

An angel with large, dark, feathered wings is shown in profile, wearing a dark robe and holding a book. He is standing and talking to a woman who is sitting on the ground, wearing a white, flowing robe. They are in a desert landscape with mountains in the background. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting sunset or sunrise. The entire image is framed by a white, stylized border.

The Gospel Demands Courage

Acts 24:1-27, Hebrews 11:24-26

Background



- **Compelled by the Holy Spirit, Paul traveled to Jerusalem where he was arrested.**
- **Paul was accused of taking Gentiles into the Temple.**
- **Paul was attacked by a mob and subsequently saved/arrested by Roman soldiers.**
- **The leader of the Roman soldiers wrote a letter to Felix explaining the need for Felix to question Paul.**
- **Paul was sent before Felix under heavy guard to ensure Paul's safety from the reported death threat.**

The Prosecution



- Tertullus, a Roman lawyer, represented the interests of the Jewish leaders.
- Tertullus cited three charges against Paul:
 - He sought to stir up riots among the people
 - He was a ringleader of the Nazarenes
 - He sought to profane the Temple.
- Tertullus referred to followers of Christ as Nazarenes because Jesus was from Nazareth.
- Tertullus called Paul “a plague.”

The Defense



- Paul stood unshaken before Felix to make his defense.
- Paul's response was simple, he was innocent of all charges.
- Paul confessed to four deeds:
 - He worshiped "the God of our ancestors."
 - He followed everything "*in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets.*"
 - He possessed "*the same hope in God,*" as his accusers.
 - He strove to keep his "*conscience clear before God and man.*"
- Felix reserved judgment until he could gather more information, but he really wanted a bribe.

Felix and Drusilla



- Felix was one of a string of mediocre Roman governors during the chaotic years before Jerusalem's fall in AD 70.
- Because Felix's brother was influential in Rome, he felt he had carte blanche authority to do what he wanted.
- Felix was so brutal that the Roman emperor Nero replaced him.
- Drusilla was the daughter of King Herod Agrippa I.
- Felix managed to steal his teenage bride away from her husband before she was twenty, making this Princess his third wife.
- Felix and Drusilla had some kind of curiosity about Christianity.

Paul's Private Conversation

- Paul talked about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come.
- Paul made sure that Felix and Drusilla knew that Christianity had ethical implications.
- Paul knew Felix needed to hear about self-control.
- Paul did not trim the hard edges of the Gospel in order to make it more marketable.
- Felix was terrified of Paul's words because Paul spoke of the resurrection of the unjust.
- Paul helped Felix see God's White Throne of Judgment.

Conclusion



- The power of the Gospel is most evident when you see its hold on a person.
- When the Gospel entered Paul, he was subjected to trouble, persecution, and sorrow.
- Paul would rather languish in prison for years than reject the Gospel.
- Like Moses, Paul regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ of greater value than all the treasures of Egypt.