

BETWEEN THE LESSONS—There is no break between Lessons I. and II.

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.

Memorize v. 11. THE LESSON PASSAGE—Acts 23: 11-24. Study Acts 22: 30 to 23: 35.

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, ¹Paul: for as thou hast testified ²of me ³in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

12 And when it was day, ⁴certain 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 ⁵had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and ⁶elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, ⁷that we will eat nothing until we have ⁸slain Paul.

15 Now therefore ⁹ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you ¹⁰to-morrow, as though ye would ¹¹enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to ¹²kill him.

16 ¹³And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, ¹⁴he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 ¹⁵Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath ¹⁶a certain thing to tell him.

18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief

Revised Version—¹Omit Paul; ²concerning; ³at; ⁴Omit certain of; ⁵Omit had; ⁶the; ⁷to taste nothing; ⁸killed; ⁹do; ¹⁰Omit to-morrow; ¹¹judge of his case more exactly; ¹²slay; ¹³But Paul's; ¹⁴and he came; ¹⁵And Paul called unto him one of the centurions; ¹⁶something; ¹⁷said; ¹⁸asked; ¹⁹to; ²⁰And the; ²¹going aside asked him privately; ²²ask; ²³to bring down; ²⁴unto; ²⁵thou wouldst; ²⁶more exactly concerning him; ²⁷Do not thou therefore yield; ²⁸under a curse, neither to eat nor to drink; ²⁹slain; ³⁰Omit then; ³¹go, charging him, tell; ³²signified; ³³of the centurions, and said; ³⁴as far as; ³⁵he bade them provide beasts; ³⁶night; ³⁷thereon.

Daily Readings—(Courtesy, I.B.R.A.)—M.—Paul a prisoner—the plot, Acts 22: 30 to 23: 11. T.—Paul a prisoner—the plot, Acts 23: 12-22. W.—Paul a prisoner—the plot, Acts 23: 23-35. Th.—Paul a Pharisee, Phil. 3: 1-14. F.—Warning and comfort, Luke 21: 10-19. S.—A hiding place, Ps. 27. S.—My Refuge, Ps. 91.

THE LESSON EXPLAINED



A LIGHT-ARMED
ROMAN SOLDIER

The day following Paul's arrest, the Roman commander summoned a meeting of the Sanhedrin. Paul addressed the Council, laying stress on the resurrection of the dead. This caused so violent a dispute between the Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection and the Sadducees who disbelieved it,—the Pharisees protecting Paul and the Sadducees trying to tear him from them,—that the commander feared for the apostle's life and sent soldiers to rescue him by force, ch. 22: 30 to 23: 10.

J. A PLOT CONTRIVED.

—11. The night following;

Paul's appearance before the Sanhedrin. The Lord; that is, Jesus. Stood by him; as in Corinth, when Paul had met with bitter opposition, ch. 18: 6, 9, 10. Be of good cheer; words often on the lips of Jesus during His earthly life, Matt. 9: 2; 14: 27; John 16: 33. As thou hast testified . . . in Jerusalem; borne witness which had brought down on him the

wrath of the Jews, but had won the approval of the Master. So must thou; because it is God's purpose, which no human opposition could overthrow. Bear witness also at Rome; where Paul had longed to preach (Rom. 1: 11-13), and whither he had made plans to go, Acts 19: 21.

12-15. When it was day; having been busy plotting murder, while the Lord was cheering Paul. Certain . . . Jews banded together. These may have been some such desperate men as the "murderers" (literally, dagger-men) of ch. 21: 38. Bound themselves under a curse; called down on themselves the most terrible punishments of God, if they should not fulfill their word. Neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. So swiftly did they mean to make away with him. More than forty . . . made this conspiracy (plot). So widely had the excitement about Paul spread. Came to the chief priests (who belonged to the Sadducees, Paul's bitter enemies) and the elders (Rev. Ver.); that is, such of them as were of the same party. These would gladly approve the plan of the murderers to rid them of Paul. Vs. 14 and 15 tell how it was proposed to carry out the plot.

II. A PLOT REVEALED.—16-22. Paul's sister's son; the only reference to Paul's family in Acts (but compare Rom. 16: 7, 11). Heard . . . entered into the castle (Antonia), and told Paul.