

Acts 25:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth.

Analysis

And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp

—The scene is spectacular: μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας (meta pollēs phantasias, 'with much pageantry, display, spectacle'). Agrippa and Bernice arrive in full royal regalia—a theatrical entrance designed to display power and majesty. The contrast is deliberate: worldly pomp versus Paul's imprisoned simplicity, yet Paul has the greater message and authority.

And was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains, and principal men of the city

—The akroatērion (ἀκροατήριον, 'audience chamber, hearing room') fills with χιλιάρχους (chiliarchois, 'military tribunes, commanders') and ἐξοχοῖς ἀνδράσιν (exochois andrasin, 'prominent men, leaders') of Caesarea.

At Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth—the prisoner enters this gathering of power and prestige. Yet Acts records none of their words, only Paul's testimony. Human pomp fades; gospel truth endures.

Historical Context

Caesarea Maritima was Herod the Great's showcase capital, with a magnificent palace that served as the Roman procurator's residence. The audience chamber was designed to impress—marble columns, mosaics, symbols of Roman power.

Agrippa's entrance would include trumpets, guards, and ceremonial protocol befitting royalty. The gathering represented the three power structures of first-century Palestine: Roman government (Festus, tribunes), Jewish royalty (Agrippa), and local aristocracy (principal men). Paul stands before all three as a prisoner in chains, yet his message will outlast their kingdoms.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the contrast between worldly pomp and gospel simplicity challenge our own attraction to spectacle over substance in worship?
2. What does this scene teach about the temporary nature of human power and pageantry compared to the eternal weight of gospel testimony?
3. In what ways might contemporary Christianity sometimes emphasize presentation and pomp over the simple, powerful proclamation of Christ?

Interlinear Text

Τῇ	οὖν	ἐπαύριον	ἐλθόντος	τοῦ	Ἀγρίππα	καὶ	τῆς
G3588	when	And on the morrow	was come	G3588	Agrippa	and	G3588
	G3767	G1887	G2064		G67	G2532	
Βερνίκης	μετὰ	πολλῆς	φαντασίας	καὶ	εἰσελθόντων	εἰς	
Bernice	with	great	pomp	and	was entered	into	
G959	G3326	G4183	G5325	G2532	G1525	G1519	
τὸ	ἄκροατήριον	σύν	τε	τοῖς	χιλιάρχοις	καὶ	
G3588	the place of hearing	with	G5037	G3588	the chief captains	and	
	G201	G4862			G5506	G2532	
ἀνδράσιν	τοῖς	κατ'	ἐξοχὴν	οὖσιν	τῆς	πόλεως	καὶ
men	G3588	G2596	principal	of	G3588	the city	and
G435			G1851	G5607		G4172	G2532
κελεύσαντος	τοῦ	Φήστου	ἦχθη	ὁ	Παῦλος		
commandment	G3588	Festus	was brought forth	G3588	Paul		
G2753		G5347	G71		G3972		

Additional Cross-References

Acts 25:13 (Parallel theme): And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Caesarea to salute Festus.

Acts 26:30 (Parallel theme): And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: