

Now that the commander knew that Paul was a Roman citizen, the apostle, while held for safe keeping, was allowed considerable liberty, his friends being permitted to visit him. At Paul's request, **one of the centurions** (Roman officers over hundreds) takes the young man to tell his story to the **chief captain**, the commander of the Roman garrison. **Paul the prisoner.** Compare Eph. 3 : 1 ; 4 : 1 ; 2 Tim. 1 : 8 ; Philemon 1, 9. **Prayed ; asked.** **Took him by the hand ;** to encourage him. When the commander had heard the lad's story, he sent him away, charging him to keep it secret from all others.

**III. A PLOT DEFEATED.—23, 24. Called . . two of the centurions** (Rev. Ver.) ; selected as specially trustworthy. **Soldiers ;** heavy-armed infantry. **Spearman ;** literally "graspers by the right hand", from their carrying a spear in that hand, a special class of light-armed soldiers. **Third hour of the night ;** 9 o'clock p.m. This large escort was provided for fear of ambuscades. **Beasts, that they might** (Rev. Ver.) **set Paul on ;** asses or horses, but not war-horses. More than one would be needed, to provide relays or for baggage **Safe unto Felix the governor ;** the Roman ruler of Judea ; his headquarters were at Caesarea.

Ch. 25 : 23-35 tell us that Paul's escort bore a letter from Claudius Lysias, the Roman commander at Jerusalem, to Felix, explaining why this prisoner was being sent to him. When Felix had read this letter, he ordered Paul to be kept in prison until his accusers should come to Caesarea.

#### THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



**THE ROAD FROM JERUSALEM TO CAESAREA** lay, first, for about three hours, northward along the Central Range of Palestine. It then turned to the left eastwards, and presently began to descend among the western hills and valleys of the mountain country, until the last ridge was reached, which overlooked the great plain of Sharon. The road now turned northwards across the rich lands of the plain,

through fields of wheat and barley, just ready for the harvest when Paul made his night journey, guarded by Roman soldiers. The distance was about 64 miles.

#### LESSON QUESTIONS

How was Paul's life in danger ? By whom was he rescued ?

11 Who appeared to Paul in the night ? Mention a previous appearance of Jesus to the apostle in a time of trial. What words of comfort did Jesus speak ? What promise did He make ?

12-15 Who formed a plot against Paul's life ? Explain "bound themselves under a curse". What shows that they intended to carry out their purpose quickly ? To whom did they make their purpose known ? To what party did these belong ? Why would they approve of the murderers' plan ?

16-22 Who told Paul of the plot ? To whom did Paul have the young man taken ? By whom ? How did the "chief captain" encourage him ? After relating his story, what was he told to do ?

23, 24 What escort was provided for Paul ? Why were so many needed ? To what governor was he sent ? At what place ?

What did Felix order regarding Paul ?

#### FOR DISCUSSION

1. How God overrules opposition for the furthering of His purposes ?
2. Should evil vows be kept ?

#### A LESSON FOR LIFE

The ancient hero Cadmus, before he could build a city, had to slay a dragon which guarded the site. He sowed the dragon's teeth in a field, like wheat, and they grew up into an army of giants ready to destroy him. He threw a rock amongst them, which struck one of them in the breast. This set them fighting with one another, till all were slain but one, who became Cadmus' helper in building the city. When we are on the right side, we are sure to win out, in spite of our enemies, be they never so many and powerful.

**Prove from Scripture—Thou God is a Shield.**

**Shorter Catechism—Ques. 31. What is effectual calling ?** A. Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel.

**The Question on Missions—2.** How large is the island of Formosa, and what is its population ? Formosa is 264 miles long, and 80 miles wide at its widest part. Only about one-third of the island is cultivated, the other two-thirds being a mass of mountains. The population is about 3,000,000.

#### FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

1. What plot was formed against Paul ?

2. How was he delivered from it ?