

Acts 13:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.

Analysis

And as John fulfilled his course (ώς δὲ ἐπλήρου Ἰωάννης τὸν δρόμον)—Paul recounts the Baptizer's testimony using dromos (course/race), the same athletic metaphor Paul later applied to his own ministry (Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:7). John's ministry was a divinely appointed assignment with a defined beginning and end.

Whom think ye that I am? I am not he—John's emphatic self-denial anticipates Jesus's identity questions (Matthew 16:15, "Whom say ye that I am?"). The Baptist's radical humility contrasts with messianic pretenders of the era. **Whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose** (οὗ οὐκ εἰμὶ ἄξιος τὸ ὑπόδημα τῶν ποδῶν λῦσαι)—Untying sandals was work beneath a Hebrew slave, yet John declared himself unworthy even for this menial task before Christ. This echoes all four Gospels' record of John's testimony (Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:7, Luke 3:16, John 1:27), demonstrating the early church's unified preservation of his witness.

Historical Context

Paul quoted John's words during his sermon in Pisidian Antioch's synagogue (c. AD 47-48). John the Baptist had been executed by Herod Antipas approximately 15 years earlier (c. AD 28-29). Paul's audience would have known John's reputation—Josephus confirms his widespread influence (Antiquities 18.5.2). Quoting the Baptist established continuity between Jewish expectation and Christian proclamation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does John's self-effacing humility challenge modern Christian leadership models that emphasize personal platform and influence?
2. Paul references John's testimony in his evangelistic sermon—what role does John's witness still play in declaring Christ's supremacy today?

Interlinear Text

ώς	δὲ	ἐπλήρου	ό	Ίωάννης	τὸν	δρόμον	ἔλεγεν	Τίνα
as	And	fulfilled	G3588	John	G3588	his course	he said	Whom
G5613	G1161	G4137		G2491		G1408	G3004	G5101
με	ὑπονοεῖτε	εἰναι	οὐκ	εἰμὶ	ἐγώ·	ἀλλ'	ἰδού,	
that I	think ye	am	not	I am	I	he But	behold	
G3165	G5282	G1511	G3756	G1510	G1473	G235	G2400	
ἔρχεται	μετ'	ἐμὲ	οὗ	οὐκ	εἰμὶ	ἄξιος	τὸ	ὑπόδημα
there cometh one	after	me	whose	not	I am	worthy	G3588	shoes
G2064	G3326	G1691	G3739	G3756	G1510	G514		G5266
τῶν	ποδῶν	λῦσαι						
G3588	of his feet	to loose						
	G4228	G3089						

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 3:11 (Parallel theme): I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Mark 1:7 (Parallel theme): And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

Acts 20:24 (Parallel theme): But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org