

HUMAN PLANS CANNOT SUCCEED
IF GOD OPPOSES THEM!
ACTS CH23:12-22

“It is easier to believe a lie that one has heard a thousand times than to believe a fact that one has never heard before.” Robert Lynd (An Irish writer) Is it easier to believe a lie over truth? How much damage can lies do? How do we work out the truth from lies? When accusations are made against someone, what should we do? Ever heard of natural justice? It refers to **the basic fundamental principles of being treated fairly**. These principles include the duty to give someone a fair hearing; the duty to ensure that the matter is decided by someone who is impartial; and the duty to allow an appeal against a decision. In English Law, natural justice is technical terminology for **the rule against bias and the right to a fair hearing**. While the term natural justice is often retained as a general concept, it has largely been replaced and extended by the general "duty to act fairly". [Wikipedia](#)



REQUEST FOR THE ASSASSINATION! V12-15

- Ch21:17 – Day 1 arrives in Jerusalem!
- Ch21:18 – Day 2 meets with James and the others!
- Ch21:26 – Day 3 Paul takes the men who have vowed!
- Ch21:27 – Day 3 Paul goes to the Temple!
- Ch22:30 – Day 4 Paul's second defence speech!
- Ch23:11 – Day 5 God speaks to Paul!
- Ch23:12 – Day 6 Plot to kill Paul!
- Ch23:31 – Day 6 Soldiers take Paul to Caesarea!
- Ch23:32 – Day 7 Soldiers Return back to Jerusalem!
- Ch24:1 – Day 7 Start of the 5 days!
- Ch24:11 – Day 12 Paul starts again!

So far there have been two attempts to stop and harm Paul, but both have failed:

1. By the Asian Jews Ch21:27-36
2. By the Sanhedrin Ch23:1-11

Here comes the 3rd attempt! More than 40 murderous minded male Jews agree an oath, consisting of no food or water until they murder Paul! The Chief Priests and Elders (The Sanhedrin) are completely complicit in this conspiracy, playing out a lead role in luring Paul to his death! All acting in violation of God's Law!

Luke is painting a clear picture for his reader Theo, and obviously for us, of the Christian and the Sanhedrin, because in every scene in both the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, that takes place in the company of the Sanhedrin, it has a negative outcome for Jesus and His followers – Luke Ch22:66-Ch23:2; Acts Ch4:5-21; Ch5:27-41; Ch6:12-15; Ch23:1-11 and here!

RUMOURS OF THE ASSASSINATION! V16-18

Just in America from 1815 – 2023 how many attempted assassinations of people in public life do you think there have been? Over 100! Somehow Paul's nephew becomes aware of the plot to assassinate his uncle!

Paul is still in the Barracks and his nephew using his own initiative goes to tell Paul. Upon hearing about the planned assassination Paul calls for the Centurion and tells him to take his nephew to the Tribune. The Centurion does exactly what he is told to do! In doing so the Roman Centurion showed great deference (politeness and respect) to his prisoner, which was very unusual!

Lucky!! Absolutely not! What we see is the absolute “providence of God”, meaning God's protective care for his people!

REVEALING THE ASSASSINATION! V19-22

God's providence continues, as the Tribune talks privately with Paul's nephew, learning about the planned assassination and instructs the young man not to tell anyone that he has spoken to the Tribune!

How has God used the Roman Tribune so far to help Paul?

1. Ch21:32 – Took soldiers and ran to Paul's aid!
2. Ch21:34 – Tried to ascertain the facts!
3. Ch21:35 – The soldiers carried Paul!
4. Ch21:40 – Gave Paul permission to speak!
5. Ch22:28 – Verified Paul's Roman Citizenship!
6. Ch22:30 – Organises for the right people to give evidence!
7. Ch23:22 – Is willing to listen and take decisive action to save Paul's life!

APPLICATION

Despite their numbers (more than 40) and rage, the murderous minded mob with the backing of the Sanhedrin are powerless, because God's plan involves Paul being God's witness in Rome (Acts Ch19:21).

How can this be applied to us as,

1. Individuals?
2. Local Church?
3. Global Church?