

Lesson II.

PAUL A PRISONER—THE PLOT

October 10, 1909

Acts 23 : 11-24. Study Acts 22 : 30 to 23 : 35—Memory Verse, 11.

Golden Text—I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress : my God ; in him will I trust.—Psalm 91 : 2.



11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul : for as thou hast testified of me in Jeru'salem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

12 And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.

13 And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him : and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain : for he hath a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me ?

20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldst bring down Paul to-morrow into the council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them : for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him : and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.

22 So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that thou hast shewed these things to me.

23 And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cesarea's, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night ;

24 And provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor.

THE LESSON RETOLD

The day after Paul had been put in prison, the Roman captain called together the high priest and the great Council of the Jews, and set Paul before them.

Paul explained that he had done no wrong of any kind, either against God or against the laws of the Jews. But everything that Paul said in the Council, caused so much noise and disturbance, that the chief captain commanded the soldiers to go down and take him away by force and shut him up again in the prison. The next night, as Paul lay in the prison, the Lord Himself came and said, "Do not be afraid, Paul : for as thou hast taught about Me here in Jerusalem, so shalt thou also teach in Rome."

Now the next morning, about forty Jews banded themselves together, and swore solemnly that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. They

went, therefore, to the chief priests and elders, and said to them, "We have agreed one with another not to eat nor drink, until we have killed Paul. Now, therefore, tell the chief captain to bring him down before the Council, as if you wished to ask some more questions of him, and while he is being brought, we will fall upon him and kill him."

But Paul's nephew heard of this plot, and came and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the officers, and said, "Take this young man to the chief captain, for he has something to tell him." So the centurion, for so these Roman officers were named, took the young man to the chief captain, saying, "Paul the prisoner asked me to bring this young man to see you." The chief captain, taking the young man by the hand, led him aside and asked what he had to tell him. Then the young man told about the wicked plot to kill Paul.