

Acts 25:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him.

Analysis

For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him—Festus's frustration: ἄλογον γάρ μοι δοκεῖ (alogon gar moi dokei, 'For unreasonable it seems to me') to send (πέμποντα δέσμιον, pemponta desmion, 'sending a prisoner') without specifying (μὴ καὶ σημαίνει, mē kai sēmanai, 'not also to indicate') τὰς κατ' αὐτοῦ αἰτίας (tas kat' autou aitias, 'the charges against him').

This verse exposes the absurdity of Paul's situation: imprisoned for years, demanded dead by Jewish leaders, yet no actual crimes identified. Festus's administrative embarrassment becomes a testimony to Paul's innocence and Christianity's legal status. The governor's candid admission before this assembled court provides official documentation that Paul—and by extension, the Christian faith he represents—is guilty of no crime against Rome. This will prove crucial as Christianity spreads; enemies cannot claim it was judged criminal by Roman officials.

Historical Context

This statement, made before witnesses including King Agrippa, Roman military commanders, and civic leaders of Caesarea, constitutes near-official exoneration of Paul and Christianity. While not a formal legal judgment, Festus's public acknowledgment that sending Paul without charges would be 'unreasonable' establishes precedent. Early Christian apologists later cited such official

acknowledgments when defending Christianity's legal status. The scene fulfills Jesus's prophecy that His followers would testify before 'governors and kings...for a testimony against them' (Matthew 10:18)—Paul's very presence, with no sustainable charges, testifies against his accusers.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Festus's frustration at having no charges to write actually serve as powerful evidence for Christianity's innocence before civil law?
2. What does this passage teach about the importance of maintaining good testimony and giving no legitimate grounds for accusation?
3. In what ways might God use even the procedural difficulties of unbelieving authorities to advance and protect gospel work?

Interlinear Text

ἄλογον	γάρ	μοι	δοκεῖ	πέμποντα	δέσμιον	μὴ
unreasonable	For	to me	it seemeth	to send	a prisoner	not withal
G249	G1063	G3427	G1380	G3992	G1198	G3361

καὶ	τὰς	κατ'	αὐτοῦ	αἰτίας	σημᾶναι
and	G3588	laid against	him	the crimes	to signify
G2532		G2596	G846	G156	G4591

Additional Cross-References

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

