

crimes of blood had been committed repeatedly in the temple courts. The interruption may have saved Paul's life by giving time for the Romans to come.

**31.** *Went about* ["were seeking"] *to kill him.* Had begun to beat him to death. *Tidings came unto* ["up to"] *the chief captain* [Margin, "military tribune"] *of the band* [Margin, "cohort"]. The organization of the Roman guard was perfect. Each soldier and officer reported to his superior, and in a few moments the news had been passed from the sentinel on the Tower of Antonia to the tribune. When Herod the Great rebuilt the temple he erected also the great fortress of Antonia, which extended from the temple wall northward and westward. It was now the military headquarters of the Romans, and served as barracks for the garrison of five or six hundred men. It was closely connected by stairs and by underground passages (Edersheim) with the temple cloisters. The name of the chief captain or tribune was Claudius Lysias. His behavior in this emergency was admirable. *All Jerusalem was in an uproar* ["confusion"]. Whatever disturbed the temple imperiled the order of the entire city.

**32.** The tribune rushed down with the *soldiers and centurions* (captains each of one hundred men), and promptly ended the murderous assault on Paul. At the approach of the soldiers the crowd left off beating him.

**33.** *Then the chief captain came near, and took* ["laid hold on"] *him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains.* He was fastened on each side to a soldier, and for the present was secure from the mob. Remember the prophecy of Agabus (Acts 21. 11). *Demanded* ["inquired"] of the excited people *who he was, and what he had done.*

**34.** But his efforts were unavailing. *Some cried* ["shouted"] *one thing, some another, among the multitude* ["crowd"]; *and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult* ["uproar"], *he commanded him to be carried* ["brought"] *into the castle* (of Antonia).

**35, 36.** *When he came upon the stairs* the crowd pressed so violently upon him that he was borne off the soldiers to make sure of his

safety. We are to think of him as being lifted upon the shoulders of the soldiers, and passed over to the staircase out of reach of the people who followed after, crying, *Away with him*, which, of course, means, "Kill him." The same words had been used against Jesus twenty-seven or twenty-eight years before.

**37.** *As Paul was to be led* ["about to be brought"] *into the castle.* He had reached the top of the staircase and was now outside the limits of the temple, but not yet in the castle. *May I speak* ["say something"] *unto thee.* Paul's quiet courtesy is observable here as everywhere. He assumed that the tribune spoke Greek, and addressed him in that language. *Canst thou speak* ["Dost thou know"] *Greek?* This is not a question for information, but an exclamation of astonishment at Paul's culture. He thought he had captured a Jewish robber and guerilla, but finds instead a gentleman of culture.

**38.** *Art not thou that Egyptian* ["Art thou not then the Egyptian"] *which before these days madest an uproar* ["who before these days stirred up to sedition"], *and leddest* ["led"] *out into the wilderness* ["the"] *four thousand men that were murderers* ["of the Assassins"]? Why the tribune should thus have identified Paul is not plain. Perhaps this was one of the things shouted by the crowd (verse 34). The Egyptian Jew referred to had come from Egypt to Jerusalem several years before this, declaring himself to be a prophet and calling the street crowds to the Mount of Olives to witness the miraculous overthrow of the city's walls. Besides the rabble there were among his followers a set of criminals called Sicarii, or Assassins. But the Roman soldiers of the city made short work with them, killing four hundred and capturing two hundred. The Egyptian Jew himself was not captured, and it must have brought delight to the heart of Claudius Lysias to believe (for a minute or two) that he had secured this outlaw. The word rendered "Assassins" means "men armed with daggers."

**39.** Paul modestly stated who he was and asked permission to address the crowd.

## HOMILETICAL AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

### PAUL AGAIN IN JERUSALEM.

This visit of Paul to Jerusalem was at the close of his third missionary tour. Twenty years before he had left Jerusalem on his persecuting mission to Damascus. What a change

had come over him during those twenty years! Then he was filled with wrath and self-righteousness; now he bore in his "body the marks of the Lord Jesus" and was as humble as a little child. Then he "breathed out threaten-

ings and Lord;" now to a great

The evangelist illustrates God man. Four great rest, one before more remarkable epistles were his consequences, to the Christians, to the world. Now it was addresses, able portions of Scripture, more important the world to go where limitations, ties for God, imprisonment, instances, conditions shall never on either side to the world.

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Rumors of chief captain commendable Paul from the thus described Twentieth C. 31-39: "The when the new son regiment in commotion some officers crowd. When men they su