



**God's Purposes Prevail:  
Even Through Plots and Prison  
Acts 22:25-23:35  
(Lesson #31)**



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**19-point outline of Chapter 22:25-23:35:**

- 1) We pick up the account as Paul is stretched out and ready to be integrated by flogging when he asked the centurion standing by: "Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?"
- 2) The centurion immediately informs the tribune that Paul is a Roman citizen (22:26).
- 3) The tribune immediately questions Paul about his Roman citizenship and ultimately withdraws from flogging Paul, in fear because he had bound a Roman citizen (22:27-29).
- 4) The next day the tribune commands the chief priest and all the council to meet so that he can ascertain what the charges are against Paul (22:30).
- 5) Paul opens the inquiry very respectfully, but also authoritatively, and starts by telling the council that he has lived his life before God with a good conscience up to this day, the high priest immediately commands one who stood by to strike Paul on the mouth (23:1-2).
- 6) Paul immediately rebukes the high priest, at which point bystanders question Paul for speaking evil of the high priest. Paul informs them he did not know he was the high priest but concurs that the Old Testament commands not to speak evil of the rulers (23:3-5).
- 7) At this point, Paul perceiving that the council contains both Pharisees and Sadducees, and he cried out that he is a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, and it is because of the resurrection that he is on trial (23:6).
- 8) This immediately created chaos and confusion in the meeting and the dissension became so violent that the tribune was afraid that Paul would be torn apart, so he ordered the soldiers to take Paul back to the Antonio Fortress (23:7-10).
- 9) The next evening the Lord appeared to Paul and told him to take courage and that Paul would testify of him in Rome (23:11).
- 10) When it was day, more than 40 Jews plotted against Paul and bound themselves in an oath that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul (23:12-12).
- 11) This group, then brings the chief priest and the elders in on their conspiracy by going to them and informing them of their plan and asking that they send for Paul under the guise of continuing to understand his case (23:14-15).
- 12) Paul's sister's son learned of the plot, went to the fortress and informed Paul of what he had learned, Paul asked that the young man be taken to the tribune (23:16-18).
- 13) Paul's nephew informed the tribune of the plot against Paul (23:19-21).
- 14) The tribune dismissed Paul's nephew commanding him not to tell anyone that he had informed the tribune of the conspiracy (23:22).
- 15) The tribune having learned of the plot against Paul, called for two centurions, with 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen, and 200 spearmen to escort Paul to Caesare and deliver him safely to the governor Felix (23:23-25).
- 16) The tribune wrote a short letter to Felix outlining all that had happened and why he was sending Paul to Felix (23:26-30).
- 17) The soldiers took Paul by night to Antipatris, and then on the next day returned allowing the horsemen to escort Paul to Caesarea (23:31-32).
- 18) When the horsemen arrived at Caesarea, they delivered the letter from the tribune as well as Paul to Felix (23:33).
- 19) Upon reading the letter, Felix asked Paul what providence he was from. Having learned Paul was from Cilicia, he informed Paul that he would hear the matter against Paul when his accusers arrived (23:34-35).

**22:24 - The tribune ordered him (Paul) to be brought into the barracks, saying that he should be examined by flogging, to find out why they were shouting against him like this.**

You can sense the frustration of the tribune. The crowd is going crazy and attempting to kill this man, yet it is unclear what he has done.

The tribune brings Paul into the Antonio Fortress and likely states to one of the centurions that he intends to examine Paul by flogging. The tribune has decided Paul likely knows why everyone is going crazy and he plans to scourge Paul until Paul explained to him what was happening.

**Vs 25 - But when they had stretched him out for the whips, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?"**

So they stretched Paul out to be whipped. Paul then looked at the centurion standing by and said: **"Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen and uncondemned?"**

We talked about this last week, I will say only one additional thing, we do not know why Paul held this back, but this is Paul's **trump card**, this is his **wild (draw four)** card, this is his get out of jail free card! What they were getting ready to do was not legal to be done to a Roman citizen.

Now let's be honest, there is no reason that the tribune would have thought Paul was a Roman citizen. Also imagine how Paul looks at this point.

**Vs 26 - When the centurion heard this, he went to the tribune and said to him, "What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."**

The centurion recognizing that if this man was a Roman citizen they were breaking multiple laws that could result in their own punishment, goes to the tribune and said: **"What are you about to do? For this man is a Roman citizen."**

This of course is a **rhetorical question**. He is really saying, hey, this man is claiming to be a Roman citizen. Did you know that? If so, what are you doing?

**Vs 27 - So the tribune came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" And he said, "Yes."**

Then the tribune came to Paul and asked: **"Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?"** The Greek expresses the question more emphatically, literally: **"You, a Roman?"**

We can imagine he looked him in the eyes, after all he had no reason to imagine he was a Roman citizen. Paul responds with a one-word response, simply - "Yes."

History tells us that Roman citizenship could be obtained in a **number of different ways**:

- 1) By being born of a Roman citizen (initially, just the father, later either father or mother).
- 2) If you were a freed slave of a Roman citizen, you could become a Roman citizen.
- 3) By being granted Roman citizenship by imperial decree for services rendered.
- 4) Military service of 25 years.
- 5) By purchasing your citizenship.
- 6) Entire communities could be granted citizenship if the emperor decreed.

By the way the penalty for claiming you were a Roman citizen, and you were not, was punishable by death.

**Vs 28 - The tribune answered, "I bought this citizenship for a large sum." Paul said, "But I am a citizen by birth."**

Then the tribune, likely probing to see if what Paul was saying was actually true said: **"I bought this citizenship for a large sum."** Paul responded: **"But I am a citizen by birth."**

Being born a Roman citizen was very **prestigious**.

**INTERESTING NOTE:** For citizens who purchased or where granted their citizenship, they usually took the **name of the sponsor**.

This man's name was Claudius Lysias (23:26), it is likely that he purchased his citizenship through the sponsorship of emperor Claudius.

***Vs 29 - So those who were about to examine him withdrew from him immediately, and the tribune also was afraid, for he realized that Paul was a Roman citizen and that he had bound him.***

Likely under the direction of the tribune, those who were about to examine Paul withdrew from him immediately. **You can sense the urgency.** They withdrew quickly; they withdrew without delay.

Literally in the Greek it indicates that they **not only withdrew**, but they **stood a great way off** from him.

Equally, the tribune was afraid. At this point, he now fully realized that Paul was a Roman citizen, and they had broken the law by binding him and were in process of really going against the law by flogging him.

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***Vs 30 - But on the next day, desiring to know the real reason why he was being accused by the Jews, he unbound him and commanded the chief priests and all the council to meet, and he brought Paul down and set him before them.***

On the next day, because the tribune was unable to get any answers by scourging and he is trying to ascertain how serious this Paul problem was, and he is trying to understand if he should continue to hold him, on the next day he turns **to the Jewish high court** for help.

Notice how Luke describes it: **“desiring to know the REAL reason why Paul is being accused of the Jews.”**

The tribune unbinds Paul and **commands the chief priests and the council (the Sanhedrin) to meet.**

The chief priests were either the leaders of the 24 priestly courses, or those still living who had served as High Priest, scholars are not positive.

It is **likely** that he commanded them to meet at **the Antonio Fortress**. This too, I find **extremely intriguing** that this tribune is commanding the Sanhedrin to meet and **formalize some charge against Paul.**

This was more than likely to determine if a trial was necessary. He brings Paul down to the meeting place and he sets Paul before them (the Sanhedrin) so that they can fully explain what the Jews are accusing Paul of doing.

***23:1 - And looking intently at the council, Paul said, "Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day."***

Now I want you to put yourself in Paul's shoes. He is now seated before the council, the Sanhedrin. He is now seated before leaders in Israel. We can imagine, once again, he plans to tell them about Jesus!

Paul sat before the council and Luke tells us he looked intently; he fixed his eyes upon the council. As Paul looked intently at them, he said: **“Brothers...”**

Once again, in spite of all the violence that Paul has suffered at the hands of his fellow countrymen, he speaks to them with great **solidarity** as he calls them **brothers**.

But there is another point I want you to see, Paul placed himself on equal footing with those in the council, they are **not rulers, elders, or fathers**, they are **brothers**!

Then he states: **I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day."**

What an amazing statement, but this requires some clarification:

**FIRST**, please do not think that Paul thought he was sinless, he surely did not (I Tim 1:15). He meant that when God pricked his heart, he responded to God.

**SECOND**, also please do not think that Paul thinks this buys him any standing before the throne of God (Ro 5:12). **Paul recognized that we could not save ourselves, we need God to show us grace!**

But he is telling the Sanhedrin, I have lived a life where when my conscience convinced me of sin, I responded.

Of course, in context, he is also saying and I did no wrong yesterday and the days proceeding there on the temple mount. To be honest, this seems like a **non-controversial start**.

Now before we read on, I will read between the lines, it seems based on his respectful address, based on how he opens about his conscience, Paul is going to tell his story and share the gospel with the Sanhedrin.

**But, look what happened next!**

*Vs 2 - And the high priest Ananias commanded those who stood by him to strike him on the mouth.*

Then Luke records that the high priest Ananias, commanded those who stood by Paul to **strike him on the mouth**.

This is shocking. Imagine something like this happening in Congress. This is beyond the pale. Now, Paul's statement had clearly riled up the high priest! But why?

Two possibilities come to mind:

- 1) The high priest could not accept this claim coming from a Jesus follower.
- 2) This claim brought great conviction, and the high priest lashed out.

History tells us that Ananias was a very wicked high priest. Our text supports that conclusion. *Josephus tells us that the high priest at this time was a man he called "Ananias ben Nebedeus." He served as high priest from 47-58 AD and he was an insolent, hot-tempered, profane man who was also very greedy.*

History also tells us that he was deposed in 58 AD and assassinated by zealots in 66 AD.

*Vs 3 - Then Paul said to him, "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Are you sitting to judge me according to the law, and yet contrary to the law you order me to be struck?"*

WOW! There is no doubt that **Paul was shocked** at what had just taken place, now look at his response!

Then Paul looked not at the person that hit him, but instead the person that gave the command, the high priest and said: *"God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Are you sitting to judge me according to the law, and yet contrary to the law you order me to be struck?"*

Paul's response:

- 1) The **way you had me struck, God will strike you.**
- 2) You are a whitewashed wall.
  - a. You are a teetering and broke down wall, that only the whitewash is holding up.
  - b. You are a **hypocrite**.

Then he asked a **probing rhetorical question**. Are you **sitting here to judge me** according to the law and yet contrary to the law you **order me to be struck when I have done nothing**.

*Vs 4 - Those who stood by said, "Would you revile God's high priest?"*

Then, likely some of the Sanhedrin who were standing by, said to Paul. **Would you revile, speak evil of, insult God's high priest?**

*Vs 5 - And Paul said, "I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"*

Then Paul quickly responded, **“I did not know brothers.”** Paul still sees himself as a member of the **Hebrew family**.

It is a little surprising that Paul did not know Ananias was the high priest. There are a few possible reasons why including, Paul had poor eyesight, he had been away from Jerusalem for so long, and/or the high priest was not wearing high priestly garments since this was a meeting at the Antonio Fortress. Some have even suggested this was sarcasm on Paul’s part.

Then Paul quotes why what he did was wrong, for it is written: **“You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.”** This quote comes from (Ex 12:28).

Paul openly acknowledges his wrong. This does not change the fact that what the high priest did was wrong.

**APPLICATION!** When we realize we are wrong, I pray our repentance is this quick!

The second thing that should catch our attention is how **relevant the word of God was to Paul** and how **Paul quickly pulled a verse to condemn his own incorrect behavior**.

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This is where this whole event gets **very interesting!**

*Vs 6 - Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial."*

As Paul is there before the council, having just **been punched in the mouth**, likely recognizing that this is a **hostile audience**. **Also, recognizing** that the council contained both **Pharisees** and **Sadducees**, who normally never get along, but here they are united against him.

**PAUSE:** We have talked about the Sadducees before, but to sum up their key fundamental points of the Jewish faith, the Sadducees rejected:

- 1) The resurrection
- 2) Angels and demons
- 3) Heaven and hell
- 4) They only believed in the first five books of the Bible.

When Paul perceived that part of the council were Sadducees and the other part Pharisees, he cried out in the council: *"Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial."*

Now this is interesting at a number of different levels:

**FIRST**, why did Paul say this? **We can only speculate**. I am speculating (Rich’s opinion) that based on what happened with the **high priest**, he knew he was not going to get a **fair hearing**.

So, he decides to take steps to **completely dismiss the audience** and thus dismiss the charges they were trying to make. He took what we might call a **divide and conqueror step**. He took a theological hand grenade and chucked in into the council!

Paul knew the **topic of the afterlife** would create a **theological rift** between these **two groups** who were **both currently set against him** for his destruction.

**SECOND**, interesting point here. We knew that Paul was a Pharisee, trained at the feet of Gamaliel, but notice also that Paul is at a minimum, a **second-generation Pharisee**, he is the **son of a Pharisee**.

It is interesting, that in the **Greek he uses the present tense**. **I am a Pharisee**.

**THIRD**, what Paul said; it is *with respect to the hope of the resurrection of the dead that he was on trial*.

Paul had met the resurrected Jesus and knew that resurrection was true. What Paul seems to be saying is the **real reason I stand before you is in respect to the hope of a future resurrection**. That is what is really on trial!

*Vs 7 - And when he had said this, a dissension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly was divided.*

As predicted, Paul knew how to **dismantle this unlikely confederation**. As soon as he brought up the resurrection of the dead, a **dissension arose** among the council, among the Sanhedrin, specifically between the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the assembly was divided, as we might imagine down party lines.

The word translated “**dissension**” is the Greek word **στάσις (stasis)**, it means an **insurrection**, an **uproar**.

One **wonders** what the **tribune made of all this**. **First**, on the temple mount the Jews went crazy when the gentiles were mentioned. Now, these “distinguished” men of the Sanhedrin, go crazy when the resurrection of the dead is mentioned.

Two important reminders from their own Bible (Pr 16:32, Pr 25:28).

*Vs 8 - For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.*

As we discussed the Sadducees rejected all of the supernatural aspects of the Jewish faith, while the Pharisees acknowledged all of these things. It is sad that these arch enemies who could not stand each other were able to get along in their attack against Jesus and now Paul.

*Vs 9 - Then a great clamor arose, and some of the scribes of the Pharisees’ party stood up and contended sharply, “We find nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or an angel spoke to him?”*

Then there in the council, Luke records that a great clamor arose. The Greek word translated clamor can be translated **a great outcry!**

Some of the Pharisees’ party, stood up and **contended sharply**, with those who were Sadducees! The Greek word here is a hapax legomenon. It is only used here, it means to **strive** or **to fight!** A **brawl** was **beginning to break out!**

The scribes of the Pharisees’ party then stated, **we find nothing wrong in this man. What if a spirit or angel spoke to him?”** Here let’s just say half in attendance all of a sudden sided with Paul!

This might be comical, if it were not so sad. This is the leading spiritual body of Israel at the time.

You see what has happened here, Paul with one sentence has set the Pharisees against the Sadducees which has set the Sanhedrin against itself, with the **two factions warring with one another**.

*Vs 10 - And when the dissension became violent, the tribune, afraid that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him away from among them by force and bring him into the barracks.*

Then the **dissension** became **violent**. Literally in the Greek this developed into **MUCH dissension!** This is the **same Greek word that we read in verse 7**. Except now the **dissension** is **growing and increasing**.

The tribune, observing this uproar, this riot that is forming, and fearing that Paul would be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him, by force and bring him back to the barracks.

The tribune has to think these Jews are **CRAZY!**



*Vs 11 - The following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."*

The following night the **Lord stood by Paul**. We can **imagine** this was a **difficult night for Paul**.

Paul had been given a chance to preach to a crowd on the temple mount, and it blew up and they tried to kill him. He had a chance to share with the Sanhedrin, but he had to derail his discussion, because he knew he would not get a fair trial. **Paul was likely a little discouraged.**

He loved his fellow-countrymen, who many hated the gospel and hated him (Rom 9:2-3).

Then we read, Jesus said to Paul: *"Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."*

Take courage Paul. The Greek word translated "take courage" is **θαρσέω (tharseo)**. This word is translated a few different ways, let me give you some; take courage, have courage, be of good cheer, take heart.

You may be **feeling down here**, but **take courage, be of good cheer**.

Then Jesus says to Paul, as you testified of me in Jerusalem you **must testify of me in Rome**.

Jesus came and encouraged Paul in the midst of a very difficult time. By the way, Paul does not know it, **but the trouble is just getting started. But Jesus is with him!**

**As we will see, Paul will go to Rome, but nothing like he thought!** He would go as a prisoner of Rome.

If Paul was **down**, this would have no doubt brought him up. This would have no doubt brought him **great comfort**.

**APPLICATION:** Can I just remind us, when we are feeling alone, or maybe even when we are feeling like we blew it.

**We are never alone!** The one who has redeemed us has promised us that he will never leave us nor forsake us. He is with us at all times. Equally, we have one another, when we are down, when we are hurting, lean on Jesus and reach out to a fellow Truth Seeker!

*Vs 12 - When it was day, the Jews made a plot and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.*

### **FROM BAD TO WORSE!!!**

Once it was **daytime** the Jews met and **hatched a plot to kill Paul**. We are not sure who this **group of Jews were**. But these were Jewish assassins, who have banded together to kill Paul.

As we read this, we do not know how many, but we will be told in the next verse that it was **more than 40**.

Further, we see that these Jews enter into an oath that they will not eat or drink until they have killed Paul. This is **not a long-term plan**, but instead one they intend to fulfill in the next day or two.

Paul's life is in the balance and a group of Jews had together taken an oath that they will not eat or drink again until Paul is dead.

This seems like the end of Paul's life, but I would remind us of what Jesus had told Paul: *"Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."* Paul will one day die, but not today and not before he testifies of the Lord Jesus in Rome!

*Vs 13-14 - There were more than forty who made this conspiracy. 14 They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul."*

Here Luke tells us plainly that it was more than 40.

They then went to the chief priests and the elders of Israel and said: We have bound ourselves with an oath not to eat or drink until we have killed Paul.

**JUST A SIDE NOTE.** One would have thought that these leaders of the Jewish faith would turn these men away from committing murder, but this is how far the Jews had drifted from Yahweh. These assassins have brought the council, at least some of the council, in on their conspiracy.

*Vs 15 - Now therefore you, along with the council, give notice to the tribune to bring him down to you, as though you were going to determine his case more exactly. And we are ready to kill him before he comes near."*

You (chief priests), along with the council (likely the Pharisees in the council had no knowledge of this plan) should give notice to the tribune to bring Paul down, pretending that you are going to cross examine him.

As he is being escorted here, we will kill him before he ever makes the council! Notice, not only have these assassins brought some on the council in on their conspiracy, but they have also convinced them to lie, to break the law of God to help them execute Paul.

How tragic, this is the leading spiritual body in Israel.

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*Vs 16-17 - Now the son of Paul's sister heard of their ambush, so he went and entered the barracks and told Paul. 17 Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to tell him."*

Here we learn a few additional details about Paul. Paul had at least one sister, she had at least one son, and she likely resided in Jerusalem.

Isn't it funny, as much as we have learned about Paul, there is a great deal we do not know.

Paul's nephew heard about the planned ambush, and went to the Antonio Fortress, where he likely obtained permission to visit Paul. Once with Paul the nephew informed Paul of the plot that he had heard about.

**Is it not interesting** to see the various ways **God works, supernaturally, yet quite naturally** to accomplish his will.

Many might say, wow, Paul was lucky. This was not luck, this is the **providence of God!**

Paul, having **heard the story**, called for one of the centurions and asked him to take the young man to the tribune for he has something to tell the tribune.

The Greek word translated "**young man**" is **νεανίας (neanias)**, it is only used **five times** in the entire New Testament, all by Luke, and all here in the book of Acts.

In Acts 7:58, **Paul was a young man** when Stephen was stoned. In Acts 20:9 **Eutychus** (the man who fell out of the window when Paul was teaching) Luke told us **was a young man**. It will be used again in verse 18 and again in 22 to describe this same person.

Also, it is clear that this Roman citizen (Paul) was given **generous privileges** while being **held by the tribune**.

*Vs 18-19 - So he took him and brought him to the tribune and said, "Paul the prisoner called me and asked me to bring this young man to you, as he has something to say to you." 19 The tribune took him by the hand, and going aside asked him privately, "What is it that you have to tell me?"*

The centurion took the young man (Paul's nephew) and brought him to the tribune, informing the tribune that **Paul (the prisoner)** asked me to bring this "young man" to you for he has something to tell you.



We said it last week, the persecutor, who had become the preacher, is now and will be for about five years the prisoner.

The tribune took him by the hand, this makes him appear to be a teenager, and took him aside privately, where no one could hear, and asked him: *"What is it that you have to tell me?"*

**Vs 20-21 - And he said, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire somewhat more closely about him. 21 But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him, who have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink till they have killed him. And now they are ready, waiting for your consent."**

The young man then tells the tribune about this plot involving over 40 Jews.

Notice, they are waiting for your consent. This means, the **plot was already hatching**, it appears **the request to the tribune had already happened**, the **plot was already in play**. They are right now waiting to hear back from you!

Imagine what goes through the tribunes' mind. Consider his options. He likely has approximately 600 soldiers, and he is in a city bustling with visitors. **What is he to do?**

***Vs 22 - So the tribune dismissed the young man, charging him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of these things."***

The tribune dismissed the young man and charged him (commanded him) to tell no one that he had told the tribune these things.

The **first thing** the tribune does is to take steps to ensure that those involved **in the plot do not know that the tribune is aware of their scheme**.

***Vs 23-25 - Then he called two of the centurions and said, "Get ready two hundred soldiers, with seventy horsemen and two hundred spearmen to go as far as Caesarea at the third hour of the night. 24 Also provide mounts for Paul to ride and bring him safely to Felix the governor." 25 And he wrote a letter to this effect:***

Then the tribune called two centurions and said get the **200 soldiers** under your authority, along with **70 horsemen**, along with **200 spearmen** and go to Caesarea.

Did you hear that. How many Roman soldiers is the tribune committing to the protection of Paul? **470!**

Luke tells us it was the third hour of the night.

**Vs 24** – Also, the tribune provides **mounts** for Paul to ride and bring him safely to Felix the governor.

And he wrote a letter that they were to deliver to Felix, **the governor of Judea**.

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**Vs 26-30 contain the contents of the letter that the tribune, (Claudius Lysias) wrote to Felix. It breaks into four sections:**

***Vs 26 - "Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency the governor Felix, greetings.***

**FIRST**, we have the introduction, the **salutation**: Here, the tribune identifies himself, who he is writing to, and includes a standards greeting.

***Vs 27 - This man was seized by the Jews and was about to be killed by them when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman citizen.***

**SECOND**, Claudius outlines **who this prisoner is** along with the conditions that caused him to be arrested.

*Vs 28-29 - And desiring to know the charge for which they were accusing him, I brought him down to their council. 29 I found that he was being accused about questions of their law, but charged with nothing deserving death or imprisonment.*

**THIRD**, Claudius outlines the **charges against Paul**.

**Vs 29** -But what I found is that he was being questions about their laws, but there were no charges that deserved death or even imprisonment.

It is interesting that what started the riot (he brought gentiles into the inner court) is not even so much as mentioned. But you see what Claudius is saying. I have heard everything and this man has done nothing that warrants imprisonment, much less death.

*Vs 30 - And when it was disclosed to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to you at once, ordering his accusers also to state before you what they have against him."*

**FOURTH**, the reason I am sending him to you. Along the way I learned of a plot again this man, a plot to assassinate him, so I at once sent him to you, since then I have ordered his accusers to come to Caesarea and **state their case against him, before you** at your judgment seat!

*Vs 31-32 - So the soldiers, according to their instructions, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. 32 And on the next day they returned to the barracks, letting the horsemen go on with him.*

The centurions along with the soldiers, the horsemen, and the spearmen followed their orders and began the journey with Paul and they brought him by night (under the cover of darkness) to Antipatris.

**Vs 32** – Then on the next day, the following day, they returned to the barracks. This was likely the 200 soldiers and the 200 spearmen, letting the 70 horsemen go on, escorting Paul.

Bottom line the dangerous portion is now over, there is no way men from Jerusalem can overtake them. Traveling only on horses would have allowed them to travel much faster for the remainder of the journey.

*Vs 33 - When they had come to Caesarea and delivered the letter to the governor, they presented Paul also before him.*

Upon their arrival in Caesarea, they delivered the prisoner (Paul) and the letter to the governor Felix.

*Vs 34-35 - On reading the letter, he asked what province he was from. And when he learned that he was from Cilicia, 35 he said, "I will give you a hearing when your accusers arrive." And he commanded him to be guarded in Herod's praetorium."*

After reading the letter Felix asked Paul: What providence he was from? Paul responded that he was from Cilicia. At that, Felix said I will provide a hearing as soon as your accusers arrive.

He then commanded Paul to be placed in Herod's praetorium under Roman guard.

Paul is going to have the opportunity to proclaim the gospel before the Governor of Judea, Felix, Paul will also preach before Festus the governor who replaces Felix, Paul will also preach before King Agrippa II, Paul will preach before Ceasar.

This imprisonment was Paul's ticket to preach the gospel to the most powerful man on the planet!

This reminds us God can use the difficult things in our lives to accomplish amazing things for his glory! As God has used Paul as a missionary, God will now use him as a prisoner.

By the way, as we will see, Paul will end up spending two years here in Caesarea.