

# 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

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'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

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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

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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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

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

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

εἰσιν  
they were  
G1526

## Additional Cross-References

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**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.

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