

# \* ACTS

The Continuing Work of Jesus

## \* A Providential Escort Toward Rome

Acts 23:11-35



### I. Jesus Stands by Paul (23:11)

The Lord visits Paul with most encouraging words that will provide calm courage in future difficulties.

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Implication

We should likewise be encouraged that

- God has good work for us to fulfill (Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 4:10)
- He will stand beside us to complete that work through adversity (Heb. 13:6)
- God supplies the strength (1 Peter 4:11)

### II. The Plot Formed (23:12-15)

- Paul's Jewish opponents were prepared to go to any extent to eliminate him.
- Paul was dependent on Roman justice and protection.

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Why was Paul such a threat?

- 1) He is regarded as attacking the fundamentals of Judaism.
- 2) He is the lightning rod for antagonism surrounding the growth of Gentile churches.

The religious leaders responded with unthinking hatred that was ultimately motivated by Satan. (2 Cor. 4:4)

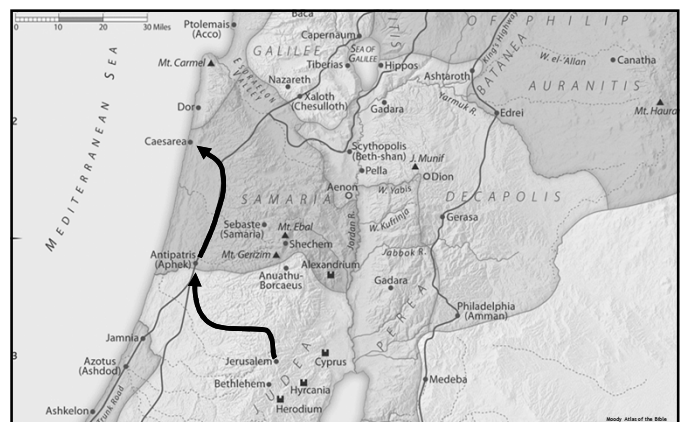
## II. The Plot Formed (23:12-15)

- *Application*  
Vigilante “justice” punishes with no authority to do so and often disproportionately, without the moderating principle of “an eye for an eye” (Ex. 21:24.)

## III. The Plot Found Out (23:16-22)

God begins to deliver Paul safely to Rome through human agents who act in their own interests.

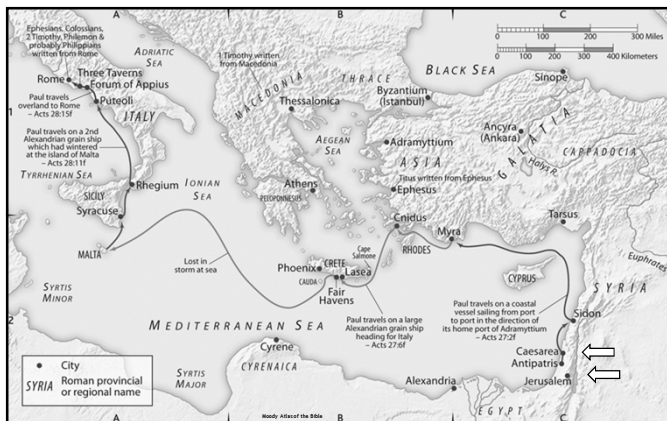
- Jews want to remove Paul from the scene.
- Paul’s nephew wants to protect his uncle’s life.
- The commander carries out his duty to safeguard his Roman citizen.



## IV. The Plot Foiled (23:23-35)

- Lysias takes too much credit, putting himself in a good light for his superior.
- Lysias sees himself as the protector of a Roman citizen from unjust treatment.
- Again, Luke shows God as Paul’s protector using flawed human agents
  - sometimes doing their job
  - sometimes embellishing the truth, and
  - sometimes intent on murder.





## V. Conclusions

### 1) *The Commander's Point of View*

- He is a better man than Paul's Jewish adversaries
- This whole thing is a Jewish mess
- *Implication*
- We, too, live in a messy world
- Difficult events are opportunities for us to demonstrate and speak of having peace in the midst of turmoil.

## V. Conclusions

### 2) *Luke's Point of View*

- We should not be surprised that unbelieving Jews wanted to kill Paul. (John 15:20)
- God providentially used human ambition, jealousy, and even religious fanaticism for the progress of the gospel

## V. Conclusions

### ➤ *Implication*

- Through disorder, conflict, and human blundering
- the gospel grows and prevails (19:20)
  - we take courage, remain faithful, and mature spiritually

*For I am sure of this very thing, that the one who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6).*