

and bitter persecution on the part of certain elements among the Jews of the Christian church in the book of Acts, and also in the Gospels, but that the Roman officials are standing in the background, called in at certain times, but not intervening on their ~~own~~ own initiative. And they are called in, usually with the idea of preserving peace and order, or of deciding among disputers. The Roman Empire, in Acts, there is nothing in the Book of Acts which will lead you to think that Rome was a persecuting power. Nothing at all. Paul is taken a prisoner, he is taken before the emperor, how did he come to be taken before the emperor? He was taken before the emperor because he appealed to the emperor, he asked to be taken before the emperor. Paul was, as you remember, attacked in the temple, and this group of men who were bitterly opposed to him would have torn him to pieces, but it was the ~~Roman~~ Roman captian who intervened, and who saved Paul from these people, delivered him, and took him to protect him from the riot which was attacking him, and then when Paul was told that the men had determined that they would not eat anything until he was dead, they were going to get him one way or another and kill him, he put the information to the Roman captain, and the captain had him sent with soldiers at night, the meeting is recorded but we don't know what was happening, up to Caesarea, where they had a strong Roman force, where he would be safe. And then it was up there that they examined him time and again, and they would have let him free, but they wanted a bribe, and he didn't offer a bribe, and he was a prisoner there for two years. And when his enemies tried to have him brought back to Jerusalem where they could have waylaid him on the way and kill him, they refused to do it, and they kept him there. And then Paul had been kept there so long, and he wanted to be ~~g~~ free, then he said I appeal to Caesar, Someone said that if this man hadn't appealed to Caesar he might have been let go. But his appeal to Caesar and it was up to Caesar to determine what the situation was. And he was sent to Rome and we have no record in the Bible of what happened to him when he got to Rome, but there is a strong tradition that he was examined by the representatives of Caesar and set free. And then later again he was arrested again and killed