

“THE GOD WHO IS FAITHFUL TO HIS PROMISE”

Acts 23:12-22

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INTRODUCTION

The Lord had just made a promise to Paul in 22:11: I will give you opportunity to witness for me in Rome as you have done in Jerusalem. However, Satan and Paul’s enemies did not know nor care about that promise, and they would do all that they could to keep Paul from ever leaving Jerusalem alive!

Please notice how serious the “children of this world” are in carrying out their business in comparison sometimes to the “children of light” in carrying out their business. But, fear not, for the Lord ceaselessly works even “in mysterious ways” in order to fulfill His plan.

YOU MUST ENTRUST YOUR LIFE TO THE SAFEKEEPING OF THE GOD TO WHOM YOU BELONG.

I. THE PLOT OF THE ‘JEWS’

- Note that Satan wastes no time—as soon as it was day.
 - The “Jews” here likely refer to the enemies of the Gospel, as often in John.
 - These could have been a band of the Sicarii. Strange to see them working together with the Sanhedrin—especially with the Sadducees, chief priests, who hated them!
- A. Their solemn “oath”—they anathematized themselves.
1. They would not eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.
 2. 40 of them made this pledge.
- B. Their complicity with a part of the Sanhedrin—“chief priests and elders”
- V. 14 gives a very strong statement of their pledge: “We have anathematized ourselves under an anathema!
 - They ask them to get the agreement of the entire Sanhedrin.
 - They want the Sanhedrin to notify the tribune to bring Paul down for a more thorough investigation (v. 15).
- C. Their plan to slay Paul on the way—before he comes near the place where the Sanhedrin meets.

II. THE PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION OF THE LORD (16)

- Paul’s nephew heard about the planned “ambush.”
- At the risk of his own life, he went to the barracks and warned Paul.
- What do we know about Paul’s family? How many were in Jerusalem? Were they for or against Paul?
- “Blood can be thicker than other ties!

III. THE PROMPT RESPONSE BY PAUL (17-18)

- Note his lighter state of imprisonment as a Roman citizen.

- Note his trusted relationship with the soldiers.
 - Note the title used, “Paul the prisoner”—Paul was not ashamed of his bonds (cf. Eph. 3:1; 4:1).
- A. Paul does not assume that he had no responsibility for his own safety and well-being.
 - B. Paul appeals to the one human leader who can actually do something about this situation.

IV. THE PLEASANT FAIRNESS OF THE TRIBUNE (19-22)

- Note that he does not “lord it over” the young man.
 - Note that he wisely sought privacy to make certain no one overheard.
- A. He takes the young man “by the hand.” This is an unusual act of gentleness and kindness from an important soldier.
 - B. He listens carefully and respectfully to the report (19b-21).
 1. He allows the lad to be very straightforward with him—“do not be persuaded by them.”
 2. “They are ready and waiting for the promise from you.”
 - C. He takes action to provide for the young man’s safety (22).

CONCLUSION

Isn’t the Lord Good?

Nothing catches Him by surprise; He is never off His guard!

He will never **leave nor forsake** His faithful servant, Paul; nor will He forsake you!

Wouldn’t it be nice to believe that this young man eventually became a believer?

Paul had evidently given up his family when he became a Christian (Phil. 3:7-8).

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