

# Unit 35: Paul's Mission to Rome

**Unit Description:** After three missionary journeys on which God used Paul to plant many churches and see many people trust in Christ, Paul returned to Jerusalem where he was arrested. Paul would eventually be sent to Rome as a prisoner, but this did not stop him from doing everything he could to preach the gospel and make much of Jesus.

**Big Picture Question:** Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.



## **SESSION 1: Paul Returned to Jerusalem**

Acts 21–22



## **SESSION 2: Paul Was on Trial**

Acts 22–23



## **SESSION 3: Paul Was Sent to Rome**

Acts 24–26



## **SESSION 4: Paul Went to Rome**

Acts 27–28



## **SESSION 5: Paul Preached in Rome**

Acts 28



## **SESSION 6: We Are Here to Make Much of Jesus** 1 Thessalonians 4–5



UNIT 35 | SESSION 2

## PAUL WAS ON TRIAL

ACTS 22–23

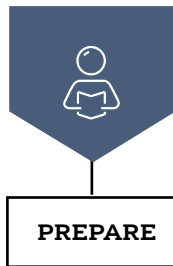
**KEY PASSAGE:** Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you and praise your name, for in perfect faithfulness you have done wonderful things, things planned long ago.  
**Isaiah 25:1 NIV**

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

Paul trusted God and believed that God, who showed His love for the world by sending His Son to die on the cross and rise again, would use the danger Paul faced to get Paul to Rome. We too can risk everything to share the gospel with courage because we know that God loves us and will care for us.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

In Acts 22–23, Paul must persevere with his trust in Jesus as he faces the dangers prophesied for him in Jerusalem head-on. Though the Jews planned evil against him, God planned it for good, to bring about the message of salvation to those who were waiting to hear it in Rome.

What was the basis of the Jews' argument and plot against Paul? How do we see the Lord fulfilling the promises He made to his apostle throughout this passage?

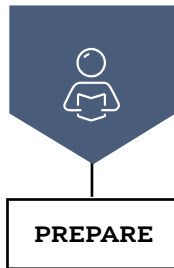
In our previous session, we learned that the Jews in Jerusalem were angry with Paul for proclaiming a gospel that seemed to make light of Moses' teachings and law. Additionally, the Jews speculated that he had even allowed Greeks into the temple, thus defiling their holy place. They held the baseless belief that Paul was leading their people further from their long-held views of God and His salvation.

While Paul had been sent back to the barracks to be kept safe from the mob overnight, the Lord drew near to him and called for him to have courage. Just as Paul had preached the good news of the gospel in Jerusalem, so, too, was he commissioned to do the same in Rome. All Paul could do was faithfully trust the God who had brought him thus far.

Reflect on the perseverance of Paul despite all the false allegations, mistreatment, and injustice he faced in today's passage. Through it all, he remained steadfast, steadied by his trust in the God who conquered death and gave him nothing to fear. Pray for the boys and girls in your group, that they, too, would experience the comfort that comes with entrusting all we are to the God who reigns.

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Sanhedrin:** the highest Jewish council in the first century. The council had 71 members and was presided over by the high priest.



## PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

### GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



#### WELCOME

##### Activity Page

- ☐ "Spot the Difference" activity page

##### Session Starter (Option 2)

- ☐ glass jar or cup
- ☐ water



#### LEARN

##### Introduce the Session

- ☐ countdown video

##### Big Picture Question

- ☐ Big Picture Question Poster

##### Review the Timeline

- ☐ Giant Timeline

##### Tell the Bible Story

- ☐ "Paul Was on Trial" video
- ☐ Bible Story Picture Poster

##### Questions from Kids

- ☐ "Unit 35, Session 2" questions from kids video

##### Missions Moment

- ☐ "Ethan Chase and Southeast Asia Photos" printable

##### Key Passage Activity

- ☐ Key Passage Poster
- ☐ "I Will Exalt You (Isaiah 25:1)" song
- ☐ worship song of your choice (optional)
- ☐ sticky notes, 2 different color sets



#### LOVE

##### Review & Bible skills

- ☐ Small Group Timeline and Map Set
- ☐ world map



#### LIVE

##### Activity Choice (Option 1)

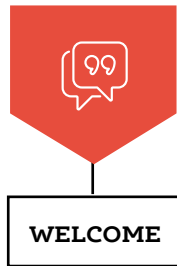
- ☐ "Gospel Booklet" printables, 1 per kid

##### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- ☐ dry erase board and marker

##### Journal and Prayer

- ☐ Journal Page
- ☐ "What Happened?" activity page



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

**SAY** “Who are some people you trust? Why do you trust them? Why is it important to have people you trust in your life?”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Spot the Difference” on the activity page.

**SAY** “Today, we will see how Paul trusted God as he faced danger for sharing the gospel. We can, like Paul, share the gospel with courage, knowing that God will care for us.”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### ☐ OPTION 1: FIVE SECONDS



Form kids into two teams. Invite one kid from team 1 to come to the front. Assign her a topic such as colors, clothes, shapes, animals, transportation, countries, etc. Immediately, start the timer for five seconds and challenge her to list as many items as she can think of within five seconds. For example, if she is assigned “transportation,” she would need to list as many modes of transportation as she could think of within five seconds. Repeat with a kid from team 2 and assign him a new topic. Then continue for as long as time allows.

**SAY** “Was it challenging to think of things so quickly? Did you feel pressure because you were timed? [Allow responses.] In today’s story, we will see how Paul was on trial and needed to defend his innocence. Rather than crumple under the pressure, we’ll learn how God gave him wisdom and boldness.”

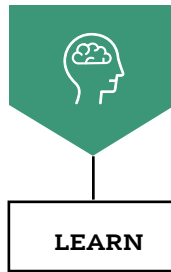
#### ☐ OPTION 2: NOT ALWAYS WHAT IT SEEMS

Present an object lesson by filling a glass jar or cup with water. Using a black marker, draw an arrow facing either left or right on a white piece of paper. Show the arrow to the kids and ask what direction it is pointing. [Allow responses.] Then hold the arrow behind the glass of water. Ask the kids what direction the arrow is now pointing. [Allow responses.] Invite kids to try the experiment for themselves.

**SAY** “At first, the arrow looked like it was going one direction; but when it was placed behind the water, it pointed in the opposite direction. This reminds me of how it is when we trust that God is control. Circumstances may seem one way, but God is always working according to His goodwill. Even if it looks like the enemy is winning, the outcome will always point in the direction of God’s good and perfect will. Today, we will see how Paul’s circumstances didn’t look good, but God was always in control.”







## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# INTRODUCE the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “Hello, everyone! My name is [your name], and I am so glad you are here! I can’t wait to learn more from God’s Word with you today. If you brought a Bible, can you take it out? **[Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.]**

Today, we will continue to talk about Paul and how he faithfully shared the gospel even when he was on trial. Paul, along with many other believers, faced persecution and danger because they shared the good news of Jesus. But Paul trusted that God would use the hardships he faced as part of His good plan.”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

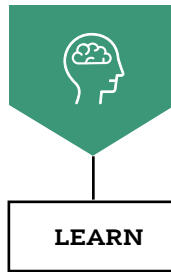
**SAY** “Do you remember our big picture question? **[Allow responses.]** Why should we praise Jesus? Repeat the answer after me: **We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.**

When have you praised Jesus? **[Allow responses.]** Do you praise Jesus when times are going well? What about when times are tough? **[Allow responses.]** Even when times may be hard, we can praise Jesus knowing that it won’t always be this way. We can give Him praise for how He has made the way for all things to be made right and that because of His forgiveness, we can live in the new heaven and earth. Today’s story reminds us that Paul faced hard times, but he continued to trust God. Trusting God during hard times is a way to praise Him!”

### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “Let’s take a moment to remember the different events in the life of Paul. First, Paul was a Pharisee who hurt Christians and put them in jail. But then, Paul had an amazing encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus. What happened to Paul when he met Jesus? **[Allow responses.]** Paul was saved and became a Christian! Next, God called Paul to become a missionary. We learned about Paul’s missionary journeys and how he told Jews and Gentiles about Jesus. During his missionary travels, he also started many churches. Last week, we saw how Paul traveled back to Jerusalem and was arrested. Today, we’ll see what happened to Paul as he was on trial.”



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### LEARN the Bible Story

#### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 22–23. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Paul Was on Trial.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### PAUL WAS ON TRIAL

“**Paul was in danger.** After traveling from city to city, telling people about Jesus, **he had nearly been killed in Jerusalem by an angry crowd.** **A Roman commander and his soldiers stepped in and rescued Paul.** They took Paul to a safe place.

The next day, **the Romans brought Paul to a powerful group of Jewish priests and other leaders.** These Jewish leaders wanted to know why Paul was causing problems.

**Paul was wise and had a plan. He knew that some of the leaders were Pharisees, and others were Sadducees.** Pharisees were religious leaders who taught the law. Sadducees were wealthy religious leaders in charge of the temple. **Each group believed different things, so Paul knew what to say to make them argue with each other.**

**Paul** looked straight at the men and **said**, “I am a Pharisee! I have always tried to do what God wants me to do. **I am here because I believe in the resurrection of the dead!**” **Paul’s words made the Pharisees happy** because they too believed in the resurrection.

**But the Sadducees didn’t agree with what Paul said.** Soon, the room was filled with loud arguing between the Pharisees and Sadducees. This made the Roman commander nervous. He was afraid Paul would be hurt in all the commotion, so he **ordered his soldiers to take Paul away to a safe place.**

**That night, the Lord came to Paul.** “Have courage!” He said to Paul. “You told about Me in Jerusalem. I want you to tell about Me in Rome, too.”

In the morning, **a group of Jews got together and made a plan to kill Paul.** They promised to not eat or drink until Paul was dead. These men told the Jewish leaders about their plan.

**But Paul’s nephew overheard their conversation. He hurried to tell Paul everything, and Paul sent him to tell this important information to the commander.**

**The commander understood that Paul was in great danger.** He ordered his soldiers to get ready to travel. They brought a horse for Paul to ride on. Then, **in the middle of the night, the soldiers secretly took Paul away to Caesarea (cess uh REE uh), where he would be safe.**

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Whisper it:** Use a whisper voice when you talk about the Jews making plans to kill Paul. Remind kids that even though they made these plans in secret, God knew and was in control.

**Exclaim it:** Use a loud voice and cheer when you talk about how Paul said he believed in the resurrection of the dead.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Christ Connection: Paul trusted God and believed that God, who showed His love for the world by sending His Son to die on the cross and rise again, would use the danger Paul faced to get Paul to Rome. We too can risk everything to share the gospel with courage because we know that God loves us and will care for us. ”

### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ Paul was often in danger as he traveled to share the gospel with those who needed to hear. In our story today, Paul was attacked by an angry mob and was rescued by Roman soldiers. Paul was then brought before a group of religious leaders who wanted to know why Paul was causing so much trouble. What did Paul say when he found out he was speaking to the high priest? Look at Acts 23:5. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 23:5.] Paul understood that it was important to speak the truth of the gospel with courage, but to also be respectful of others, especially those in authority like the religious leaders. When we treat others with respect, we honor the Lord and we demonstrate trust in God as we know those leaders are not outside God’s control.

Paul was then taken to a safe place, away from the rioting crowd. What did God say to Paul? Look at Acts 23:11. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 23:11.] God told Paul to have courage because He wanted to use Paul to share the gospel in Rome. God was not finished helping Paul take the good news around the world. God would use this dangerous situation to get Paul to Rome to share the gospel with those who had not yet heard. Paul was willing to risk everything to share the gospel because he trusted that God would take care of him.

Later, the Roman soldiers learned that the Jews had made a plan to kill Paul. Even when Paul’s life was in danger, how did God show He was in control? Look at Acts 23:16. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 23:16.] God had allowed Paul’s nephew to overhear the Jews’ plan and report it. Nothing is outside God’s plan for our lives. He is wise and good. Even when times are difficult and scary, we can trust Him. ”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ Paul trusted God and believed that God, who showed His love for the world by sending His Son to die on the cross and rise again, would use the danger Paul faced to get Paul to Rome. We too can risk everything to share the gospel with courage because we know that God loves us and will care for us. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 35, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How do you show the love of Jesus when you are surrounded by sinful people?
2. How does our faith in Jesus help us not fear the sinful actions of others?





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Ethan Chase and Southeast Asia Photos” as you tell the kids about Ethan Chase and Southeast Asia. Tell kids that over 600 unreached people groups in Southeast Asia do not know about Jesus. Explain that missionaries like Ethan Chase want to share the good news of Jesus with these people groups. Tell kids that Ethan and his team prayerwalk, bicycle, kayak, and motorbike to take resources about Jesus to people in Southeast Asian communities.

**SAY** “ One time a 10-year-old girl, named Mai, found a plastic bag dangling from a tree. Mai found printed materials about Jesus in the bag. Her father told her to throw all the materials away. Mai threw away all the materials, except one book. She put the book under her pillow and read it over the next few years. A few years later, Mai’s neighbor started a church in the rural village. Mai was now a teenager, and she began attending the church and learned more about the Bible.

After many years, Mai became a Christian. Her church helped her go to college, and she became a teacher. Mai told Ethan her story. Ethan realized that the book she kept had been left by a prayerwalking team he sent out. Ethan says that is just one example of how God is at work in unexpected ways in Southeast Asia. ”

Close in prayer, asking God to help the missionaries continue finding creative ways to tell people about Jesus.

### 6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before this activity, write out the words of the key passage on sticky notes, writing just one word on each note. Make at least two different sets using two different colors of sticky notes. Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Isaiah 25:1 together.

**SAY** “ Our desire as believers is to exalt or to draw attention to the Lord. God alone is worthy of all praise! Let’s continue to learn our key passage. ”

Place the sticky notes around the room. Form kids into two groups and assign each group a sticky note color. Challenge each group to gather all their group’s sticky notes. Then direct groups to put them in the correct order.

Lead kids to sing “I Will Exalt You (Isaiah 25:1).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

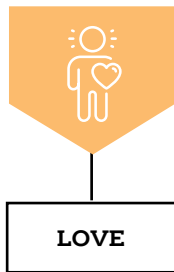
### 7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** “ Thank You, Lord, for Your love and care for us. Thank You for sending Jesus as the sacrifice for our sin. Help us confidently and courageously trust You, knowing You are in control and care for us. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**





## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

### **LOVE** God by Applying the Story

#### **1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)**

Distribute Bibles and display the New Testament Mediterranean Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 23. Explain that within the book of Acts we see Jesus' followers obey His command to go and preach the good news. Discuss how His followers courageously shared the truth of the gospel even when they faced danger and punishment. Remind kids that later many of them died for their faith, but they died with the hope of the resurrection to come.

Consider comparing the New Testament Mediterranean Map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Jerusalem [G9].) Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 23:23-24.

**SAY** “ Even though Paul was in danger, God used it to bring about His plan of getting Paul to Rome to share the good news. God used Roman soldiers to provide Paul with a safe journey to Caesarea and eventually to Rome. God had promised earlier in Paul's life that he would go to Rome, and God kept that promise.

God can use any situation we face for His glory and to bring about His good plans. We may go through scary and difficult times, but we can have courage, knowing that the Lord cares for us. We can praise Him at all times, remembering His love for us through Jesus. ”

#### **2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)**

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “ Does trusting God mean we will never have sadness or difficult times? Why not? ”

Remind kids that even Jesus, the Son of God, had sad and difficult times. Tell kids that we live in a world filled with sin, so there will be times where we suffer. Encourage kids to remember that we trust God, knowing that no matter what we face He is with us. Remind kids that through Jesus, He has saved us and that we have the hope of life with Him forever.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Pet. 5:10.)

**SAY** “ What is the greatest way God has proven that He loves and cares for us? ”

Discuss how God sent His one and only Son, Jesus, to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins because He loves us. Remind kids that sin is the greatest problem anyone has. Tell kids that through Jesus, God provided the way for us to be saved. Share that He met our greatest need, and we can trust Him to meet every other need we have.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 4:10.)

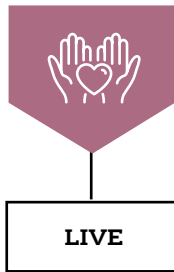
**SAY** “ How can we demonstrate our trust in the Lord? ”

Tell kids that when we obey what God tells us in His Word, we demonstrate our trust in Him. Discuss how we can trust the Lord because His plans for His children are good.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Prov. 3:5-6.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### **LIVE** the Mission

#### **1 ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

##### ☐ **GOSPEL BOOKLET**



Remind kids that Mai found a book that helped her learn about Jesus. Invite kids to create their own booklet that they can share with someone who needs to hear about Jesus. Provide each kid with a printed copy of the “Gospel Booklet” printable. Lead kids to color in the gospel icons on each page. Then guide kids to write a short prayer on page six for someone who needs to hear the good news. Invite kids to decorate the back cover with pictures or include a Bible verse for kids to copy on the page.

**SAY** “Your Gospel Booklets can be a tool to help you share the good news of Jesus with others. Think about who you know that needs to hear the gospel. Then give them the booklet and pray they will trust in Jesus. We can be bold like Paul and share Jesus with others.”

##### ☐ **OPTION 2: FOR GOOD**



On a dry erase board, write the following Bible story names and outcomes out of order: Joseph, saving of many people from famine; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, praise to the one true God; Daniel, fear of God; Esther, saving of Jewish people and Mordecai; Jesus, forgiveness of sin. Consider providing kids with the following Bible references as well: Daniel 6:26; Daniel 3:28; Genesis 50:19-20; Esther 9:20-22; Galatians 1:4.

Form kids into groups of three or four and have them work together to match a Bible story name with an outcome. Once kids have made the matches, review the answers. Discuss how each of these people were in hard situations but that God showed He was sovereign and working everything for good.

**SAY** “Paul was under arrest and in a dangerous situation. But God was working to use this situation for good. God would get Paul to Rome so he could share the good news of Jesus and lead others to salvation.”

#### **2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God’s glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for the way we can trust Him and His plans for our lives. As time allows, lead kids to complete “What Happened?” on the activity page.



JOURNAL PAGE

1. What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?

2. What does this story teach me about myself?

3. Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?

4. Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?

5. How does this story help me to live on mission better?



Unit 35 • Session 2

## PAUL WAS ON TRIAL

Acts 22-23

### WHY SHOULD WE PRAISE JESUS?

**WE SHOULD PRAISE JESUS FOR WHAT HE HAS DONE TO PROVIDE OUR SALVATION AND BECAUSE HE WILL ONE DAY MAKE ALL THINGS RIGHT.**

Paul was in danger. He had nearly been killed in Jerusalem by an angry crowd. A Roman commander and his soldiers stepped in and rescued Paul. The Romans brought Paul to a powerful group of Jewish priests and other leaders. These Jewish leaders wanted to know why Paul was causing problems. Paul was wise and had a plan. He knew that some of the leaders were Pharisees, and others were Sadducees. Each group believed different things, so Paul knew what to say to make them argue with each other.

Paul said, "I am here because I believe in the resurrection of the dead!" Paul's words made the Pharisees happy. But the Sadducees didn't agree with what Paul said. Soon, the room was filled with loud arguing between the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Roman commander ordered his soldiers to take Paul away to a safe place. That night, the Lord came to Paul. "Have courage!" He said to Paul. "You told about Me in Jerusalem. I want you to tell about Me in Rome, too." A group of Jews got together and made a plan to kill Paul. But Paul's nephew overheard their conversation. He hurried to tell Paul everything, and Paul sent him to tell this important information to the commander. The commander understood that Paul was in great danger. In the middle of the night, the soldiers secretly took Paul away to Caesarea (cess uh REE uh), where he would be safe.

**Christ Connection:** Paul trusted God and believed that God, who showed His love for the world by sending His Son to die on the cross and rise again, would use the danger Paul faced to get Paul to Rome. We too can risk everything to share the gospel with courage because we know that God loves us and will care for us.

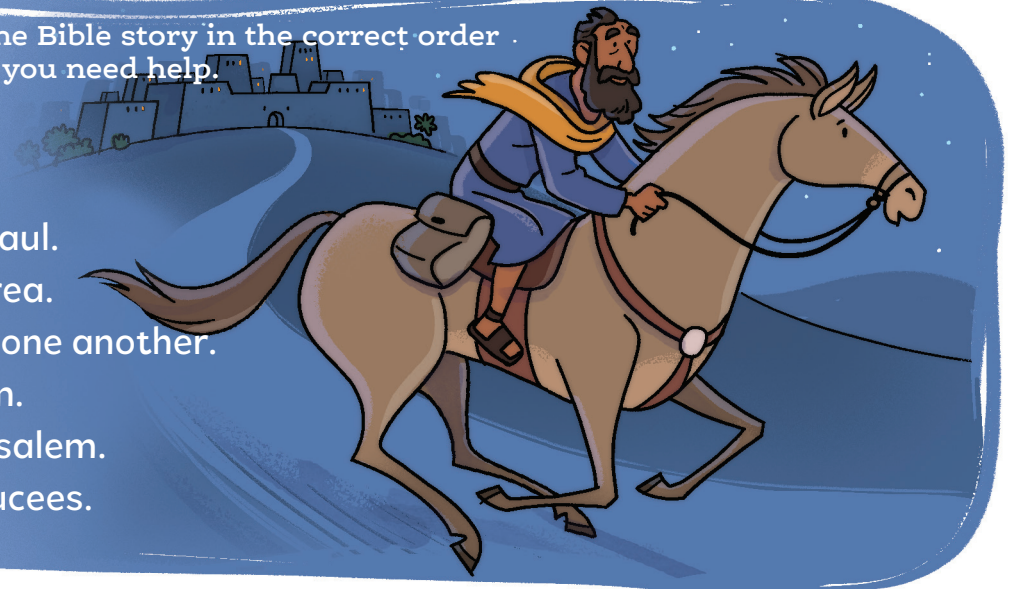


## Spot the Difference | Find and circle the 10 differences in the pictures below.



**What Happened?** | Number the events from the Bible story in the correct order from 1–8. Refer to the Bible story on the other page if you need help.

- ☐ Jewish leaders planned to kill Paul.
- ☐ God spoke to Paul and encouraged him.
- ☐ Paul's nephew heard the Jews plan to kill Paul.
- ☐ Soldiers secretly took Paul away to Caesarea.
- ☐ The Pharisees and Sadducees argued with one another.
- ☐ An angry crowd attacked Paul in Jerusalem.
- ☐ A Roman commander rescued Paul in Jerusalem.
- ☐ Paul was taken to the Pharisees and Sadducees.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



theGOSPELPROJECT.

## Paul Was on Trial

### BIBLE STORY SUMMARY:

- The Romans brought Paul to the Jewish priests and leaders to figure out why Paul was causing problems.
- Paul spoke about the hope of the gospel. The Jewish leaders argued with each other. Some made a plan to kill Paul.
- God spoke to Paul and told him to have courage. God would help Paul get to Rome.

### CHRIST CONNECTION:

Paul trusted God and believed that God, who showed His love for the world by sending His Son to die on the cross and rise again, would use the danger Paul faced to get Paul to Rome. We too can risk everything to share the gospel with courage because we know that God loves us and will care for us.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Isaiah 25:1

### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why should we praise Jesus? We should praise Jesus for what He has done to provide our salvation and because He will one day make all things right.

