

Political context

- These events about AD58; the Jewish rebellion and civil war started in AD66...
 - can see the maneuvering for position throughout this!
 - **Festus and Agrippa** (part of Herod's family, technically not a Jew though with the power to appoint the high-priest (and dislike by many Jews for the capricious way he did this!...) **stepping round each other**
- Note the level of importance the Jewish leaders gave to sorting Paul out - high on their agenda with a new provincial governor...
 - Paul appeals to Caesar - to get justice? to go to Rome? to thwart the Jewish leadership? to save his skin?
 - perhaps all of these!
- Scene set then for his encounter with Agrippa and his sister Bernice (probably the elder sister of Drusilla, who we met last week, Felix's wife!)
 - (and there have long been extra-Biblical, but historical, rumours that Agrippa and Bernice had an affair)
 - tumultuous stuff!

Importance of the message

- Key verse: 26:29
 - *Paul replied, "Short time or long - I pray God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.*
 - given his life to...
 - his highest priority!

Importance of the response

- Key verse: 26:28
 - *Then Agrippa said to Paul, "Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?"*
 - (KJV) *"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*
 - eternal destiny hangs in the balance

Importance of our story

- Share my own testimony
 - encourage people to share their testimony, to ask one another how they became a Christian...