

Acts 25:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth.

Analysis

Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow I sat on the judgment seat—Festus recounts his prompt action to King Agrippa. The phrase ἀναβολὴν μηδεμίαν ποιησάμενος (anabolēn mēdemian poiēsamenos, 'making no delay') emphasizes his diligence—a contrast to Felix's two-year stalling (24:27). **The morrow** (τῇ ἑξῆς, tē hexēs) shows immediate action upon arrival in Caesarea. **I sat on the judgment seat** (καθίσας ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος, kathisas epi tou bēματος)—the bēma was the official tribunal, symbolizing Roman authority and formal legal proceedings.

Festus's account serves to justify his refusal to send Paul to Jerusalem (where an ambush waited, 25:3). By emphasizing his swift, proper legal procedure, he distinguishes himself from his predecessor Felix and demonstrates to Agrippa that he followed protocol. Yet Festus admits his confusion about the charges—setting up his request for Agrippa's help in framing accusations for Caesar.

Historical Context

Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as procurator of Judea around AD 59-60. Unlike Felix's corrupt nine-year tenure, Festus attempted conscientious governance, though he ruled only 2-3 years before dying in office. The bēma (judgment seat) in Caesarea was a raised platform where the procurator heard cases. Festus's prompt attention to Paul's case suggests both administrative efficiency and awareness that

this case had political implications—Paul had been imprisoned for years, and the Jewish leadership immediately pressed for resolution.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does Festus's prompt action contrast with Felix's procrastination, and what does this teach about God's timing in advancing Paul toward Rome?
2. What's the spiritual significance of Paul repeatedly standing before *bēma* seats, foreshadowing the ultimate judgment seat of Christ (Romans 14:10)?
3. In what ways do earthly judges' diligence or corruption affect justice, and how should this inform Christian engagement with legal systems?

Interlinear Text

συνελθόντων	οὖν	αὐτῶν	ἐνθάδε	ἀναβολὴν	μηδεμίαν
were come	Therefore	when they	hither	delay	any
G4905	G3767	G846	G1759	G311	G3367
ποιησάμενος	τῇ	ἐξῆς	καθίσας	ἐπὶ	τοῦ
without	G3588	on the morrow	I sat	on	G3588
G4160		G1836	G2523	G1909	
βήματος	ἐκέλευσα	ἀχθῆναι	τὸν	ἄνδρα·	
the judgment seat	and commanded	to be brought forth	G3588	the man	
G968	G2753	G71		G435	

Additional Cross-References

Acts 25:6 (Judgment): And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Caesarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be brought.

Acts 25:10 (Judgment): Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest.

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