

Acts 26:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently.

Analysis

Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews—Paul addresses King Agrippa II, who as ruler of territories in northern Palestine and supervisor of the Jerusalem temple, possessed exceptional knowledge of Jewish law and theology. The Greek *gnostes* (γνώστην) means "knower" or "expert," indicating Agrippa was not merely familiar but deeply versed in Jewish matters.

Wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently (δέομαι μακροθύμως ἀκοῦσαί μου)—The word *makrothymos* (μακροθύμως, "patiently") literally means "long-suffering" or "long-tempered," a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Paul requests the same patient endurance God shows toward sinners. This is Paul's most sophisticated defense, tailored to a Jewish expert who could appreciate the messianic implications of his testimony.

Historical Context

Acts 26 records Paul's defense before Agrippa II (ruled AD 53-100), great-grandson of Herod the Great. As a Herodian ruler appointed by Rome with authority over temple affairs, Agrippa was uniquely qualified to evaluate Paul's claims about fulfillment of Jewish messianic prophecy. Festus (Roman procurator) arranged this hearing hoping Agrippa could help formulate charges for Paul's appeal to Caesar.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's strategic approach to Agrippa (expert-to-expert) model contextualized gospel witness to different audiences?
2. What does Paul's request for patient hearing teach about how we should present the gospel to skeptics—with confidence in truth but humility in manner?

Interlinear Text

μάλιστα γνώστην ὅντα σε πάντων τῶν κατὰ^{τῶν}
Especially expert to be thee in all which are among
G3122 G1109 G5607 G4571 G3956 G3588 G2596

Ἰουδαίουν ἐθῶν τε καὶ ζητημάτων διὸ δέομαι σου,
the Jews customs G5037 and questions wherefore I beseech thee
G2453 G1485 G2532 G2213 G1352 G1189 G4675

μακροθύμως ἀκοῦσαι μου
patiently to hear me
G3116 G191 G3450

Additional Cross-References

Acts 6:14 (Parallel theme): For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.