

Acts 22:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

Analysis

The high priest doth bear me witness (μαρτυρεῖ μοι)—Paul invokes living eyewitnesses to verify his past as chief persecutor. This wasn't distant history; some leaders present had personally authorized his Damascus mission. **Letters unto the brethren** (ἐπιστολὰς πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς)—Official extradition documents from the Sanhedrin to Damascus synagogues, granting authority to arrest believers and bring them to Jerusalem.

To be punished (τιμωρηθῶσιν)—The Greek 'timoreo' implies judicial vengeance, not merely discipline. Paul sought Christians' execution (Acts 26:10-11). His transformation from zealous persecutor to passionate apostle becomes undeniable evidence of Christ's resurrection—only seeing the risen Lord could convert such an opponent. The greater the antagonist, the greater the testimony.

Historical Context

This occurred around AD 34-35, shortly after Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 7:58-8:3). The Damascus synagogues held authority over Jews living there, making them co-enforcers of Jerusalem's religious judgments. Paul's 'letters' represented official cooperation between Palestinian and Diaspora Jewish leadership.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's honesty about his violent past strengthen rather than weaken his gospel witness?
2. Who are the 'eyewitnesses' to your transformation that could verify Christ's work in your life?

Interlinear Text

ὥς καὶ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς μαρτυρεῖ μοι καὶ πᾶν τὸ
As also ^{G3588} **the high priest** **doth bear** **me** **also** **all** ^{G3588}
^{G5613} ^{G2532} ^{G749} ^{G3140} ^{G3427} ^{G2532} ^{G3956}

πρεσβυτέριον παρ' ὧν καὶ ἐπιστολὰς δεξάμενος πρὸς
the estate of the elders **from** **whom** **also** **letters** **I received** **unto**
^{G4244} ^{G3844} ^{G3739} ^{G2532} ^{G1992} ^{G1209} ^{G4314}

τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς εἰς Δαμασκὸν ἐπορευόμεν ἄξων καὶ
^{G3588} **the brethren** **to** **Damascus** **went** **to bring** **also**
^{G80} ^{G1519} ^{G1154} ^{G4198} ^{G71} ^{G2532}

τοὺς ἐκεῖσε ὄντας δεδεμένους εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἵνα
^{G3588} **there** **them which were** **bound** **to** **Jerusalem** **for to**
^{G1566} ^{G5607} ^{G1210} ^{G1519} ^{G2419} ^{G2443}

τιμωρηθῶσιν
be punished
^{G5097}

Additional Cross-References

Luke 22:66 (Parallel theme): And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

Acts 5:21 (Parallel theme): And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

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