

Acts 23:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him.

Analysis

Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain—Over forty men conspired with Sanhedrin members to murder Paul under pretense of further inquiry (v. 12-14). The verb *emphanisate* (make clear/inform) shows their plan required official cooperation. **As though ye would enquire something more perfectly** (ἀκριβέστερον, *akribesteron*, more accurately)—The adverb 'more perfectly' gave the plot appearance of legitimate judicial procedure, masking murderous intent with religious language.

We, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him—The conspirators' confidence reveals their fanaticism: bound by oath, fasting until Paul's death (v. 12). This plot demonstrates how religious zeal untethered from righteousness produces violence. The irony is stark—those claiming to defend God's law planned premeditated murder in God's name, violating the sixth commandment while invoking the first.

Historical Context

Assassinations by zealots were common in this volatile period. The forty-plus conspirators likely included sicarii willing to die for their cause. That Sanhedrin members cooperated shows the depth of opposition to Paul's gospel. Roman

protective custody proved providential—God used pagan justice to thwart religious assassination.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does religious language sometimes mask unrighteous motives and violent intentions?
2. What does this conspiracy teach about the danger of zealotry divorced from love and truth?

Interlinear Text

νῦν	οὖν	ὕμεῖς	ἐμφανίσατε	τῷ	χιλιάρχῳ	σὺν	τῷ
Now	therefore	ye	signify	G3588	to the chief captain	with	G3588
G3568	G3767	G5210	G1718		G5506	G4862	

συνεδρίῳ	ὅπως	αὔριον	αὐτόν	καταγάγῃ	πρὸς	ὑμᾶς	ὥς
the council	that	to morrow	he	down	unto	you	as
G4892	G3704	G839	G846	G2609	G4314	G5209	G5613

μέλλοντας	διαγινώσκειν	ἀκριβέστερον	τὰ	περὶ	αὐτόν
though ye would	enquire	G199	G3588	concerning	he
G3195	G1231			G4012	G846

ἡμεῖς	δὲ	πρὸ	τοῦ	ἐγγίσει	αὐτόν	ἔτοιμοί	ἐσμεν	τοῦ
we	and	or ever	G3588	come near	he	ready	are	G3588
G2249	G1161	G4253		G1448	G846	G2092	G2070	

ἀνελεῖν	αὐτόν
to kill	he
G337	G846

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 59:7 (Parallel theme): Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.

Psalms 21:11 (Parallel theme): For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform.

Proverbs 4:16 (Parallel theme): For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.

Proverbs 1:16 (Parallel theme): For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

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