

## Now, or Maybe Never

“And as he reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me” (Acts 24:25).

Could you imagine hearing a time sensitive message that was so applicable to your fleshly and eternal well-being that it caused you to “tremble,” and then tell the messenger, “when I have a convenient season, I will call thee unto me”? What proper occasion could possibly arise that would change the magnitude of the message?

There are three sides to a situation such as this: (1) To hear a message that has such an impact that it causes an individual to tremble. (2) To hear a message that should have an impact to cause an individual to tremble, yet it has no affect at all. (3) To hear a message that has such an impact that it produces a positive response, as it did on the day of Pentecost, where those who heard “were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). To which of these categories would you best identify?

Felix had been appointed governor of Judæa by the Roman Emperor Tiberius Claudius Cæsar Augustus Germanicus. Tacitus, a Roman historian, said of Felix, he “maintained the royal law with servile disposition by means of all sorts of cruelty and greed (History, V.9).” Josephus, a Jewish Historian, said of Felix, he “bore an ill-will to Jonathan, the high priest, because he frequently gave him admonition about governing the Jewish affairs better than he did...So Felix contrived a method whereby he might get rid of him. Wherefore Felix contrived to have him murdered” (Antiquities, Chapter 8). Within our text, “Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus” (Acts 24:24). Now, concerning the marriage of Felix and Drusilla, Felix, through a Cyprian sorcerer named Simon, induced her to abandon her husband, Azizus, king of Emeza and go to Felix and by doing so she would be happy, thus, her marriage to Felix was adulterous, and the primary interest of Felix in the Apostle Paul was one of greed, the scriptures revealing, “He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul: wherefore also he sent from him the oftener, and communed with him” (Acts 24:26). Felix, having heard the message, apparently believed what he heard, else it would not have caused him to tremble.

Paul reasoned of: righteousness, God’s standard by which man should live; self-control, of which Felix lacked, which was evidenced in taking Drusilla to

wife; and the judgment to come, of which “we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Take a survey of your own life: have you subjected yourself to the righteousness of God? (Romans 10:2). Do you buffet your body, “and bring it into bondage?” (1 Corinthians 9:27), and are you ready to bow the knee, confess with the tongue, and give an account of yourself to God? (Romans 14:11-12). Knowing these things to be true, they caused Felix to tremble! Could the same be said of you, or is your heart harder than that of the rebellious of Judah, when they said to Jeremiah, “As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of Jehovah, we will not hearken unto thee” (Jeremiah 44:16). ret