



Portion:

SCRIPTURES

- Acts 24-26
- Matthew 10:16-22
- II Timothy 1-4

Title:

INFLUENCE THE INFLUENCERS

- Before Governors
- Before Kings
- Be Ready

“You will be brought before governors and kings as a testimony.” Very interesting words from our Lord, predicting very interesting times. One may believe that Y’shua meant those words for other disciples, for another time in history. But, I’d argue they are prophetic for more than the twelve He addressed that day. The simple fact is that Paul was not one of them and he was actually the first to literally be “brought before governors and kings.”

I don’t believe it was the legal issue Paul faced that was the primary reason for being put on display in the presence of the governing authorities and royalty, nor his main motivation for his formal request to go before Nero, Caesar of Rome, the supreme leader of the day. I am convinced that Paul’s readiness to present before governors and kings and his boldness to go before Caesar was based on this principle: if you cause the head to turn, the body will follow. And he was ready, willing, and able to do so. Are you?

In his last communication, a letter written to Timothy from Rome, the location of his final imprisonment and death as a martyr, Paul summarized the philosophy of his entire ministry. Preach the word of God, be ready whether it is convenient or not. Reprimand and rebuke as necessary, but also use plenty of encouragement. Do it all with absolute patience and by being an excellent teacher, using clear instruction. Be willing to be vaporized into a mist for God, as if your life is a cool glass of water being tossed into a blazing fire. And fight for the faith until your last dying breath, like a sprinter straining for the tape. This is the attitude in which Paul faced the most prominent leaders of the day. He was an influencer of people of influence. What about you?

To influence people of influence. That is an idea close to my heart. Long ago, when I moved away from my professional life and into full time ministry, those were the words that God impressed upon me. Quite simply, the more you can touch the lives of those who can touch so many more lives, the more lives you can touch. It’s been a passion of mine ever since. I pray you too will desire to touch many lives with the truth of God’s word, regardless of your calling or profession. One thing is for certain, to do so you must be ready and bold whether it is convenient or not.

PROPHETIC SEED:

“So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus’ command Paul was brought in.” Acts 25:23 NKJV

PROPHETIC FRUIT:

“Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You are permitted to speak for yourself.” So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: “I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself before you concerning

all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, **especially because you are expert** in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently." Acts 26:1-3 NKJV

"and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, "This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains." Then Agrippa said to Festus, "**This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.**"
Acts 26:31-32 NKJV

BEFORE GOVERNORS

1. Paul's Case Escalates in the Roman Judicial System

A. **Felix: the first Governor to examine Paul!**

(1) Let the trial continue! (**Acts 23:35**)

(a) Paul was not getting a fair trial in the Jewish Courts in Jerusalem (the Sanhedrin) so he is sent to Caesarea.

1. Felix said... "**I will hear you when your accusers also have come.**" And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Praetorium." Acts 23:35 NKJV

(2) Formal Accusation and Presentation of Evidence (**Acts 24:1-9**)

(a) The Great Suck Up!

1. "Now after five days **Ananias the high priest** came down with the **elders** and **a certain orator named Tertullus**. These **gave evidence** to the governor against Paul. And when he was called upon, **Tertullus began his accusation**, saying: "Seeing that through you we **enjoy great peace, and prosperity** is being brought to this nation by **your foresight**, we accept it always and in all places, **most noble Felix, with all thankfulness**. Nevertheless, not to be tedious to you any further, I beg you to hear, by your courtesy, a few words from us. For **we have found this man a plague, a creator of dissension** among all the Jews throughout the world, and a **ringleader** of the sect of the Nazarenes. He even tried to **profane the temple**, and we seized him, and wanted to **judge him according to our law**. But the commander **Lysias came by and with great violence took him out of our hands**, commanding his accusers to come to you. By **examining him yourself** you may ascertain all these things of which we accuse him." And the **Jews also assented**, maintaining that these things were so." Acts 24:1-9 NKJV

(3) Paul's Defense Before Felix (**Acts 24:10-21**)

(a) Paul is happy to speak for himself and answer to any accusations...

1. "Then Paul, after the governor had nodded to him to speak, answered: "Inasmuch as I know that you have been for many years a **judge of this nation**, I do the more **cheerfully answer** for myself, because you may ascertain that it is no more than twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. And they **neither found me in the temple disputing with anyone nor inciting the crowd**, either in the synagogues or in the city. **Nor can they prove** the things of which they now accuse me. But **this I confess to you**, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, **believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets**. I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, **that there will be a resurrection** of the dead, **both of the just and the unjust**. This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and

men. “Now after many years **I came to bring alms and offerings to my nation**, in the midst of which some Jews from Asia found me **purified in the temple, neither with a mob nor with tumult**. They ought to have been here before you to object **if they had anything against me**. Or else **let those who are here themselves say if they found any wrongdoing in me while I stood before the council**, unless it is for this one statement which I cried out, standing among them, **‘Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am being judged by you this day.’** ” Acts 24:10-21

(4) Felix Procrastinates (**Acts 24:22-27**)

(a) Felix adjourns to make a decision...

1. “But when **Felix** heard these things, **having more accurate knowledge of the Way**, he **adjourned** the proceedings and said, **“When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case.”** So he commanded the centurion to **keep Paul** and to **let him have liberty**, and told him **not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him**. And after some days, when Felix came with **his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish**, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he **reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come**, Felix was afraid and answered, **“Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.”** Meanwhile he also **hoped that money would be given him by Paul**, that he might **release him**. Therefore he **sent for him more often and conversed with him**. But **after two years Porcius Festus succeeded Felix**; and **Felix, wanting to do the Jews a favor, left Paul bound.**” Acts 24:22-27 NKJV

B. Porcius Festus: the second Governor to examine Paul

(1) Paul appears before Festus (**Acts 25:1-12**)

(a) Festus will not have the final word: Paul appeals to Caesar.

1. “Now when **Festus** had come to the province, after three days he **went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem**. Then **the high priest** and the **chief men** of the Jews **informed him against Paul**; and they **petitioned him**, asking a favor against him, that **he would summon him to Jerusalem**—while **they lay in ambush along the road to kill him**. But **Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Caesarea**, and that he himself was going there shortly. “Therefore,” he said, **“let those who have authority among you go down with me and accuse this man**, to see if there is any fault in him.” And when he had remained among them more than ten days, he went down to Caesarea. And the next day, **sitting on the judgment seat, he commanded Paul to be brought**. When he had come, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about and **laid many serious complaints against Paul, which they could not prove**, while he answered for himself, **“Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I offended in anything at all.”** But Festus, wanting to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, **“Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and there be judged before me concerning these things?”** So Paul said, **“I stand at Caesar’s judgment seat, where I ought to be judged**. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as you very well know. For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. **I appeal to Caesar.**” Then

Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, **“You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!”** Acts 25:1-12 NKJV

BEFORE KINGS

2. Paul’s Recounts His Entire Testimony

A. A Roman Leader with a Jewish Heritage

(1) Paul appears before King Agrippa (**Acts 25:13-27**)

(a) Festus trots Paul out in front of the regional king.

1. “And after some days **King Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus**. When they had been there many days, **Festus laid Paul’s case before the king**, saying: “There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix, about whom the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, when I was in Jerusalem, asking for a judgment against him. To them I answered, **‘It is not the custom of the Romans to deliver any man to destruction before the accused meets the accusers face to face, and has opportunity to answer for himself concerning the charge against him.’** Therefore when they had come together, without any delay, the next day I sat on the judgment seat and commanded the man to be brought in. **When the accusers stood up, they brought no accusation against him of such things as I supposed, but had some questions against him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.** And because I was uncertain of such questions, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there be judged concerning these matters. But when **Paul appealed to be reserved for the decision of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I could send him to Caesar.**” Then Agrippa said to Festus, **“I also would like to hear the man myself.”** “Tomorrow,” he said, “you shall hear him.” So the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice had come with great pomp, and had entered the auditorium with the commanders and the prominent men of the city, at Festus’ command **Paul was brought in.** And **Festus said:** “King Agrippa and all the men who are here present with us, you see this man about whom **the whole assembly of the Jews** petitioned me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that **he was not fit to live** any longer. But when **I found that he had committed nothing deserving of death**, and that **he himself had appealed to Augustus**, I decided to send him. I have nothing certain to write to my Lord concerning him. Therefore I have brought him out before you, and especially **before you, King Agrippa**, so that **after the examination has taken place I may have something to write.** For it seems to me **unreasonable to send a prisoner and not to specify the charges against him.**”” Acts 25:13-27 NKJV

B. Paul starts from the beginning...

(1) Testimony in the presence of King Agrippa and all the most influential people of the Caesarea. (**Acts 26:1-11**)

(a) Paul happily begins his defense to the charges against him, starting with his younger days.

1. “Then Agrippa said to Paul, “You are permitted to speak for yourself.” So Paul stretched out his hand and answered for himself: **“I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because today I shall answer for myself** before you concerning all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, **especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which have to do with the Jews.** Therefore I beg you to

hear me patiently. **“My manner of life from my youth, which was spent from the beginning among my own nation at Jerusalem, all the Jews know. They knew me from the first, if they were willing to testify, that according to the strictest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers.** To this promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. For this hope’s sake, King Agrippa, I am accused by the Jews. **Why should it be thought incredible by you that God raises the dead?** “Indeed, **I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.** This I also did in Jerusalem, and **many of the saints I shut up in prison,** having received authority from the chief priests; and **when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.** And **I punished them often in every synagogue** and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, **I persecuted them** even to foreign cities.” Acts 26:1-11 NKJV

(2) Paul Recounts His Conversion (Acts 26:12-18)

(a) Paul explains what happened that shifted him from persecutor to follower...

1. **““While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.”** Acts 26:12-18 NKJV

(3) Paul’s Post-Conversion Life (Acts 26:19-23)

(a) Paul tells Agrippa what his life in ministry looked like from that moment of conversion onward...

1. **““Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance. For these reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.** Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, **saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come— that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.”** Acts 26:19-23 NKJV

C. The Verdict: This man is doing nothing wrong!

(1) Response to Paul’s Defense (Acts 26:24-32)

(a) Firsts Festus responds, then Agrippa weighs in...

1. **“Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, “Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!”** But he said, **“I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the**

words of truth and reason. For **the king**, before whom I also speak freely, **knows these things**; for I am convinced that **none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner.** **King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”** Then **Agrippa said to Paul, “You almost persuade me to become a Christian.”** And **Paul said, “I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.”** When he had said these things, the king stood up, as well as the governor and Bernice and those who sat with them; and when they had gone aside, they talked among themselves, saying, **“This man is doing nothing deserving of death or chains.”** Then **Agrippa said to Festus, “This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar.”**” Acts 26:24-32 NKJV

2. But the seed was planted: *“According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder **I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it.** But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* I Corinthians 3:10-11 NKJV

BE READY

3. Be ready, whether it is convenient or not...

A. Paul’s Final Resting Place

(1) Like the Apostle Peter in II Peter...

(a) Paul’s last will and testament!

1. “For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, **knowing that shortly I must put off my tent**, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover **I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.**” II Peter 1:12-15 NKJV

(2) Paul’s Final Days

(a) Paul affirms what we’ve seen already—going to Rome as a prisoner worked out for the best! (All things work for good, Romans 8:28.) He was willing to do whatever it takes to get to Rome.

1. *“But I want you to know, brethren, that the **things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel**, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, **that my chains are in Christ**; and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.”* Philippians 1:12-14 NKJV
2. *“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. **And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith**, that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.”* Philippians 1:21-26 NKJV

3. *“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and **the time of my departure is at hand.**”* II Timothy 4:6 NKJV

(3) Paul’s Final Words (Words to live by!)

(a) A Holy Calling!

1. “Therefore **do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord**, nor of me His prisoner, but **share with me in the sufferings for the gospel** according to the **power of God**, who has saved us and **called us with a holy calling**, not according to our works, but **according to His own purpose and grace** which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,” II Timothy 1:8-9 NKJV

(b) Make Disciples!

1. “You therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace** that is in Christ Jesus. And **the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also**. You therefore must **endure hardship as a good soldier** of Jesus Christ. **No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life**, that he may **please him who enlisted him** as a soldier. And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he **competes according to the rules**. The **hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops**. **Consider** what I say, and may the Lord give you **understanding** in all things.” II Timothy 2:1-7 NKJV

(c) I am reminding you; you remind others...

1. “**Remind them of these things**, charging them before the Lord **not to strive about words to no profit**, to the ruin of the hearers. **Be diligent to present yourself approved** to God, a worker **who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**” II Timothy 2:14-15 NKJV

(d) Excellent Character Traits

1. “And a servant of the Lord must **not quarrel** but **be gentle** to all, **able to teach, patient**, in **humility correcting** those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will **grant them repentance**, so that they may **know the truth**, and that they may **come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil**, having been taken captive by him to do his will.” II Timothy 2:24-26 NKJV

(e) Warning!

1. “But know this, that **in the last days** perilous times will come: For men will be **lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**, having a **form of godliness** but denying its power. And from such people **turn away!** For of this sort are those who **creep into households** and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, **always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**” II Timothy 3:1-7 NKJV

(f) The Remedy for Evil

1. “But you have **carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions**, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra— what persecutions I endured. And **out of them all the Lord delivered me**. Yes, and **all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**” II Timothy 3:10-12 NKJV

(g) The Word of God is Everything!

1. **“All Scripture** is given by **inspiration** of God, and is profitable for **doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**, that the man of God may be complete, **thoroughly equipped** for every good work.” II Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV

(h) Be Ready!

1. “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: **Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.** For the time will come when they **will not endure sound doctrine**, but according to their **own desires**, because they have **itching ears**, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears **away from the truth**, and be turned aside **to fables**. But you **be watchful** in all things, **endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.** For **I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.** I have **fought the good fight**, I have **finished the race**, I have **kept the faith**. Finally, there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and **not to me only** but also to all who have loved His appearing.” II Timothy 4:1-8 NKJV

(i) The whole reason for my call is this...

1. **“But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me**, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. **And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me** for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!” II Timothy 4:17-18 NKJV
2. **“And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,”** (Philippians 1:25 NKJV), this time in Rome will culminate in my last dying breath! **“The time of my departure is at hand.”** (II Timothy 4:6)

(4) Your Story?

(a) Will you will stand before governors and kings?

1. **“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.** But when they deliver you up, **do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak;** for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of **your Father who speaks in you.** Now **brother will deliver up brother** to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And **you will be hated** by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.” Matthew 10:16-22 NKJV