

“The next morning a group of Jews got together and bound themselves with an oath not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. There were more than forty of them in the conspiracy. They went to the leading priests and elders and told them, “We have bound ourselves with an oath to eat nothing until we have killed Paul. So you and the high council should ask the commander to bring Paul back to the council again. Pretend you want to examine his case more fully. We will kill him on the way.” Acts 23:12-15 NLT

lectio // Acts 23:12-35

They are going to starve to death before their “vow” becomes a reality. Bound by an OATH, FORTY DUDES death threat the Apostle Paul. Man, these guys are seriously messed up, AND they work for God! They are trying to kill again! They just don’t like what God is doing, but they feel that they are the sole adjudicators, sole justice, sole righteousness FOR him. They oddly believe they are protecting God, when in fact they are trying to control God. Forty religious guys plan on jumping Paul and killing him. I just shake my head and think, WHY? What is wrong with them? Does religion make people crazy in the head? Answer: YES. This powerful mixture of power, wealth and iron-fisted control drives a person insane, drunk with selfish ambition and vain conceit. Paul’s sister “happened” to overhear the plan and get word to the commander over Paul’s safety. The safety to guarantee him rights under the provisions of the government towards Roman citizens. Paul had more rights and freedoms under Rome than he did under the religious rulers of that day! God always has a plan, and plans behind those plans, and so on. There could be a thousands plans behind plan A and we would never know. God’s perfection and precision behind a plan means that it will never fail. And God is all creative, so he can do something new every second of everyday and never repeat himself. There is ALWAYS a way and God makes it work.

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Dad,

In the middle of a planned “hit” on Paul’s life, I find myself comforted by the fact that you have plans and purpose for our life and NOTHING is going to sidetrack or cause it not to come about. You are ALWAYS and creatively at work! When I feel trapped or boxed in, even by my own stupid decisions and failures, I desperately need to remember that you are in control and thank goodness. - I am not! Thank you for the power to sustain, protect and keep our lives on track with you.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root