

# Acts 25:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.

## Analysis

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Festus's explanation of Roman justice - 'It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself' - articulates fundamental legal principles: presumption of innocence, right to face accusers, and opportunity for defense. These principles, rooted in Roman law, became foundational to Western jurisprudence and reflect God's own just character.

## Historical Context

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Roman legal procedure, though imperfectly applied, established principles of due process that protected the innocent. Festus's statement reveals pride in Roman justice even when political pressure tempted him to violate these very principles (as he later did by suggesting Jerusalem trial).

## Related Passages

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

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

## Study Questions

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1. How do proper legal procedures reflect God's just character and protect the innocent?
2. What does this teach about advocating for justice systems that honor due process and presumption of innocence?

## Interlinear Text

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πρὸς οὓς ἀπεκρίθην ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἔθος Ἡρμαίοις  
To whom I answered not It is the manner of the Romans  
G4314 G3739 G611 G3754 G3756 G2076 G1485 G4514

χαρίζεσθαί τινα ἄνθρωπον εἰς ἀπώλειαν, πρὶν ἡ ὁ  
to deliver any man to die before that G3588  
G5483 G5100 G444 G1519 G684 G4250 G2228

κατηγορούμενος κατὰ πρόσωπον ἔχοι τοὺς κατηγόρους  
he which is accused face to face have the accusers  
G2723 G2596 G4383 G2192 G3588 G2725

τόπον τε ἀπολογίας λάβοι περὶ τοῦ  
licence G5037 to answer for himself and have concerning G3588  
G5117 G627 G2983 G4012

ἐγκλήματος  
the crime laid against him  
G1462

## Additional Cross-References

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**John 7:51** (Parallel theme): Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

**Acts 23:30** (Parallel theme): And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him. Farewell.

