

Power From on High

Series: Power From On High

Title: When God Delays

Lesson: 128

Text: Acts 23:6-11

Date: April 26, 2026

Acts 23:1–5 Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, “Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God *up to this day.*” 2 The high priest Ananias commanded those standing beside him to strike him on the mouth. 3 Then Paul said to him, “God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit to try me according to the Law, and in violation of the Law order me to be struck?” 4 But the bystanders said, “Do you revile God’s high priest?” 5 And Paul said, “I was not aware, brethren, that he was high priest; for it is written, ‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.’ ”

Acts 23:6–11 But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council, “Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!” 7 As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all. 9 And there occurred a great uproar; and some of the scribes of the Pharisaic party stood up and began to argue heatedly, saying, “We find nothing wrong with this man; suppose a spirit or an angel has spoken to him?”

10 And as a great dissension was developing, the commander was afraid Paul would be torn to pieces by them and ordered the troops to go down and take him away from them by force, and bring him into the barracks. 11 But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said,

“Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.”

Acts 23:6 But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council,

The Pharisees -

The Sadducees -

Paul's strategy - He used his own testimony and the truth of the resurrection to shift the spotlight away from himself to expose the volatile rift between the two rival parties.

That strategy accomplished two goals:

1. It spared his life, preventing an execution based on fabricated charges.
2. It kept the door open for him to witness in Rome.

6a “Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I am on trial for the hope and resurrection of the dead!”

“Brethren”

“Pharisee”

“son of Pharisees”

How did Paul remain a Pharisee?

How was Paul no longer a Pharisee?

“the hope and resurrection of the dead”

Acts 24:15 having a hope in God, which these men cherish themselves, that there shall certainly be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.

Daniel 12:2 “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28–29 “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

7 As he said this, there occurred a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the assembly was divided. 8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor an angel, nor a spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all.

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“Take courage”

11a for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem”

1. He affirmed his past faithfulness.

2. He gave certainty regarding his future.

11b so you must witness at Rome also.”

“must”

Implications

1. Encouragement and comfort may come _____
difficulties.

Elijah on Mount Carmel - 1 Kings 18-19

The disciples on the Sea of Galilee - Matthew 8:23-27”

The disciples after the resurrection - John 20:19

Why does Jesus often allow fear to arise before He intervenes?

**Don't assume God is _____ when He is
silent during our storms.**

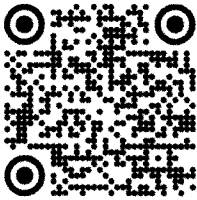
God will _____ us in what He calls us to do.

We are _____ until our work is done.

Paul teaches us that we should strive for holy _____

Discussion Guide

1. Why does Jesus often wait until after fear arises to comfort Paul and others (Elijah, disciples)? What might we miss about our faith if God always intervened immediately?
2. When Jesus finally appeared to Paul (v.11), He says Paul had "solemnly witnessed" in Jerusalem. How does this prove Jesus was watching every chaotic moment? Where do you need to trust God's hidden providence today?
3. We are immortal until our work is done. How does Paul's survival through all of the commander's rescues illustrate God's providence?
4. If God is for us, who can be against us? How does Paul's story reframe your current opposition, not as threat, but as divine opportunity for witness? What step of courage does this spark?



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ANSWERS: after, absent, preserve, immortal