

BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED by DR. AYODEJI AWE

Q 75-PASTOR, I HEARD YOU PREACH ON THE ENCOUNTER OF FELIX THE GOVERNOR WITH PAUL THE APOSTLE IN ACTS 24:24FF. I'M INTERESTED IN KNOWING THE END OF THAT STORY. DID FELIX EVER COME TO FAITH IN CHRIST?

ANSWER:

The encounter of Felix with Paul hints us of how God is fair in giving a chance to everyone to know him regardless of status, class, age and disposition. It also shows how the foundational fabrics of our lives as we currently subsist could stand in the way of accepting God.

For the purpose of facts, let us unravel Felix. He was the governor of Judea at this point in time. He was the representative of the emperor in Rome, who was the de facto ruler in all regions of the Roman Empire, Judea included. Extra reading from the ancient historians plus the biblical account inform us that he was a high class and powerful man in the land (Josephus- Ant. 20:8.7-8; Acts 24, *ibid*). He had two wives before he sighted Drusilla the daughter of Agrippa (who behind Felix himself was the most powerful man, being the king, but the governmental structure of having the governor standing in for the emperor subjugated the royal authority to the number two position).

The very day Felix saw Drusilla, he decided he would have her. She was pretty and youthful and for a womanizer Felix was, not even the fact that she was already married would deter his determination. Agrippa himself, tempted to be powerfully connected with the Roman power would not help matters. In a nut shell, by the time Paul was in front of Felix witnessing Jesus, Drusilla, nineteen years old was already his third wife and the favorite. He flamboyantly paraded her as his classy (Jewish princess) 'queen'.

We've been told: Every man born of a woman is conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity (Psa.51:5). So all men did sin and come short of the glory of God (Rom.3:23). But the wages of sin is death and the gift of God which is eternal life can only be secured when we obtain faith through Christ Jesus. This is a must, and God would extend at least one opportunity in a life time (Matt. 24:14). This very day Felix got the precious chance of encountering Paul face to face.

However Felix would be faced with full bloom demons of a life invested with sin and ambitions that are disparate with God's ideals. Felix is given to love power, money and women. These are not necessarily bad. As a matter of fact they are

some of the most significant and great things that God will readily endow his own. For example God crafted Eve for Adam and therefore projected for every man thereafter to be given a woman as wife. Regarding power, we know that as many as receive Him to them he gave authority (power) to live a bona fide child of God with all rights and privileges given to live abundantly, following the access to the power to make wealth which only God as Father does give (John 1:12; Deut.8:18).

Again, good as power, money and women are and even desired by all men, all like Felix, who don't know God are in jeopardy of being devoid of love for God. For the love of the world (1John 2:15), of money (1Tim.6:10) and of sin, of which they had so much of instead, they stand the risk of being stifled at the sight of the gospel, and of the ultimate shut out from God's kingdom. Satan the god of this world controls these powerful and highly sought accessories and he relishes in giving them out bountifully but with a trade for the eternal loss of soul. Remember he tried it with Jesus and lost woefully (Matt.). The irony is that only those who have the word of God in them have the power to overcome Satan, called the wicked one as Jesus' encounter with him revealed. Unfortunately no one can retain the word if he is not a believer. Felix was eaten deep with lust for the flesh to the point that recusing was near impossible. Not being a believer and void of the word, he stood no chance.

No wonder that on the spot as Paul preached about righteousness, self control, and the judgment to come, he became terrified. He was convicted. Those were matters he was flagrantly guilty of. Talking about righteousness, Felix was docked. Far from being one, here is a big man still hoping to extort bribe from Paul the prisoner. Self control? This he lacked big time. He couldn't take his eyes off pretty women. And concerning judgment to come, he knew that even in the court of his conscience he was guilty, how much more if he were to stand before God. Ultimately he had no option but to bolt Paul's presence instead of humbly surrendering to the Lord for salvation. The weight he was carrying was perhaps too heavy to lay aside while his sins to him were too easily besetting. This seems like his day of adversity and obviously his strength was low. He botched the golden opportunity.

In closing up your request, in this passage the end was not told, but digging into scripture further and interpolating same, we find a similar end to all who would go the path he took. Immediately following (having tragically survived the gospel blitz invariably, but to his peril), the account revealed that he later often

called for him with the dubious hope of collecting bribe from Paul, which never happened.

And so with his avarice overflowing, he traded the freedom of the guiltless man of God for favor with the Emperor that he might be granted an extension of power in Judea (v. 27b). But power belongs to the Lord and if God does not grant a thing, a man doesn't receive it (Jn. 3:27). After two years he was finally recalled to Rome and that sealed his selfish ambition and unenviable eternity. He missed the acceptable time and his day of favor. In the archives of history, his legacy would be a reference to a typical procrastination and a bye line in the life account of the emulation- worthy Apostle Paul, while in the heavenly considerations we are compelled to conclude that he became an inhabitant of a place away from the eternal abode of God wherein ends the souls of those who never believed Jesus the only begotten Son of God. His life added one more number to an infamous statistics proving the efficacy of the thesis of Jesus concerning the near doom of the rich and the high on earth – “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of the needle than for the rich man to enter into the kingdom of God” (Matt. 19:24).

For prayers, counseling, and to have your questions answered or opportunities for fellowship, contact us at:

BQA @ Our Saviors Church

Quail Run Community Center (Upper Room),

16748 Quail Park Dr, Missouri City Tx. 77489

*713/8947832 * 713/7761958 * jumie888@yahoo.com*