

Acts 19:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly.

Analysis

Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against—The town clerk of Ephesus, addressing the riot sparked by Demetrius and the silversmiths, makes a shrewd rhetorical move. The phrase ἀναντιρρήτων (anantirrētōn, 'undeniable, irrefutable') refers not to the truth of Artemis worship but to its established status in Ephesus. He's appealing to the crowd's pride in their city's religious prestige while defusing mob violence.

Ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly—The imperatives δέον ἔστιν (deon estin, 'it is necessary') and μηδὲν προπετὲς πράσσειν (mēden propetes prassein, 'to practice nothing rash') call for civic order. The town clerk recognizes that mob violence threatens Roman oversight of Ephesus's self-governance. His concern isn't truth but social stability—yet God uses even pagan officials to protect His messengers, just as He used Pharaoh's daughter to save Moses.

Historical Context

Ephesus was the provincial capital of Asia and home to the Temple of Artemis (Diana), one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The city's identity and economy were deeply entwined with Artemis worship and the associated tourist trade. The town clerk (γραμματεύς, grammateus) was the highest-ranking local official, responsible for relations with Rome. Any riot that reached Roman ears could result in loss of self-governance or worse, making the clerk's intervention a matter of political survival, not religious conviction.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's sovereignty work through secular authorities who have no allegiance to Him, as seen in this pagan official protecting Paul?
2. What does this passage teach about the difference between cultural Christianity (concerned with religious prestige) and genuine faith?
3. When has God used unexpected sources to provide protection or provision in your life, and how did that display His sovereignty?

Interlinear Text

ἀναντιρρήτων	οὖν	Ὥντων	τούτων	δέον	ἐστὶν
cannot be spoken against	then	Seeing	that these things	ought	G2076
G368	G3767	G5607	G5130	G1163	

ὑμᾶς	κατεσταλμένους	ὑπάρχειν	καὶ	μηδὲν	προπετὲς
ye	quiet	to be	and	nothing	rashly
G5209	G2687	G5225	G2532	G3367	G4312

πράττειν

to do

64238

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org