Rüthy 47f): Is 11, 60ء, מָטָעו (ג' מַטָּען), אָ מָטָעו Q and Tg., Pesh., Vulg. מָטַעו י' הוה) rd. (מטעו י' meaning, plantation of Yahweh (Koehler *Trtjs*. 209; 1QIsa '(מטעו י' Da 11<sub>a</sub> rd. נצָר משָרִשִּיה Sept.; 'וֹםס נ' growth of crime Sir 40, margin Sir<sup>M</sup>; נֹתְעָב Is 14,, (Tg. יחט iniscarriage, Sept. νεκρός < transcription \*νεσρ, Seeligmann 30), decomposing body :: Nestle ZAW 24:127ff (צל MHeb. miscarriage (→ Tg.), Wildberger BK 10:536 rd. נפל "miscarriage". †

# Acts 24:7 — The name of the Roman commander was Claudius Lysias

"with much violence took him out of our hands"

#### Acts 24:11 - 12 days prior Paul had come to the temple to worship

Acts 24:14 — "according to 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 that is written in the Prophets"

- "the Way which they call a sect"
  - Pharisees
    - School of Hillel
    - School of Shammai
  - Sadducees
    - Hasmoneans

Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and M. E. J. Richardon, eds. The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (HALOT). Leiden: Brill, 2000.

- Samaritans
- Essenes
- "I do serve the God of our fathers"
  - Paul said he was "believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets."
- If Paul wrote later that the Law was "nailed to His cross" (Col. 2:\_\_\_) or was "obsolete, fading away" (Heb. \_\_\_\_\_) as some claim, was he speaking by the Spirit at this point or in those letters?

### Acts 24:22 — "Felix, having a more exact knowledge of the Way, put them [Paul's accusers] off"

- This "more accurate knowledge" could have come from his experience in dealing with insurrections and Jewish politics in Iudea as well as insights into the teachings themselves.
  - The freedom given to Paul during his imprisonment suggests that God was speaking to Felix.
    - This "Way" wasn't seeking earthly power, so it wasn't a threat to Rome.
    - Felix was known for violently putting down insurrections, such as that of "the Egyptian" mentioned in a previous chapter of *Acts*.
- Flavius Josephus recorded that Antonius Felix succeeded Cumanus as procurator of Iudea at the behest of a high priest named Yohonatan.<sup>2</sup>
  - This could be why Felix was so conciliatory to the Sanhedrin.
  - However, Roman officials often gave deference to the Sanhedrin to keep peace. Felix's successor, Porcius Festus, also gave deference to the Sanhedrin by offering to send Paul back to them to decide a religious matter (Acts 25–26).
  - The Roman historian Tacitus recorded that Felix served as co-procurator of Iudea with Cumanus and fell into disgrace with Rome in A.D. 55.<sup>3</sup>
    - Josephus refers to Felix as a cruel leader, sometimes hiring assassins to deal with robbers and murderers and, perhaps, "the Egyptian" Lysias asked Paul about.
    - His rule brought on a number of rebellions that culminated in the destruction of Yerushalayim in A.D.
       70 and the Jewish Wars that followed.
    - That unrest could have prompted the replacement by Festus.
    - Felix's time in office is described as starting in A.D. 51, with Paul's two-year imprisonment starting in A.D. 53 or 54.
- In Acts 24:24 we read that Felix's wife, Drusilla, was a Jew.
  - According to Josephus, she was the youngest of the three daughters of Agrippa I.
    - Born in A.D. 36, she was married the first time at age 14, but Felix persuaded her to desert her husband and marry him in A.D. 54.4
  - Her son, Agrippa, died when the eruption of Vesuvius buried Pompeii in A.D. 79,<sup>5</sup> but it's debated whether "the woman" Josephus described as being with him was his mother or his wife.<sup>6</sup>

# Acts 24:24-25 — Paul spoke to Felix and Drusilla about faith in Yeshua, righteousness, self-control and judgment to come.

- These are key aspects of the "good news," a "complete salvation message" Stern suggests cover past, present and future:<sup>7</sup>
  - Past: Faith in the death and resurrection of Yeshua as the Lamb of God cancels God's charges against us and mends the relationship between God and mankind. God declares us righteous before Him for the sake of Yeshua.
    - "But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God through faith in Iesous Christos for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christos Iesous; whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the

<sup>2</sup> Orr, James, ed. "Felix, Antonius." International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1915.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. "Drusilla."

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See *ibid.*, citing Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.7.2, and "Acts 24:24" in David H. Stern's *Jewish New Testament Commentary: a Companion Volume to the Jewish New Testament*. Clarksville, Md: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992.

<sup>7</sup> Stern. "Acts 24:25."

- justifier of the one who has faith in Iesous." (Rom. 3:21-26)
- "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8)
- Present: God continues to make us righteous by His Spirit, teaching us self-control by "writing" His
  instructions on our hearts (motivation and emotion) and minds (reason).
  - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." (Gal. 5:22–23)
- Future: God's promised judgment leaves everyone responsible for making a decision for or against Him.
  - "According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Iesous Christos. Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire." (1st Cor. 3:10-15)

## Acts 24:25-26 - "Felix became frightened ... he was hoping that money would be given him by Paul"

- ἔμφοβος emphobos (ἐν, φόβος). Adjective masculine singular nominative: "afraid," "put into fear"
- Felix seemed to have been hearing the Spirit and experiencing "holy fear," the realization that God is real, has a code of conduct and one hasn't remotely been following it or even actively fighting against it.
  - "Better is a fearful person inferior in intelligence than one superior in prudence and transgressing the law." (Sirac/Ecclesiasticus 19:24 New English Translation of the Septuagint)
  - He seemed to be looking to see if The Way truly was different from the other "ways" by watching Paul's conduct to see if he would offer a bribe to get out of jail. Yet Paul was a trustworthy prisoner for two years, even through the handoff to the next procurator.
    - How are we showing the excellence of The Way of God by the excellence of our behavior and reaction to hardship and persecution?
    - Such excellence of behavior is a fruit of God's Spirit working in us.
  - Yet Felix seemed to have "blinked," or pulled back from his fear of God. His recorded behavior up to the time of his removal from office wasn't excellent. We can hope that the jarring of his removal brought him back to the fear of the LORD he once felt.

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