A close-up, dramatic shot of a Roman soldier's armor. The soldier is wearing a large, circular, weathered metal shield with a wooden core and metal plates. The armor is highly detailed, showing rivets and a dark, patinated surface. The soldier's helmet, featuring a prominent plume, is partially visible on the right side of the frame. The background is a dark, smoky, and turbulent environment, suggesting a battlefield or a scene of conflict. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the metal and the intensity of the scene.

ACTS 25:13-27 – PART 2

Relying on the authority of the Lord and not on appearance

FESTUS REQUESTS ADVICE FROM AGRIPPA AND BERNICE ABOUT SENDING PAUL TO CAESAR (25:13-21)

¹³ Now when some days had passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived at Caesarea and greeted Festus. ¹⁴ And as they stayed there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, "There is a man left prisoner by Felix, ¹⁵ and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews laid out their case against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him. ¹⁶ I answered them that it was not the custom of the Romans to give up anyone before the accused met the accusers face to face and had opportunity to make his defense concerning the charge laid against him. ¹⁷ So when they came together here, I made no delay, but on the next day took my seat on the tribunal and ordered the man to be brought. ¹⁸ When the accusers stood up, they brought no charge in his case of such evils as I supposed. ¹⁹ Rather they had certain points of dispute with him about their own religion and about a certain Jesus, who was dead, but whom Paul asserted to be alive. ²⁰ Being at a loss how to investigate these questions, I asked whether he wanted to go to Jerusalem and be tried there regarding them. ²¹ But when Paul had appealed to be kept in custody for the decision of the emperor, I ordered him to be held until I could send him to Caesar."

PRISONER PAUL APPEARS BEFORE THE POMP OF ROMAN AUTHORITIES (25:22-27)

²² Then Agrippa said to Festus, “I would like to hear the man myself.” “Tomorrow,” said he, “you will hear him.”

- Agrippa is curious and wants to hear what Paul has to say about Jesus
- Agrippa is familiar with the Scripture and the teaching and practices of the Jews
- He is likely aware of the stir Jesus caused

²³ So on the next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp, and they entered the audience hall with the military tribunes and the prominent men of the city. Then, at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. ²⁴ And Festus said, “King Agrippa and all who are present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish people petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. ²⁵ But I found that he had done nothing deserving death. And as he himself appealed to the emperor, I decided to go ahead and send him.

- Not only is Agrippa curious, but it is also an opportunity for Agrippa, Bernice, and Festus to put themselves on display as Roman leaders, allowing them to shine in the public spotlight
- Agrippa, Bernice, and Festus wear their royal vestments and captivate the attention of the public
- It allows them to parade their military might under their direct authority
- In many ways, this event is a self-gratulatory display of their glory in personal achievements

PRISONER PAUL APPEARS BEFORE THE POMP OF ROMAN AUTHORITIES (25:22-27)

- As the presiding potentate, Festus summons the pathetic prisoner Paul
- Looks are deceiving
- Paul is an ambassador of the Lord of Glory, and he stands before them in gospel boldness
- What are the convictions of the Apostle Paul?
 - Jesus teaches us to pray expectantly of His power and intervention
 - Matthew 6:9–10
 - Why don't more Christians pray as Jesus taught us to pray?
 - Many don't pray because they are busy abiding in the world with worldly desires and seeing their spiritual lives as something altogether detached and without influence
 - James 4:2b–4
- Who should be impacting the people on Earth?
- The new covenant people of God
 - 2 Corinthians 2:14–17

PRISONER PAUL APPEARS BEFORE THE POMP OF ROMAN AUTHORITIES (25:22-27)

- For too long we've been content with a private faith rather than a public faith
- Paul has the unseen backing of the Lord and the hosts of heaven
 - 2 Kings 6:17
- If we trust the promises of our Lord, we will realize that we are gospel ambassadors sent to dispel the darkness with the light of Jesus Christ
 - 2 Corinthians 10:4–5
- Paul is a warrior advancing in the power of God while these worldly rulers think themselves to be high and mighty
- Festus introduces Paul to Agrippa and Bernice, the prisoner who is a citizen of Rome appealing to Caesar

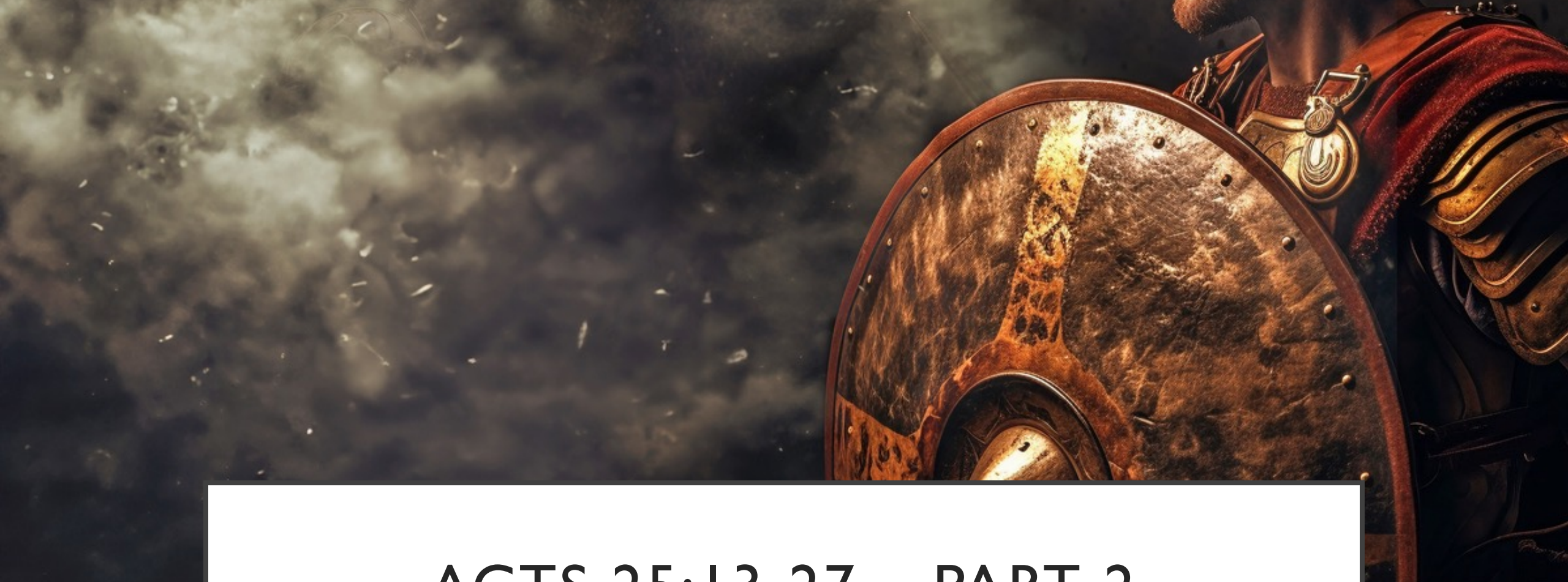
PRISONER PAUL APPEARS BEFORE THE POMP OF ROMAN AUTHORITIES (25:22-27)

²⁶ But I have nothing definite to write to my lord about him. Therefore I have brought him before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write. ²⁷ For it seems to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not to indicate the charges against him.”

- Festus inherited Paul as a prisoner and wants to maintain the peace in the face of antagonized Jews
- Agrippa's visit presents an opportunity for Paul to be assessed by a ruler who is familiar with the Jews and their religious practices
- Agrippa also has the strong backing of Rome
- As Paul stands in solitude in the presence of nobility and earthly power, he stands in the strength of the reigning Lord of Glory, who is sovereign over His earth
 - Luke 12:11–12
- Jesus chose us to be His people and He sends us out to walk in gospel light and proclaim gospel light
- We are not alone
- We may not appear to be mighty, but looks are deceiving
 - 1 John 4:3–4

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What should your reaction be to influential displays of worldly prestige and power?
- How can you encourage your heart when people view you as pathetic and weak?
- When no one stands with you in truth and righteousness, what should you do?
- How are your weaknesses an occasion for the power of Christ to be put on display?

A close-up, dramatic shot of a Roman soldier's shoulder and arm. The soldier is wearing a red tunic with gold-colored metal arm guards (cuirass) and a large, round, weathered metal shield. The background is a dark, smoky, and chaotic battlefield scene with falling debris.

ACTS 25:13-27 – PART 2

Relying on the authority of the Lord and not on appearance