Lesson VI.

THE PLOT AGAINST PAUL

May 10, 1903

Acts 23: 12-22. Study vs. 10-35. Commmit to memory vs. 20-22. Read Acts 22: 29 to 23: 9.

12 And when it was day, I 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 2 had made this conspiracy.

14 And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, 3 that we will eat nothing until we have 4 slain Paul.

Paul.

15 Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you 5 tomorrow, as though ye would 6 enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to 7 kill him.

16 8 And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, 9 he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul.

17 Then Paul called one of the conturious unto

17 Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said. Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath 10 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 11 prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.

19 T? an the chief captain took him by the hand, and 12 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 13 desire thee that thou wouldest oring down Paul to-morrow 14 into the council, as though 13 they would enquire somewhat 16 of him more perfectly.

21 But do not thou yield unto them : for there lie in wait for him of them nore than forty men, which have bound themselves 17 with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for 18 a promise from thee

22 So the chief captain then let the young man 12 depart, and charged him, See thou tell no man that thou hast 20 shewed these things to me.

Revised Version—1 On it certain of: 20mit had: 3 to taste: 4 killed: 5 Omit to-morrow; 6 judge of his case more exactly; 7 slav; 8 Pat Paul's: 9 and he came; 10 something; 11 asked: 12 going aside asked him privately; 13 ask: 14 unto: 15 thou wouldest: 16 more exactly concerning him; 17 under a curse neither to eat; 18 the; 19 go, charging him, Tent; 20 signified.

EXPLANATION

Connection-The events between this Lesson and the previous one are: Paul's speech from the castle stairs; his rescue by the soldiers from the Jews enraged by his mention of the Gentiles; his escape from scourging by claiming to be a Roman citizen; his defence next day before the council; another rescue

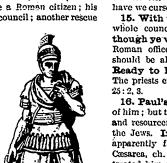
by the soldiers; and a vision of the Saviour at night, ch. 22:1 to 23:11.

12. Banded together. They saw that the Roman officer would not punish Paul, unless they could prove him guilty of some crime; and so they resolved to kill him. Bound themselves under a curse; called down God's anathema or curse upon themselves, if they did not keep their vow. It shows how desperately in earnest they were. Neither eat nor drink; an ancient form of oath, 1 Sam. 14: 24. It made fools, too, in Paul's case, of those who took it.

13. More than forty.

It would be easy to get any number of men to do the deed, so bitterly did they hate Paul, ch. 22: 21, 22. Conspiracy; from a Latin word meaning "to breathe together," a secret agreement as if whispering together. Some think that these men belonged to the Sicarii or Assassins referred to in ch. 21:38.

14. The chief priests and elders; members of the Jewish council, ch. 22:30. We have bound ourselves. They do not hesitate to tell the plot to the council, who were as eager for Paul's blood as



A Roman Centurion

themselves. They thought they were doing a re-... ous act. Under a great curse. The expression used by the conspirators is one which denotes great earnestness. Its literal translation is, "with a curse have we cursed ourselves."

15. With the council; with the approval of the whole council. Signify; give notice to. As though ye would enquire. It would seem to the Roman officer quite reasonable that the council should be allowed to examine Paul more closely. Ready to kill him; on his way to the council. The priests evidently consented to this villainy, ch.

16. Paul's sister's son. Nothing more is known of him; but this one deed showed him faithful, brave and resourceful. Heard. It was no secret among the Jews. Into the castle. Paul's friends had apparently free access to him, as afterwards at Casarea, ch. 24:23. The chief captain may have treated him the more mildly because he wished to make amends for his fault in having bound a Roman citizen (ch. 22:27-29) contrary to law.

17, 18. Brought him to the chief captain. The centurion's compliance with Paul's request shows the Roman sense of fair play, also the respect which Paul's conduct had gained for him. Paul the prisoner; probably still bound with chains, ch. 21:33. Prayed. The old meaning of this word was simply "to ask." Paul had asked the centurion.

19. Took him by the hand; in a friendly way, to make him feel at home. What is that, etc.? He was anxious to know; for plots were very common, and governors and officers had ever to be on their guard.

20-22. The Jews have agreed. The story is again told, perhaps in the lad's own words. A promise from thee; to send Paul to the Jewish council. Charged him; to keep silence, to give him time to rescue Paul (see vs. 23, 24).