

# Acts 22:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman.

## Analysis

**When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain**—The centurion's immediate response (ἀκούσας, akousas, 'having heard') shows the seriousness of Paul's claim. He doesn't proceed with the flogging but runs to report to the χιλιάρχω (chiliarchō, 'commander of a thousand,' the tribune Claudius Lysias, 23:26). The urgency reflects the grave consequences of illegally flogging a Roman citizen.

**Saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman**—The centurion's warning Ὁρα τί μέλλεις ποιεῖν (Hora ti melleis poiein, 'Watch what you are about to do!') is stronger than the KJV suggests—it's nearly an imperative. The revelation οὗτος γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος Ῥωμαῖός ἐστιν (houtos gar ho anthrōpos Rōmaiōs estin, 'for this man is a Roman') changes everything. The chain of command respects citizenship even when dealing with a prisoner, showing Roman law's power to protect even unpopular minorities.

## Historical Context

The centurion serves under the tribune Claudius Lysias, commander of the Jerusalem garrison (likely 600-1000 troops). Roman military hierarchy was rigid but justice-oriented—a centurion who allowed illegal flogging would face punishment. The tribune would be even more vulnerable, as his career and possibly life depended on proper conduct. False claims of citizenship were

punishable by death, so Paul's claim is risky but verifiable. The speed of the centurion's intervention shows how seriously Rome protected citizen rights.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. What does the centurion's immediate action to protect Paul's rights teach about the value of just legal systems?
2. How does this scene illustrate the early church's dependence on God's providence working through Roman legal structures?
3. In what ways should Christians today show the same respect for legal process and rights that this centurion demonstrated?

## Interlinear Text

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ἀκούσας	δὲ	ό	ἐκατόνταρχος	προσελθὼν	ἀπήγγειλεν		
heard	When	G3588	the centurion	that he went	and told		
G191	G1161		G1543	G4334	G518		
τῷ	χιλιάρχῳ	λέγων,	Ὦρα	Τί	μέλλεις	ποιεῖν	ό
G3588	the chief captain	saying	Take heed	what	thou doest	G4160	G3588
	G5506	G3004	G3708	G5101	G3195		
γὰρ	ἄνθρωπος	οὗτος	Ῥωμαῖός	ἐστιν			
for	man	this	a Roman	is			
G1063	G444	G3778	G4514	G2076			