

“Testifying To The Resurrection In Jerusalem & Rome!”

Acts 23:1-11

Then Paul, looking earnestly at the Council (Sanhedrin), said, “Men and Brethren, I have lived in All Good Conscience Before God until this day.” And the High Priest Ananias Commanded Those Who stood by Him to strike Him on the mouth. ^{1a} Then Paul said to Him (High Priest), “God Will Strike You (High Priest); You Whitewashed Wall! ^{2a} For You Sit to Judge Me According to the Law, and do you Command Me to be Struck Contrary to the Law?” And Those Who stood by said, “Do You Revile God's High Priest?” Then Paul said, “I did not know, Brethren, that He was the High Priest; for it is written, ‘You Shall Not Speak Evil of a Ruler of Your People.’” But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, He cried out in the Council (Sanhedrin), “Men and Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the Son of a Pharisee; Concerning the Hope and Resurrection of the Dead I am Being Judged!” And when He (Paul) had said this, a Dissension Arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the Assembly (Sanhedrin) Was Divided. For Sadducees say that there is No Resurrection, and No Angel or (No) Spirit; but the Pharisees Confess Both. Then there Arose a Loud Outcry. And the Scribes of the Pharisees’ Party Arose and Protested, saying, “We Find No Evil in this Man; ^{3a} But If A Spirit Or An Angel Has Spoken To Him (Paul), Let Us Not Fight Against God.” ^{4a} Now when there Arose a Great Dissension, the Commander / Tribune, fearing lest Paul might be pulled to pieces by Them (Sanhedrin Council), Commanded the Soldiers to go down and take Him by force from among Them, and bring Him (Paul) into the Barracks. But the following night the Lord Stood (Epiphany) by Him (Paul) and Said (Theophany), “Be of Good Cheer, Paul; for as You Have Testified for Me (The Lord) in Jerusalem, so You must also Bear Witness (for Me) at Rome!” **Acts 23:1-11 (NKJV)**

REVIEW

The next day, because He / Commander wanted to know for certain why He (Paul) was accused by the Jews, He / Tribune released Him from His Bonds, * and Commanded the Chief Priests and All Their Council (Sanhedrin) to Appear, and He brought Paul down and set Him before Them (Jewish Religious Authorities). **Acts 22:30**

NOTICE

According To Jewish Religious Law & Court Proceedings

- 1) A Person Is Considered Innocent Until Proven Otherwise**
- 2) A Person Must Be Informed Of The Crimes Or Offenses They Are Charged With At The Beginning Of A Trial**

NOTICE

These Two Principles Are Apparently Not In Play At This Trial

Then Paul, looking earnestly at the Council (Sanhedrin), said, “Men and Brethren, I have lived in All Good Conscience Before God until this day.” And the High Priest Ananias Commanded Those Who stood by Him to strike Him on the mouth. ^{1a} **Acts 23:1-2**

NOTICE

Similarity Between Paul's Trial Before The Sanhedrin & Jesus's Trial

The High Priest (Caiaphas) then asked Jesus about His Disciples and His Doctrine. Jesus answered him, “I spoke openly to the World. I always taught in Synagogues and in the Temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. Why do You ask Me? Ask Those Who have heard Me what I said to Them. Indeed They know what I said.” And when He (Jesus) had said these things, One of the Officers Who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, “Do You Answer the High Priest like that?” ^{1b} Jesus answered Him, “If I Have Spoken Evil, Bear Witness of the Evil; But If (I Have Spoken) Well, Why Do You Strike Me?” **John 18:19-24**

NOTICE

Continued Similarity Between Paul's Trial Before The Sanhedrin & Jesus's Trial

Then Paul said to Him (High Priest), "God Will Strike You (High Priest); You **Whitewashed Wall!** ^{2a} For You Sit to Judge Me According to the Law, and do You Command Me to be Struck Contrary to the Law?" And Those Who stood by said, "Do You Revile God's High Priest?" Acts 23:3-4

Jesus Said, "Woe to You, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For You Cleanse the Outside of the Cup and Dish, But Inside They Are Full of Extortion and Self-Indulgence. Blind Pharisee, First Cleanse the Inside of the Cup and Dish, That The Outside of Them May Be Clean Also. Woe to You, Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For You are **Like Whitewashed Tombs** Which Indeed Appear Beautiful Outwardly, But Inside are Full of Dead Men's Bones and All Uncleaness. Even so, You Also Outwardly Appear Righteous to Men, But Inside You are Full of Hypocrisy and Lawlessness." ^{2b} Matthew 23:25-28

NOTICE THE IRONY - The 1st Time!

The Hypocritical Character of the Current High Priest Ananias Who Judged Paul Was Identical To The Hypocritical Character of the Past High Priest Caiaphas Who Judged Jesus!

Q

"Who Was The Current High Priest Ananias Yohanan, Son of Nedebaeus?"

A1

He Was Appointed in 47 A.D. By The Reigning Regent King Herod Chalcis, Who Was The Younger Brother of King Herod Agrippa 1st
He Served 12 Years As High Priest From 47 – 59 A.D.

A2

He Brought Discredit On The Office Of High Priest Many Times In Many Ways!

The *Talmud* Comments A Parity on Psalm 24:7

"Lift Up Your Heads, O Ye Gates;

That Yohanan Ben Narbai, The Disciple of Pinqai,

May Go In And Fill His Belly With The Divine Sacrifices!"

A3

The Historian Josephus Tells A Story About How The High Priest Ananias Yohanan, Son of Nedebaeus

Stole The Regular Wages of The Common Priests By Having His Servants Go To The Threshing Floor And Seize The Tithes & Portions From The People For Himself!

A4

The Roman Emperor Claudius Under The Bribe & Influence of King Herod Chalcis Restored Ananias Yohanan Back To The High Priest Office After A Large Scandal In Which He Played **Identity Politics** By Pitting Different Races Of His Own People Against One Another – Judeans Vs Samaritans!

A5

Ananias Yohanan Was The Most Pro-Roman Of All The Recorded High Priests Of The 1st Century.

Eventually During The Uprising Of The Jewish People In The "Great Revolt"

Against Rome – Beginning In 66 A.D. He & His Brother Were Assassinated By Jewish Zealots!

Next, Paul Attempts Some Civility In His Defense!

Then Paul said, "I did not know, Brethren, that He was the High Priest; for it is written, 'You Shall Not Speak Evil of a Ruler of Your People.'" Acts 23:25

This Momentary Civility Gave Paul An Opportunity To Perceive His Opposition's Weakness!

But when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, He cried out in the Council (Sanhedrin), *“Men and Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the Son of a Pharisee; Concerning the Hope and Resurrection of the Dead I am Being Judged!”* Acts 23:6

**Paul Used The Differences In The Theology Of The Jewish Religious Authorities
To Testify To His 2-Part Divine Mission:**

1) The Lordship Of Jesus Christ & 2) His Resurrection From The Dead

And when He (Paul) had said this, a *Dissension Arose* between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the Assembly (Sanhedrin) *Was Divided*. For Sadducees say that there is No Resurrection, and No Angel or (No) Spirit; but the Pharisees Confess Both. Acts 23:7-8

Paul Knew The Sadducees Were The Majority of the Ruling Class In The Sanhedrin & The Pharisees The Minority. Paul Further Knew That He Could Testify To The Resurrection of Jesus Christ As Both Man, God, & Messiah & Cause The Pharisees To Have To Decide For Themselves Whether or Not Jesus of Nazareth Was Indeed Their Messiah Or Not – Once & For All!

Paul Further Knew The Sadducees Would Be Forced To Stick To Their Beliefs & Therefore Stand In Opposition To The Pharisees. Paul Also Knew The Sadducees Reason Why They Had Rejected Jesus Christ In The First Place As Their Messiah, Was Related To Their Known Cover-up Of His Resurrection As Well!

Paul Further Confirms His Central Importance of Faith On The Central Doctrine of the Resurrection From The Dead As He Already Confirmed Three Years Earlier in 54 A.D. In His 1st Letter To The Corinthian Church!

“Now if Christ is Preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among You say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But If there is no resurrection of the dead, Then Christ is not risen. And If Christ is not risen, Then Our Preaching Is Empty, and Your Faith Is Also Empty. Yes, and (Then) We are Found False Witnesses of God because We Have Testified of God that He raised up Christ, Whom He did not raise up, If in fact the dead do not rise. For If the dead do not rise, Then Christ is not risen. And If Christ is not risen, Your Faith is Futile; You Are Still in Your Sins! Then Also Those Who Have Fallen Asleep in Christ Have Perished. If in this Life Only We Have Hope in Christ, (Then) We are of All Men the Most Pitiable. But Now Christ Is Risen from the Dead, and Has Become the First Fruits of Those Who Have Fallen Asleep. For Since By Man Came Death, By Man Also Came The Resurrection of the Dead. For As In Adam All Die, Even So In Christ All Shall Be Made Alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the First Fruits, Afterward Those Who Are Christ's At His Coming. Then comes the end, when He Delivers the Kingdom to God the Father, when He Puts an End to All Rule and All Authority and Power. For He Must Reign Till He Has Put All Enemies Under His Feet. The Last Enemy That Will Be Destroyed Is Death.” 1st Corinthians 15:12-26

NOTICE THE IRONY - The 2nd Time!

The Pharisees Defending Paul Are Sounding Like The Pagan Pontius Pilate Defending Jesus! Then there *Arose a Loud Outcry*. And the Scribes of the Pharisees' Party *Arose and Protested*, saying, *“We Find No Evil in this Man;”*^{3a} Acts 23:9ab

Then the *Whole Multitude of Them Arose and Led Him* (Jesus) to Pilate. And They *Began to Accuse Him*, saying, *“We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.”* Then Pilate asked Him, saying, *“Are You the King of the Jews?”* He (Jesus) answered Him and said, *“It is as you say.”* So, Pilate said to the Chief Priests and the Crowd, *“I find no fault in this Man!”*^{3b} Luke 23:1-4

NOTICE THE IRONY – Yet a 3rd Time!

The Pharisees Defending Paul Here - Sound Like The Pharisee Gamaliel Defending The Apostles! Then there **Arose a Loud Outcry**. And the **Scribes of the Pharisees' Party Arose and Protested**, saying, ... **But If A Spirit Or An Angel Has Spoken To Him (Paul), Let Us Not Fight Against God.**" ^{4a}
Acts 23:9a & 9c

And when **They (Jewish Guards)** had brought **Them (Apostles)**, **They** set **Them** before the **Council (Sanhedrin)**. And the **High Priest (Caiaphas)** asked **Them**, saying, "**Did We not strictly command You not to Teach in this Name (Jesus Christ)? And look, You have filled Jerusalem with your Doctrine (Christian), and intend to bring this Man's Blood on Us!**" But **Peter** and the **Other Apostles** answered and said: "**We ought to Obey God rather than Men. The God of Our Fathers Raised Up Jesus Whom You murdered by hanging (cursed) on a tree. Him God Has Exalted to His Right Hand to be Prince and Savior, to Give Repentance to Israel and Forgiveness of Sins. And We are His Witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit Whom God Has Given to Those Who Obey Him.**" When **They (Sanhedrin Council)** heard this, **They** were furious and **plotted to kill Them**. Then **One** in the **Council** stood up, a **Pharisee** named **Gamaliel**, a **Teacher of the Law** held in respect by **All the People**, and commanded **Them (Jewish Guards)** to put the **Apostles** outside for a little while. And **He (Gamaliel)** said to **Them**: "**Men of Israel, take heed to Yourselves what you intend to do regarding these Men. For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined Him. He was slain, and all who obeyed Him were scattered and came to nothing. After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after Him. He also perished, and all who obeyed Him were dispersed. And now I say to you, keep away from these Men and let Them alone; for If this Plan or this Work is of Men, (Then) It will come to Nothing; But If It (Plan) Is Of God, You Cannot Overthrow It, Lest You Even Be Found To Fight Against God!**" ^{4b}
Acts 5:27-39

Paul Is Saved Again For The Moment By The Roman Tribune & His Soldiers!

Now when there **Arose a Great Dissension**, the **Commander / Tribune**, fearing lest **Paul** might be pulled to pieces by **Them (Sanhedrin Council)**, **Commanded the Soldiers** to go down and take **Him** by force from among **Them**, and bring **Him (Paul)** into the **Barracks**.
Acts 23:10

Finally, The Lord Himself Appears & Encourages & Instructs Paul About His Future!

But the following night the **Lord Stood (Epiphany)** by **Him (Paul)** and **Said (Theophany)**, "**Be of Good Cheer, Paul; for as You Have Testified for Me (The Lord) in Jerusalem, so You must also Bear Witness (for Me) at Rome!**"
Acts 23:11

Stand With Me Now As God's Beloved & Chosen People & Hear From The Apostle Peter Again!

"But Sanctify The Lord God In Your Hearts, And Always Be Ready To Give a Defense To Everyone Who Asks You A Reason For The Hope That Is In You! In All Meekness And Fear; Having A Good Conscience, That When They Defame You As Evildoers, Those Who Revile Your Good Conduct In Christ May Be Ashamed. For It Is Better, If It Is The Will Of God, To Suffer For Doing Good, Than For Doing Evil. For Christ Also Suffered Once For Sins, The Just For The Unjust, That He Might Bring Us To God, Being Put To Death In The Flesh, But Made Alive By The Spirit!"

1st Peter 3:15-18