

Acts 25:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.

Analysis

Let them therefore... which among you are able (οἱ δυνατοί, hoi dynatoi)—Festus invites 'the powerful ones' (Jewish leaders) to accompany him, revealing his awareness of the case's political complexity. His phrase **if there be any wickedness in him** (ἄτοπον, atopon—'anything out of place, improper') shows presumption of innocence, a cornerstone of Roman jurisprudence.

The conditional 'if' is legally significant. Festus refuses to assume guilt, requiring accusers to prove charges through proper legal procedure. This contrasts sharply with the mob violence and assassination plots that characterized earlier Jewish attempts to eliminate Paul.

Historical Context

Roman legal procedure required formal accusation, evidence, and defense. The 'able' (powerful) accusers would have been Sanhedrin members or chief priests, as common Jews lacked standing to bring capital charges. Festus's invitation acknowledges their religious authority while asserting Roman legal supremacy.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the principle of 'innocent until proven guilty' reflect God's justice and protect the vulnerable?
2. What does Festus's careful language teach about maintaining neutrality when faced with politically charged accusations?

Interlinear Text

Oi	οὐν	δυνατοὶ	ἐν	ὑμῖν	φησίν
G3588	Let them therefore	are able	he which among	you	said
	G3767	G1415	G1722	G5213	G5346

συγκαταβάντες	εἴ	τί	ἐστιν	ἄτοπον	ἐν	τῷ
go down with	G1487	G5100	there be	G824	he which among	G3588
G4782			G2076		G1722	

ἀνδρὶ	τούτῳ	κατηγορείτωσαν	αὐτοῦ
man	him	me and accuse	this
G435	G5129	G2723	G846

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