

FELIX TREMBLED

TEXT: *Acts 24:25: And as he [Paul] reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*

Context: *2 Timothy 3:4: Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;*

Jesus had this out with Peter after His Resurrection.

The sermon was too hot for this king. The preacher had unloaded both barrels and his aim was perfect. The arrows of conviction had struck their mark, and the Judge becomes the convicted criminal. However, since he is the Judge, he can handle the case to his own liking, so he told Paul to temporarily go away and when the time is right, he would hear him again. Felix liked this kind of preaching or he would not have requested a return visit from the preacher, even though the preaching was straight and hard.



Felix is, right at this time, the Governor of Judea, having been appointed to his position as a favor granted to the mother of Emperor Claudius of Rome. Felix' brother Pallas had been real close to the Emperor, and with this political pull he helped Felix to his high position. He accepted bribes in office, and even up and married Drusilla, the former wife of Amicus who was a puppet ruler in a small province in Syria.

She was a Jewess, and he fell madly in love with her and worked through his clever magician, Simon, to entice her to become his housekeeper. She could live high on the hog and have more delightful trinkets with Felix than with her lesser fortunate governing husband. So she accepted. Felix may have reasoned: why should two people in love remain unhappy all because of some old fogy ancient laws which had been laid down to the Jewish race. These rules have no relationship to real life, for they are unreasonable and archaic — out of date.

About this time, the Chief Captain Lysias of the Roman Guard had taken prisoner a man in Jerusalem who was about to be killed by an angry, bitter mob. The man was

charged with inciting a riot, and was a member of the most despised religious sect of his day — Christians, Nazarenes:

Acts 24:5: For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes:

Paul is one of the top evangelists, and he doesn't stop his soul-winning campaign, even inside the prison walls. Felix has heard of this flaming firebrand for Jesus and sends for him to hear about the Gospel of Christ, as told by Luke in:

Acts 24:25: And as he [Paul] reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.



The Governor has reviewed the charges made against Paul. Now the Prosecuting Attorney by the name of Tertullus states his argument. Saul answers all of them; and of all that has been said, two things interest the governor most. The first is the purpose of Paul's coming here to Jerusalem. Felix feels that Paul is a man of wealth with rich friends, and the Bible gives record.

Acts 24:26: He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him.

The second thing that bugged Felix was this preaching about the Resurrection of the Dead. How could a man live again, having been wasted away to dust and ashes? How could this man, Jesus, Who had been put to death, come alive again?

Yet Paul affirmed it was so, and he was willing to back up his claims and faith with imprisonment and even death. Nothing seemed to shake Paul's faith. Even mockery and ridicule cannot dim his declarations. Now Paul is permitted to make his defense.

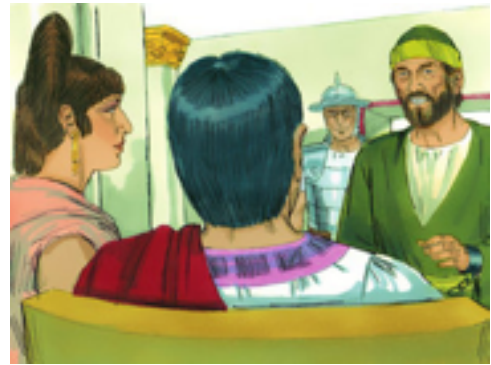
Acts 24:14-16:

¹⁴ But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void to offence toward God, and toward men.

These words struck Felix deeply, and he asked his wife, Drusilla, about them. She had said they were in the scriptures of the great prophet.



Daniel 12:1-2:

1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book.

2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Then Felix commanded Paul to speak to him concerning this Christ and his faith in Him. Then Paul told the Governor of his conversion, the necessity of believing in Christ and receiving Him for forgiveness of sins; that JESUS is God's sin offering, and that His Blood was shed for the sins of the whole world.

Paul sees that his heart is touched by the love of God for sinners, and he even wants the message continued. Paul then takes three fundamental doctrines of the Bible — Righteousness, (lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life), Temperance, and Judgment to come.

The Bible declares that Righteousness is a right relationship with God. That lying is sin against God and also against man. That being dishonest to get gain is wicked —to confiscate property and money from others. Paul spoke of injustice and murder, of which Felix was guilty of all. His conscience is pricked, for he has another man's wife, has been a liar, a thief, and a murderer of a High Priest in Jerusalem and others.

Paul then speaks of Temperance which was a sore spot in Felix, for he never tried to bridle his passions. He lived to eat, drink, and be merry, and now the Judge begins to squirm under this preaching. Could these things be so?

Then Paul spoke of Judgment to come and of the White Throne records at the last day. Certainly, this God of Paul's hadn't meted out any drastic punishment to him



thus far. **Paul made it plain that God does not always punish sin here in the earth. Paul spoke of the secret deeds that would be made public in the Judgment.**

Felix thought about his lies, curses, thefts, and started to tremble. Not many men had ever seen the Roman Governor tremble as Paul told of the great separation day when the good will go to the right and evil will go to the left, and how Jesus would say to them on the left: *“Depart from Me ye cursed into*

everlasting fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Matthew 25:41: Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

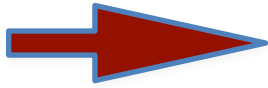
There is no question that Felix is feeling his guilt. He is shaking like Belshazzar as it dawns on him that a Holy God will surely punish sin. **Where can a guilty man find mercy and pardon? Christ is the answer, Paul declared. God extends mercy to every guilty soul on earth through turning to His Only Begotten Son.**

Through Him, God extends forgiveness to the most guilty of all on the earth. What an offer! What will the Governor do with it? Will he accept it as Paul did on the Damascus road?

The price tag is REPENTANCE and FORSAKING SIN. (In the case of the rich young ruler, dollar bills blinded his eyes.) We cannot be lovers of selves more than lovers of God. The first law of life is putting God first.

For Felix, that would mean straightening out his love affairs, making restitution for the money he has taken by pressure and under the table in unjust gain. Felix has just begun to get into the big money, and it isn't easy to give up a good racket. He may feel that the time is not quite ripe to turn from and forsake all these luxuries; but

just before death, he will make peace with God. The Bible records that this trembling Judge asks Paul to go back to his cell, and when it is convenient, he will hear the rest of his sermon.



**Do you know that convenient season never came again?
God never dealt with Felix again.**

Ties with sins with one loves are hard to break away from. The battle raged in his soul for days over the wealth he had plundered from his victims in Syria and the murders he committed to accomplish his aims. Finally, it all caught up with him and the Emperor recalled him, dismissed him from office, and never did the convenient season come.

Felix knew he ought to repent but he put it off. Many feel like that today. **You cannot come to God on your own terms.** The best chance you will ever have in life is when the Spirit is striving with your soul. That bottle, and that side-door woman, that extra man in your life, will not be worth the loss of your soul at the Judgment. No sir, you cannot square accounts with God at your convenience. God says: He limits a certain day saying: Today, after so long a time, today if you hear His Voice, harden not your heart.

Hebrews 4:7: Again, He limiteth a certain day, saying in David, Today, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear His Voice, harden not your hearts.

Your destiny depends upon saying “Yes” to Jesus when He calls you. Please do not make the mistake the Governor did. That decision can be fatal; it was first for Felix, and could be for you, too.

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1 Corinthians 6:9-10:

⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

¹⁰ Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God.

You will have to renounce, and give up your sins. You can't take them with you to Heaven. The Bible says in **Matthew 5:29-30**:

Matthew 5:29-30:

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell.

This does not refer to a literal cutting off of one's limbs, but rather it means we are to cut the sinful behavior — whatever it is that is causing us to stumble — out of our life.

The cost of Heaven for us is cheap — it's repenting of our sins, and then submitting our lives to Him Who paid a High Price on the Cross. I don't believe we will ever know, while on this earth, the extreme suffering He endured for us on the Cross. It cost Him everything! *Our* sins put Him there.

We would not refuse to part with an eye, foot, or hand if it would save our life. **SIN is the soul's gangrene, and *IT MUST* be CUT OUT from our lives.**

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