

# Acts 9:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:

## Analysis

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### **And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:**

The opposition Saul now faces reverses his former role, demonstrating that genuine conversion produces persecution and identifying believers with Christ's sufferings.

After many days indicates extended ministry period—Galatians 1:17-18 suggests approximately three years total (Damascus, Arabia, Damascus again). The phrase took counsel reveals organized conspiracy, not spontaneous mob action. Saul's former allies now plot his death, highlighting gospel's divisive nature.

The Jews who plot against Saul are his former colleagues—Pharisees, synagogue leaders, likely including temple authorities. This role reversal is profound: persecutor becomes persecuted, hunter becomes hunted. Saul experiences firsthand what he'd inflicted on Stephen and early Christians. This providentially prepares him for ministry emphasizing union with Christ's sufferings (Philippians 3:10, 2 Corinthians 11:23-28).

Reformed theology emphasizes persecution as normative Christian experience (2 Timothy 3:12). True gospel proclamation provokes opposition because it challenges human autonomy and exposes sin. Saul's conversion didn't bring earthly reward but suffering—validating his testimony's authenticity. False conversions seeking worldly advantage fold under persecution; genuine faith perseveres.

## Historical Context

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The murderous plot occurred after Saul's Arabia sojourn and return to Damascus (approximately 37 CE). Galatians 1:17-18 indicates three years elapsed between conversion and first Jerusalem visit. During this period, Saul's bold preaching antagonized Damascus's Jewish leadership.

The Jewish community likely viewed Saul as traitor, apostate from Judaism. His claim that Jesus is Messiah directly challenged their rejection of Christ. The conspiracy required coordination with Damascus's ethnarch (2 Corinthians 11:32-33), suggesting Jewish leaders enlisted civil authorities—same tactics used against Jesus and early Christians. Saul's escape (Acts 9:25) foreshadows repeated pattern in his ministry—persecution driving him to new mission fields.

## Related Passages

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**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

## Study Questions

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1. How does facing persecution validate the genuineness of conversion and gospel witness?
2. What does Saul's role reversal teach about identifying with Christ's sufferings?
3. In what ways does opposition to gospel proclamation serve God's purposes in advancing His kingdom?
4. How should believers respond when former allies become opponents due to Christian witness?
5. What distinguishes persecution for righteousness from suffering due to sinful behavior?

## Interlinear Text

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Ως δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἵκαναι συνεβουλεύσαντο οἱ  
after And were fulfilled days that many took counsel G3588  
G5613 G1161 G4137 G2250 G2425 G4823

Ἰουδαῖοι ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν.

the Jews to kill him  
G2453 G337 G846

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