

STUDYING THE BOOK OF ACTS
IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Lesson 60 - Before the Sanhedrin - [Acts 23:1-11](#)

Read the following verses in the Last Days Bible or a translation of your choice. Then discuss the questions that follow. Questions should be studied by each individual before your discussion group meets.

Materials may be copied and used for Bible study purposes. Not to be sold.

23 Then Paul, looking straight into the eyes of the Council members, said, “Men and brothers, up to this moment I have a clear conscience about the way I have lived to please God.”

²Immediately the High Priest, Ananias, ordered those standing near him to strike him on the mouth.

³“God is about to strike you, you whitewashed wall*!” Paul retorted. “There you sit, intending to judge me according to the Law, but at the same time you are breaking the Law by commanding these men to strike me.”

Acts 23:3 – “You whitewashed wall*!” A hypocrite, fraud, deceiver.

⁴“How dare you insult God’s High Priest?” challenged those standing near him.

⁵“Brothers,” Paul replied, “I didn’t realize he was the High Priest, because the Scriptures tell us, ‘You shall not speak disrespectfully about a ruler of your people.’” (*Exodus 22:28*)

⁶But then Paul remembered that the Jewish Council was made up of both Pharisees and Sadducees, so he shouted, “Men and brothers, I am a Pharisee, and my father was a Pharisee. The reason I am being judged here today is because of the confident assurance I have that the dead will be resurrected to live again!”

⁷That statement caused an argument between the Pharisees and Sadducees, causing a split in the Council.

⁸Because the Sadducees claim there will be no resurrection, and that there are no angels or spirits, while the Pharisees believe in all of them.

⁹So a lot of shouting was the result. The teachers of the Law who were Pharisees stood up and fiercely argued, “We don’t find anything wrong with this man! If a spirit or an angel has spoken to him,” they said, “let’s not fight against God!”

¹⁰The argument became so heated that the commander feared Paul would be torn apart by them. So he ordered his soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and return him to the barracks.

¹¹But that night, the Lord stood beside him and said, “Keep up your courage, Paul! Because in the same way that you have courageously and earnestly taken a stand for Me here in Jerusalem, you must also tell others about Me in Rome.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 60 - Before the Sanhedrin - [Acts 23:1-11](#)

- 886. Why did the commander order the Sanhedrin to assemble? ([22:30](#))
- 887. What bold claims did Paul make? ([23:1](#))
- 888. What order did Ananias give? ([23:2](#))
- 889. What did Paul say in reaction to the high priest’s illegal command? ([23:3](#))
- 890. How did those standing nearby challenge Paul? ([23:4](#))
- 891. Why did Paul respond the way he did to the challenge? ([23:5](#))
- 892. How did Paul disrupt the proceedings? ([23:6-9](#))
- 893. How did Paul divide his enemies? ([23:6-9](#))
- 894. Why did the Pharisees side with Paul? ([23:9](#))
- 895. Why was Paul in extreme danger? ([23:10](#))
- 896. Where was Paul taken? ([23:10](#))
- 897. How was Paul comforted and encouraged? When? ([23:11](#))
- 898. How did the Lord confirm Paul’s plans to go to Rome? ([23:11](#))

Lesson 61 - The Plot to Kill Paul - [Acts 23:12-22](#)

The Plot to Kill Paul

¹²The next morning, however, some of the Jews got together and bound themselves by a curse neither to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.

¹³More than 40 men were involved in this conspiracy.

14 Then they went to the chief priests and elders and said, “We have bound ourselves by an oath, *asking God* to send a curse upon us if we eat anything before we kill Paul.

15 “Now then, we ask that you, together with the Council, ask the Roman commander to bring Paul down to you tomorrow so you can further study his case. We are prepared to kill him before he ever gets near this place.”

16 But the son of Paul’s sister heard of the plot, so he went into the barracks and told Paul.

17 Paul then called one of the captains over to him and said, “Please take this young man to the commander. He has a very important message for him.”

18 So the captain brought the boy to the commander and said, “Paul, the prisoner, called me over and asked that I bring this young man to you. He has an important message for you.”

19 The commander then took the boy by the hand and brought him aside. There he asked him privately, “What is it you wish to tell me?”

20 “The Jewish leaders have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down tomorrow to again appear before the Council,” he said, “pretending they want to question him some more.

21 “But please don’t do it, because more than 40 men will be waiting to attack him. They have put themselves under a curse not to eat or drink until they kill him. They are ready right now, just waiting for you to promise you’ll send him.”

22 The commander said, “Don’t tell even one person that you told me this,” after which he dismissed him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 61 - The Plot to Kill Paul - [Acts 23:12-22](#)

899. Why did the Jews form a conspiracy? ([23:12](#))

900. Who took an oath? Why? ([23:12](#))

901. How many men were involved in the plot against Paul? ([23:13](#))

902. How were the chief priests and elders accomplices in the plot against Paul? ([23:14-15](#))

903. What did the plotters want the Jewish elders to do? ([23:15](#))

904. When Paul’s nephew heard about the plot, what did he do? ([23:16](#))

905. How was the young man able to go before the commander? ([23:17-18](#))
906. What did the commander ask Paul's nephew? ([23:19](#))
907. What did the young man tell the commander? ([23:20-21](#))
908. How did the commander respond to the informant? ([23:22](#))
909. Why would the conspirators risk their own lives to kill Paul?

Lesson 62 – Paul Transferred to Caesarea - [Acts 23:23-35](#)

Paul Is Sent to Governor Felix

²³Then he called for two particular captains and ordered them, “Get 200 soldiers ready, as well as 70 horsemen and 200 soldiers armed with spears. You are to leave with them for Caesarea at nine o’clock tonight.

²⁴“Also have horses ready for Paul to ride, and bring him safely to Governor Felix.”

²⁵Then he wrote the following letter:

²⁶From Claudius Lysias,
To His Excellency, Governor Felix:
Greetings!

²⁷This man was mobbed by the Jews, and was about to be killed by them. When I learned that he was a Roman citizen, I rushed in with my troops and rescued him.

²⁸I wanted to know what they had against him, so I brought him down to appear before their Council.

²⁹I found he was being accused in some controversy involving their religion, but it certainly wasn't anything that would require the death penalty or even jail.

³⁰When I learned that the Jews are still plotting to kill him, I immediately sent him on to you. I have also ordered his accusers to state their charges against him before you. Farewell.

³¹So the soldiers took Paul, as they had been ordered, and brought him that night as far as Antipatris.

³²The next day, they let the soldiers on horses continue on with him, and the foot soldiers returned to the barracks.

³³When the horsemen arrived in Caesarea, they delivered the letter to the governor and turned Paul over to him.

34 When the governor had finished reading the letter, he asked Paul what province he was from.

“From Cilicia,” Paul replied.

35 “I will give your case a full hearing when your accusers also arrive,” he said. Then he ordered that he be kept in jail at Herod’s palace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Lesson 62 – Paul Transferred to Caesarea - [Acts 23:23-35](#)

910. Why was Paul sent to Caesarea? ([23:23](#))
911. Why was the apostle escorted from Jerusalem at night? ([23:23](#))
912. What orders did the commander give to get Paul away from danger? ([23:23-24](#))
913. How did the commander protect Paul? ([23:23-24](#))
914. Who wrote a letter to whom? Why? ([23:25-30](#))
915. What did the tribune say in his letter to Governor Felix? ([23:25-30](#))
916. In his letter, how did the commander bend the truth? ([23:27](#))
917. What important fact did Claudius omit from the record? ([23:25-30](#))
918. What important declaration did the commander make concerning Paul? ([23:29](#))
919. Where did the soldiers take Paul the first night? ([23:31](#))
920. Who escorted Paul the rest of the journey? ([23:32](#))
921. When the cavalry and Paul arrived, what did the governor do? ([23:33-35](#))
922. After Felix learned that Paul was from Cilicia, what did the governor determine to do? ([23:34-35](#))
923. What kind of reputation did Paul have?
924. How did God protect Paul?
925. What "human means" does God use to protect His people?

