

BOOK OF ACTS: THE BRIDGE



- Many detours in order to learn about Judaism and Jewishness in NT times
- Paul is central to the Book of Acts, and one of the chief decision makers
- Paul is being directed, by the Lord, to go to Rome to take the Gospel to the future seat of the gentile Church government

WHAT

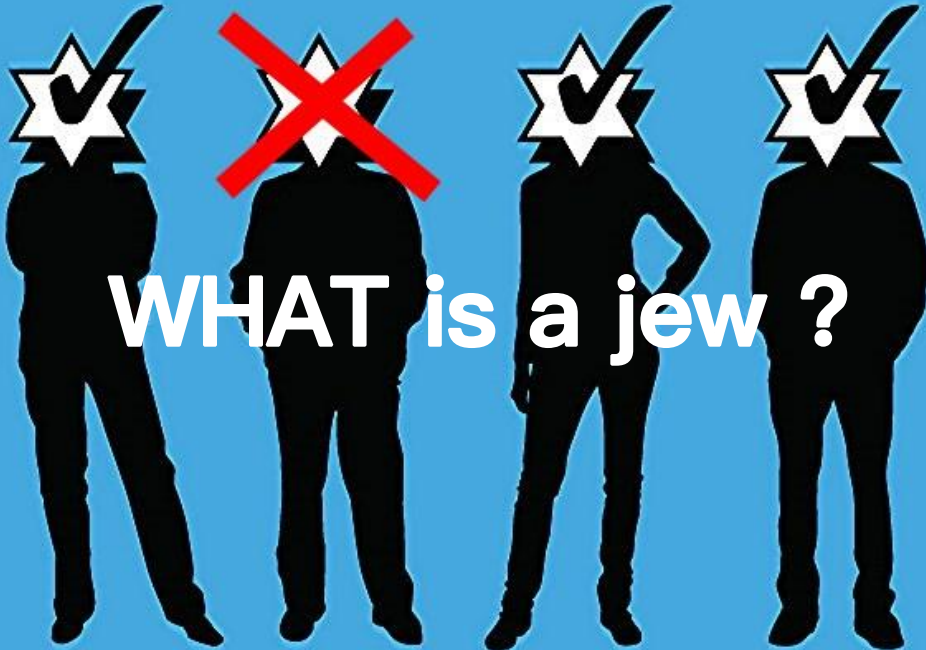
is

**A
CHRISTIAN?**



JUDAISM OR JEWISHNESS?

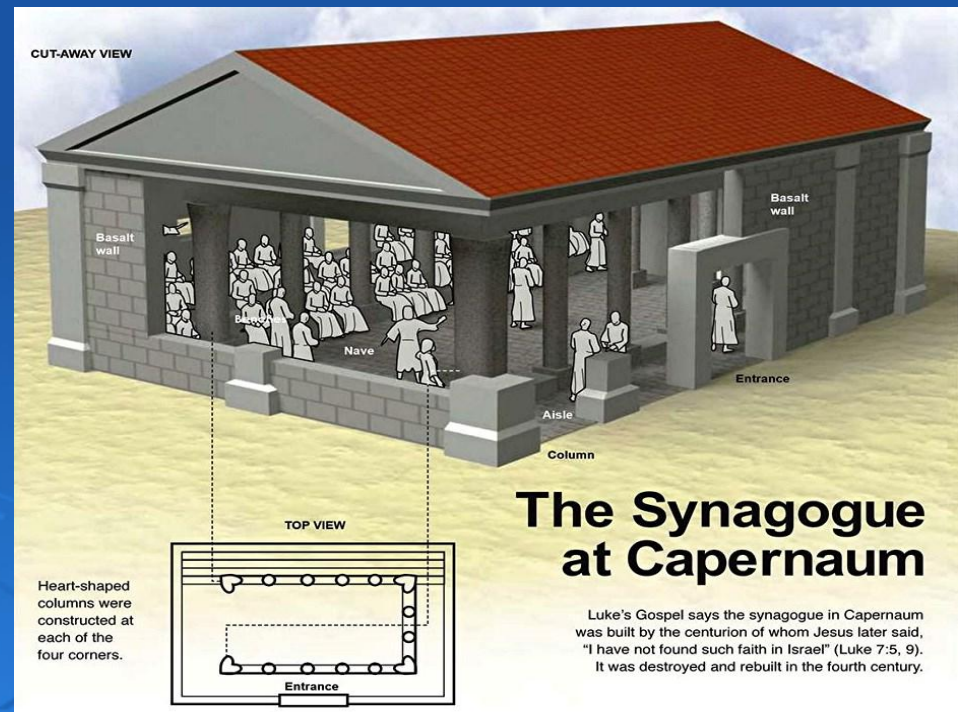
- Paul accused of being a traitor to Jewishness
- No single authority can declare what a Jew is
- What being a Christian means is also just as murky
- Judaism is a religion, while Jewishness is an identity
- Several elements defined ethnicity, including religion
- Religion only part of what made a Jew, a Jew



WHAT is a jew ?

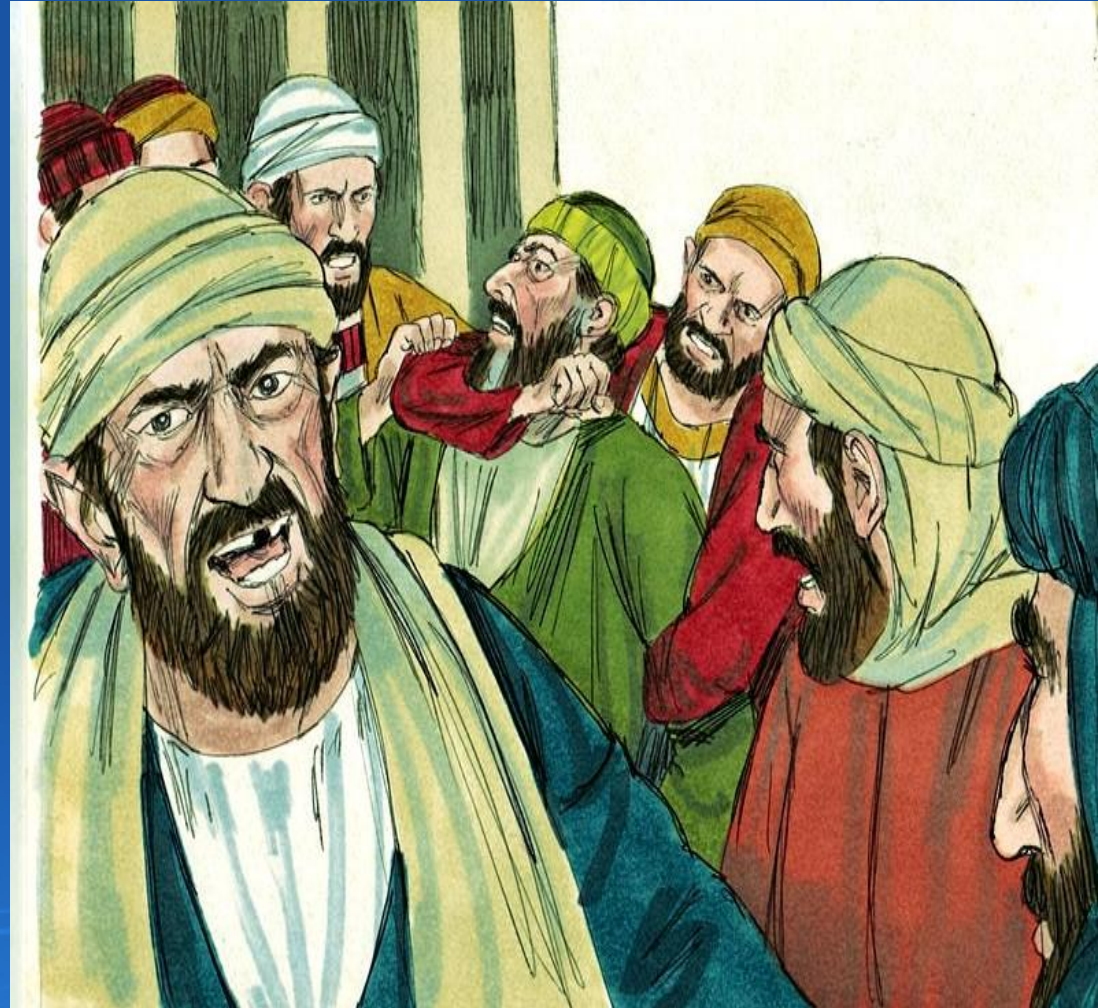
FROM TEMPLE TO SYNAGOGUE

- Synagogue NOT taken exclusively from Bible
- NO mention of synagogue in OT
- Synagogue arose from Babylonian exile 600 B.C.
- Temple destroyed, old system defunct
- Judaism/synagogue added some elements and dropped others
- Designed to serve the survivors of the exile



WHY WAS PAUL ATTACKED?

- Paul attacked by Judean Jews
- Zealots, Sicarri
- NOT because of any theological issue
- Mob was not a bunch of Torah scholars
- The issue was NOT religion, it was about Paul's commitment to Jewishness
- Was Paul still a *REAL* Jew ???





PLOT FOILED

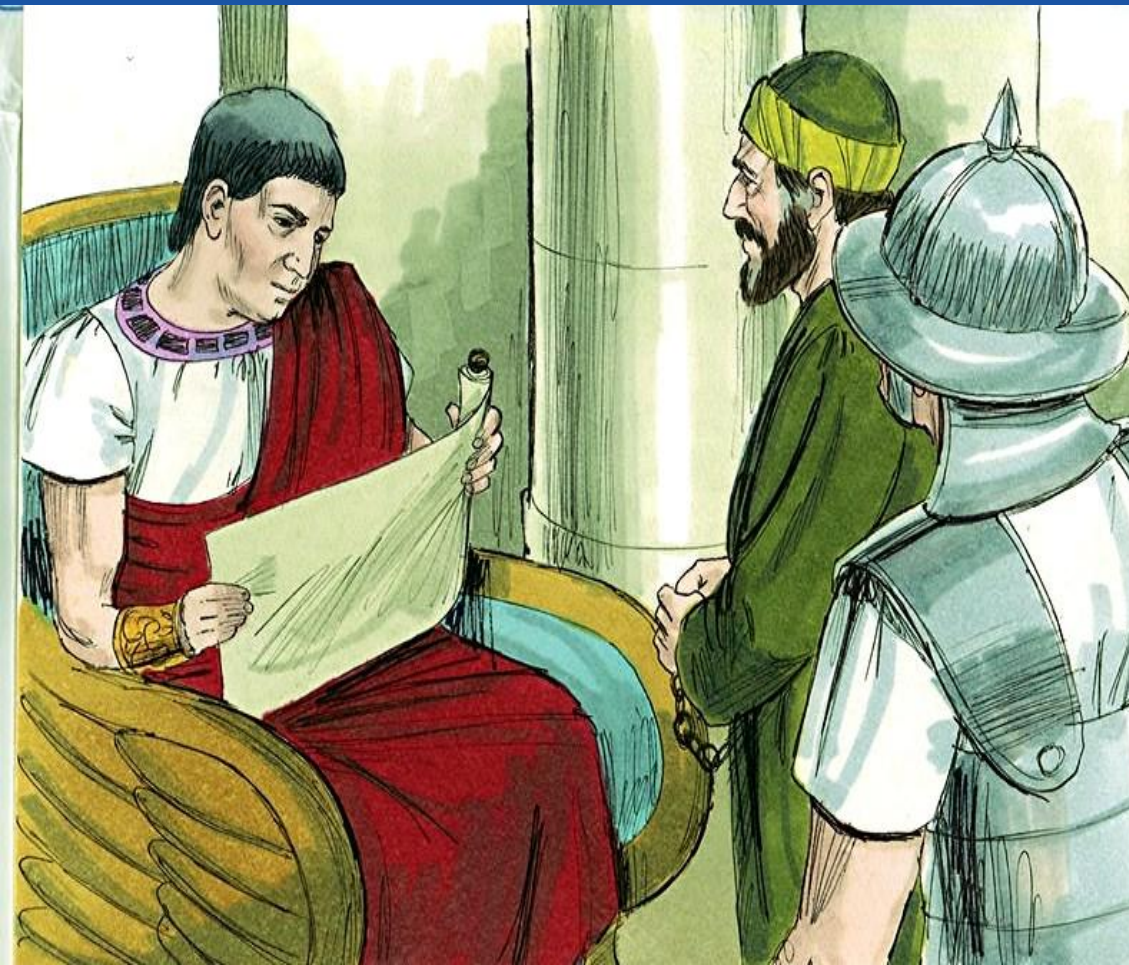
- Mob and Sanhedrin wanted to kill Paul, each for their own reasons
- Temple was Sadducee Headquarters
- High Priest and senior priests were Sadducees
- 40 Zealots decided to take Paul from the Romans and assassinate him, High Priest agreed
- Lysias knew that the only sure way to protect Paul was to send him away

PAUL IS TAKEN TO CAESAREA

- Caesarea Maritima is well fortified, Felix's residence
- A forced march got them to Antipatris (Aphek) in nearly half the normal time
- Lysias did not go, but sent a letter explaining everything to Governor Felix
- Luke did NOT have the actual letter, but somehow found out most of the content



FELIX DECIDES TO TRY THE CASE



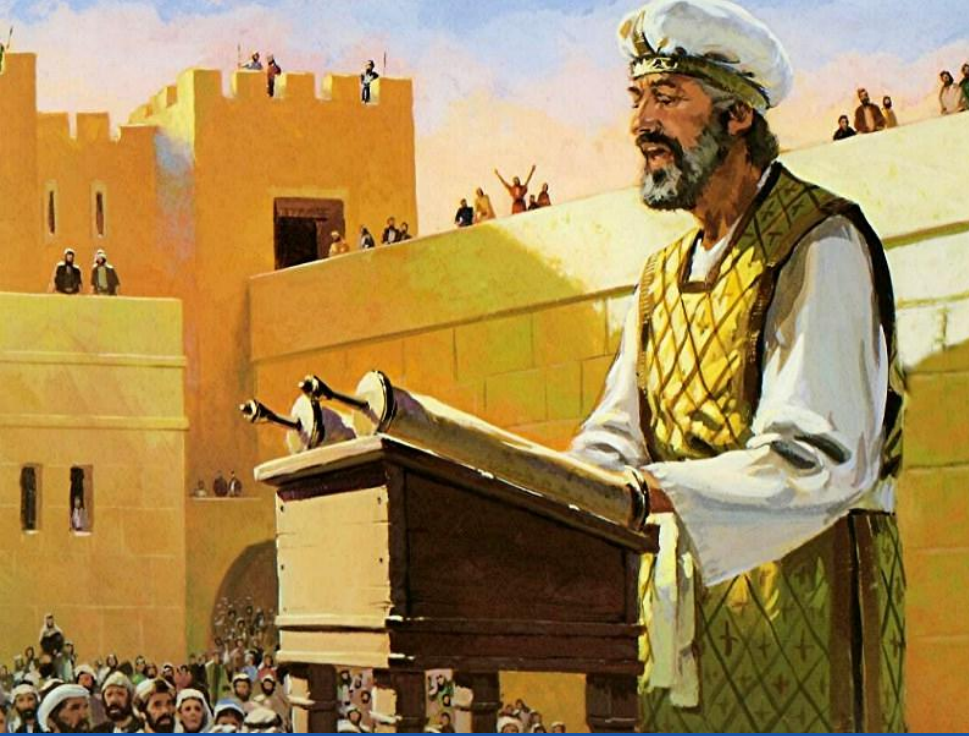
- Letter to Felix full of flattery
- Lysias omits that he almost flogged Paul
- Paul taken to Sanhedrin, but no charge worthy of death or jail was revealed
- Felix learns that Paul is from Cilicia, therefore it is his jurisdiction
- Paul would remain in custody as he waited for the accusers to arrive from Jerusalem

ACTS CHAPTER 24: PAUL ON TRIAL

- High Priest *Hananyah* (Ananias) made the trip to Caesarea
- *Rhetor* = Orator
- Tertullus probably a Hellenistic Jew, but perhaps a gentile
- The High Priest had become a figurehead position, duties mainly involved Shabbat, 7 Biblical Feasts, and New Moons
- High Priest was no longer a Torah expert
- Synagogue and Temple were rivals, but not enemies

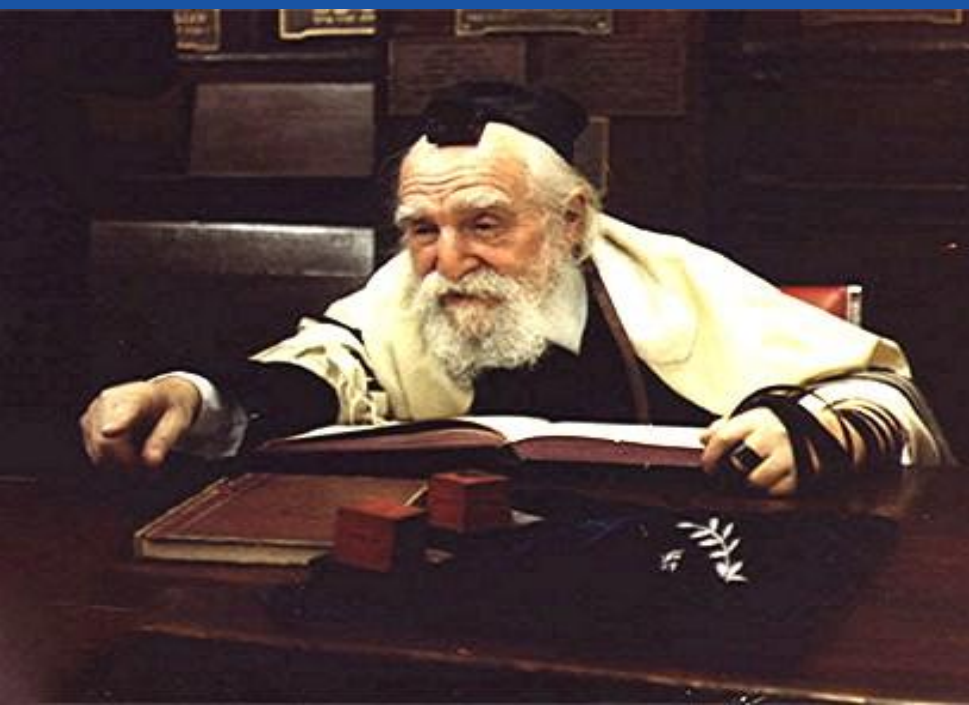


Rhetor



PRIESTS USED TO TEACH THE TORAH...NO MORE

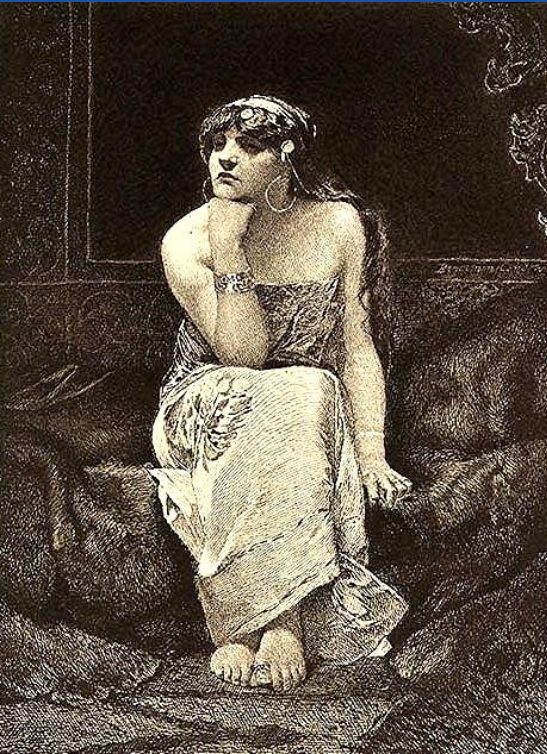
- Since the Nehemiah Temple, priesthood more about ceremony than teaching and enforcing
- Diaspora Jews' religious experience was in the synagogue
- New religious theories about sin, atonement, purity were created by the synagogue
- Elders, not Priests, taught the people
- Shabbat as a communal day of worship first happened under the synagogue system



FELIX: GREEDY & CRUEL



- Tertullus flatters Felix saying he is a great peacemaker....FALSE!
- Equestrian class, the lower of 2 Aristocratic classes
- Antonius Felix a freedman
- Married to the daughter of Antony and Cleopatra
- Stole Drusilla away from King Azizus
- Tacitus: Felix practiced “every kind of cruelty and lust.....”



HIGH PRIEST ACCUSES PAUL

- No discernable theological violation is put forward
- The main issue is that Paul is a “pest”
- The implication is that Paul is causing trouble and disturbing the peace between Jews and Romans
- Hananyah was an informer
- Talmud Tractate Sanhedrin condemns informing on a fellow Jew, as does the Essenes’ Community rules
- This is the 2nd time in a week that Paul has faced Hananyah
- Now it’s Paul’s turn to respond

