

Acts 16:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.

Analysis

'The serjeants told these words unto the magistrates: and they feared, when they heard that they were Romans.' The magistrates' fear reveals their legal jeopardy - beating Roman citizens without trial could result in severe punishment from Rome. Their hasty injustice became political liability. This fear would restrain future persecution of Philippi's church.

Historical Context

Roman officials who violated citizens' rights faced serious consequences, including loss of office. The magistrates' fear was well-founded - their illegal actions could bring imperial investigation.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God use even unjust authorities' fear to protect His people?
2. What does this teach about the rule of law and accountability?
3. How can injustice toward Christians sometimes lead to greater protection?

Interlinear Text

ἀνήγγειλάν **told** G312 δὲ **And** G1161 τοῖς G3588 στρατηγοῖς **unto the magistrates** G4755 οἱ G3588 ῥαβδοῦχοι **the serjeants** G4465 τὰ G3588

ῥήματα **words** G4487 ταῦτα **these** G5023 καὶ **and** G2532 ἐφοβήθησαν **they feared** G5399 ἀκούσαντες **when they heard** G191 ὅτι **that** G3754 Ῥωμαῖοί **Romans** G4514

εἰσιν
they were
G1526

Additional Cross-References

Acts 22:29 (Parallel theme): Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.