

Children's Bible Story: Acts 23

Paul began: 'Brothers, I have always lived before God with a clear conscience!' Instantly Ananias the high priest commanded those close to Paul to slap him on the mouth. 'What kind of judge are you to break the law by ordering me struck like that?' Paul asked.



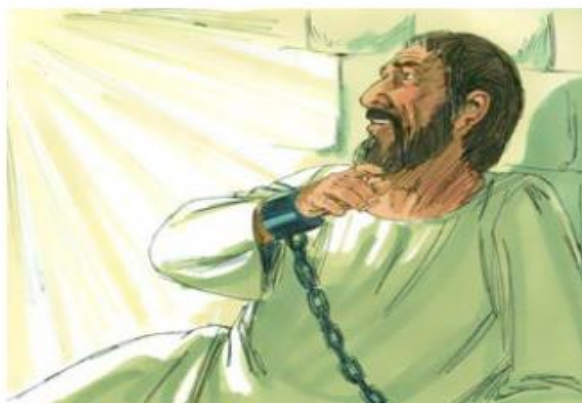
Paul knew that some members of the high council were Sadducees and some were Pharisees, so he shouted, 'Brothers, I am a Pharisee, on trial because my hope is in the resurrection of the dead!'



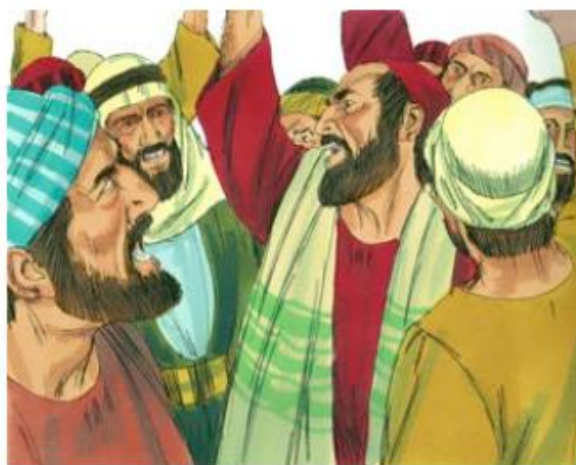
The council began arguing among themselves as the Sadducees did not believe in resurrection or angels or spirits, but the Pharisees believed in all of these. In the uproar that followed the commander was afraid for Paul's safety and ordered his soldiers rescue him by force and take him back to the fortress.



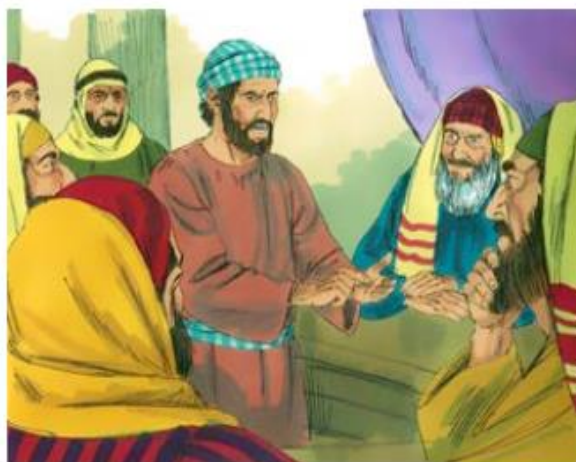
That night the Lord appeared to Paul and said, 'Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well.'



The next morning a group of Jews got together and made an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul.



They went to the leading priests and elders and told them, 'We have made an oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. So you and the high council should ask the commander to bring Paul back to the council again so we can kill him on the way.'



But Paul's nephew, his sister's son, heard of their plan and went to the fortress and told Paul. Paul asked one of the Roman officers, 'Take this young man to the commander. He has something important to tell him.'



After hearing about the plot, the commander called two of his officers and ordered, 'Get 200 soldiers ready to leave for Caesarea at nine o'clock tonight. Also take 200 spearmen and 70 mounted troops. Provide horses for Paul to ride, and get him safely to Governor Felix.'



He gave them the following letter for Governor Felix:

'This man was seized by some Jews who were about to kill him when I arrived with troops. When I learned that he was a Roman citizen, I removed him to safety. Their accusations against him are about their religious law but nothing worthy of imprisonment or death. I was informed of a plot to kill him, so I immediately sent him on to you. I have told his accusers to bring their charges before you.'



That night, the soldiers escorted Paul as far as Antipatris. They returned to the fortress the next morning, while the mounted troops took Paul on to Caesarea. 'I will hear your case myself when your accusers arrive,' the governor told Paul.



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