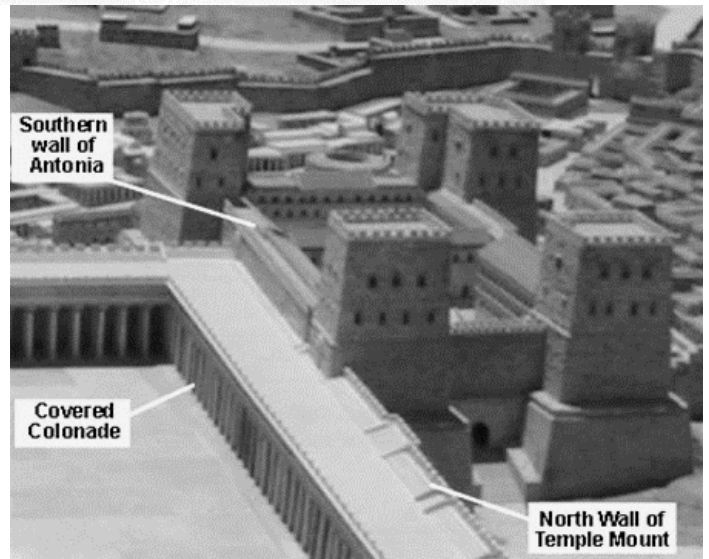
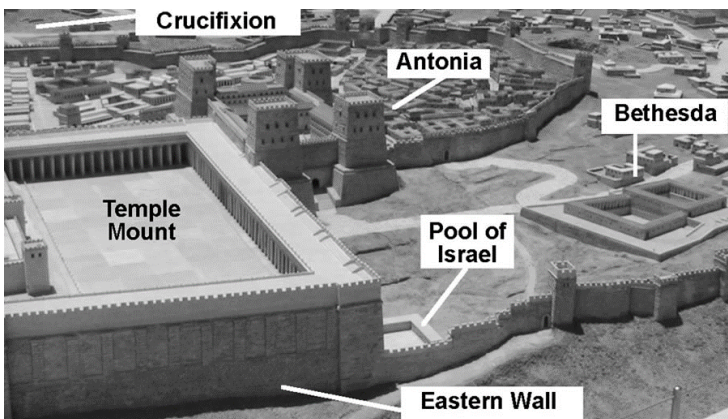
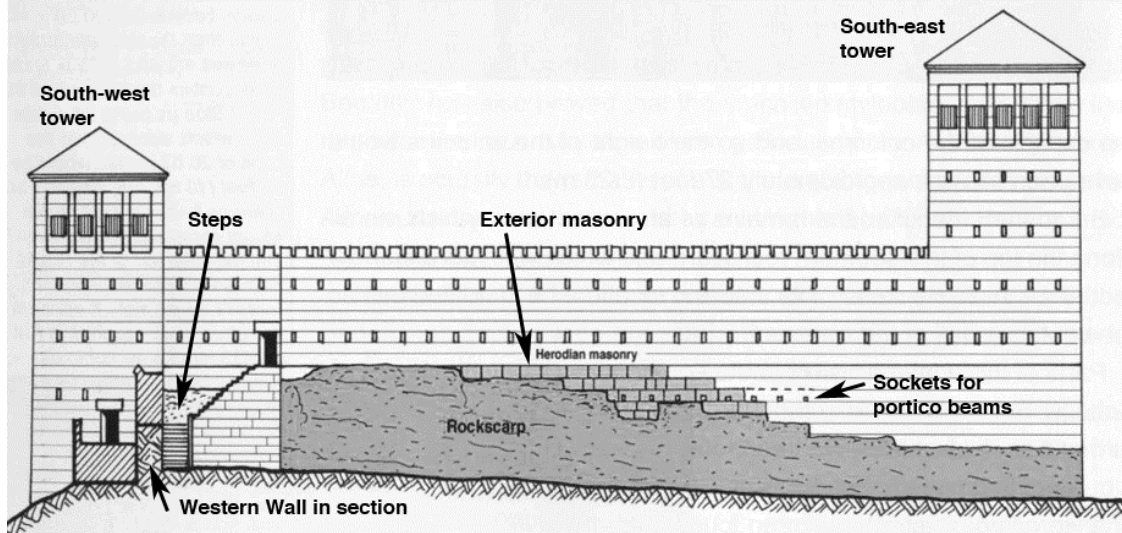
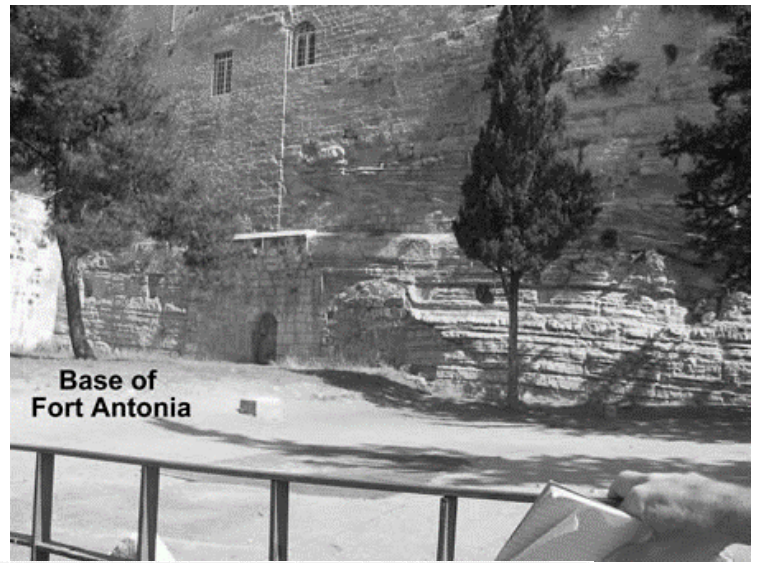
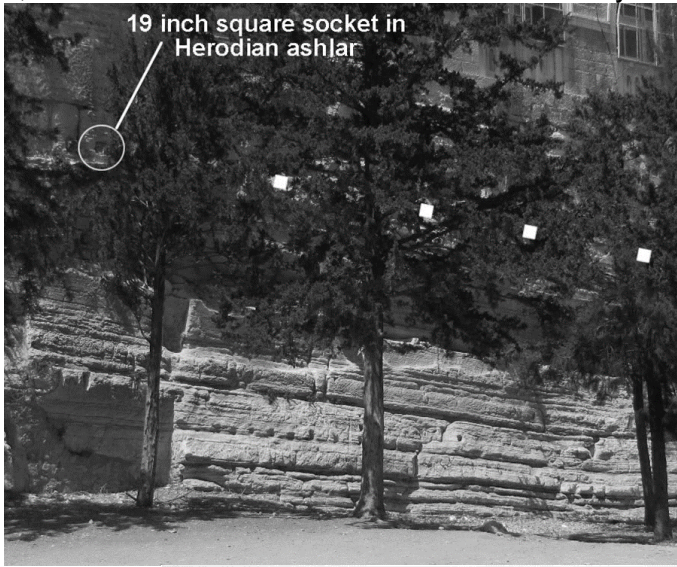
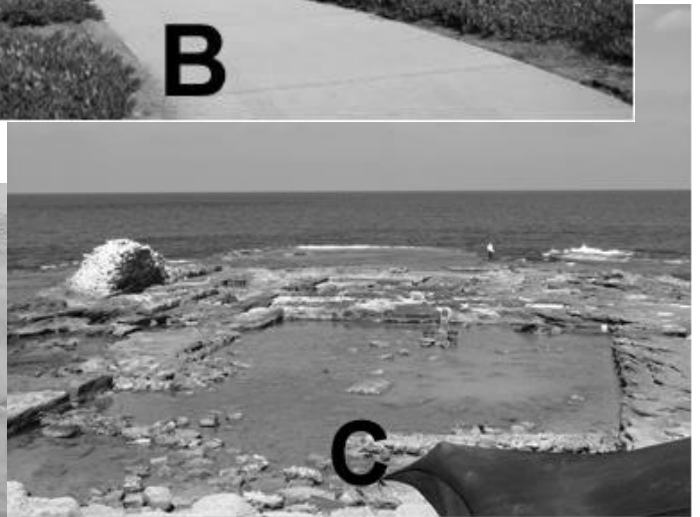
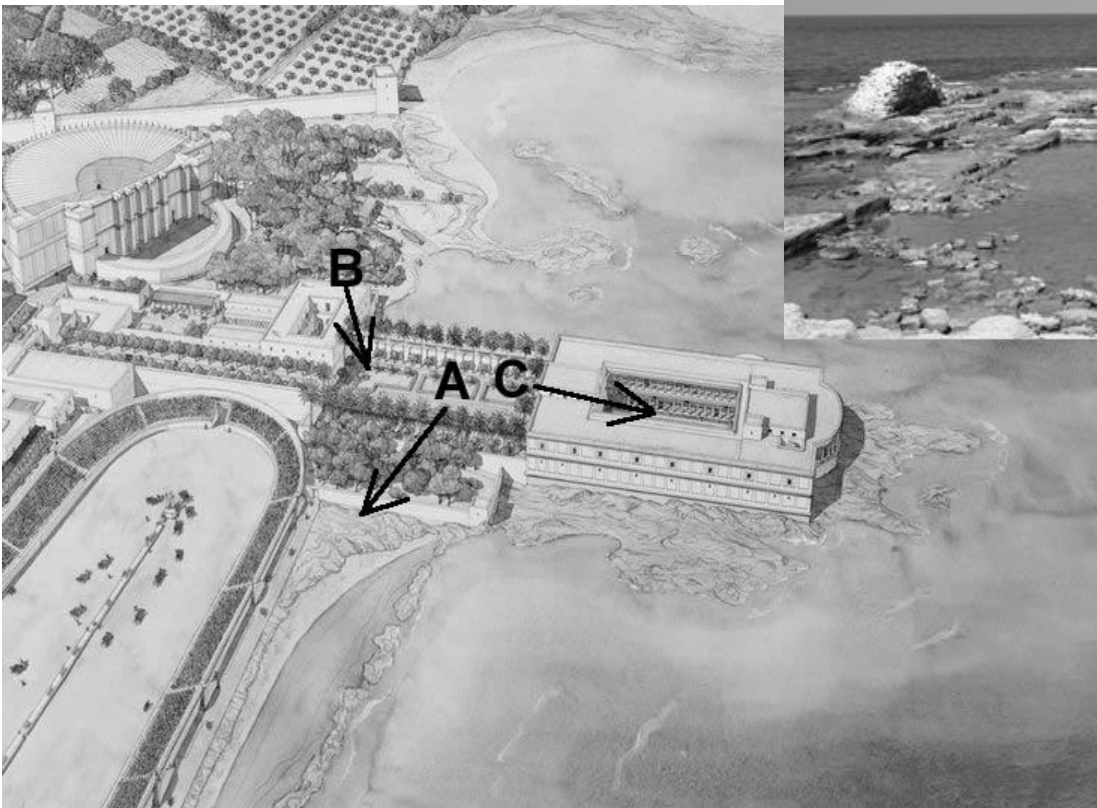


**Claudius Lysias** is the Tribune or Roman Commander in Jerusalem at Fort Antonia. He is over 1,000 men 760 foot soldiers and 240 cavalry.



**Felix** is the Roman Governor of Judea stationed in Caesarea.



**Acts 22:30-23:10 - Paul Before the Sanhedrin**

**23:2** – Paul mentions “duty to God” and “good conscience” which immediately receives rebuke and judgment from the high priest.

- This will cause Paul to switch his line of defense from a personal testimony to dividing the Pharisees in the Sanhedrin from the Sadducees in the Sanhedrin.

The **high priest Ananias**, son of Nedebaeus was placed in office by Herod of Chalcis (you7nger brother of Herod Agrippa I in 47 AD. He was high priest for 12 years.

- Josephus condemns him for sending his servants to the threshing floors to seize the tithes that should have gone to the common priests. If the workers refused to give him their tithe at that time they were beaten. Many elderly priest who depended on that tithe of grain starved to death.
- Josephus also says Ananias was corrupt and filled himself with wealth.
- The Talmud alters the text of Psalm 24:7 to make a political insult to this high priest Ananias when it says, “Lift up your heads, O you gates; that Yohanan ben Narbai, the disciple of Pinqai, may go in and fill his belly with the divine sacrifices.”
- Ananias sided with the Romans since they had the power. He was opposed by the Pharisees, the conservatives and the patriots, and the rebels that began the Jewish wars with Rome in 66 AD.

Paul tells Ananias that God will strike him and calls him a whitewashed wall.

- The reference to “whitewashed wall” comes from Ezekiel 36;10-16 and is used to identify something that is weak, faltering and about to collapse being covered up with paint to hide the true condition.
- “God will strike you” is a statement that not only aligns with God’s word to wicked leaders, but also proved to be prophetic concerning the individual Ananias who 9 years later fled to hide in an aqueduct when the Roman armies heading towards and surrounding Jerusalem. The Jewish rebels found Ananias and his brother, Hezekiah, and beat them to death.

**23:3** – Paul had not yet been charged

Jesus likewise protested when he was struck before being charged in John 18:21-23

Moses forbid reviling a ruler in Exodus 22:28 so Paul would not have called him a whitewashed wall.

Did Paul not know? Did he not recognize the high priest?

Was Paul being sarcastic in the sense the true high priest would not violate the Law of Moses?

Could Paul not see the high priest? Did Paul not know who ordered him to be struck?

The best answer might be that Paul had been gone from Jerusalem for 20 years or so and was not familiar with Ananias and did not recognize him sitting among all the other members of the Sanhedrin.

### **Acts 23:11 – The Lord Encourages Paul**

**23:11** – The Spirit’s words had come to pass. Paul had been arrested. The Jerusalem church leaders’ plan had failed and the Jerusalem church was of no use to Paul in this situation. But, the ministry would continue West as the Lord desired. The Lord appeared to Paul when no one else was there to encourage him. This is similar to Paul’s words in 2 Timothy 4:16-17,

*“At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion’s mouth.”*

Jesus also appears to Paul in Corinth during a troubling time in Acts 18:9.

### **Acts 23:12-15 – Jews Vow to Kill Paul**

- 40 men take an “oath” which is the Greek word “**anathema**” which is used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew word “**herem**” which is used to identify something that is hostile and offense to God that must be totally destroyed by fire. Examples are Jericho.
- The 40 Jewish men were going to kill Paul before he arrived at the meeting place of the Sanhedrin which was called the “Chamber of Hewn Stone” which was just west of the Western

Wall of the Temple Mount. Josephus called it Xystos and about ¼ of a mile from Fort Antonia (400 meters)

## Acts 23:16-22 – Plot Exposed by Paul’s Nephew in Jerusalem

- Did Paul’s sister live in Jerusalem? Had Paul’s nephew been sent to Jerusalem for training as a young boy/young man as Paul had been?
- Interestingly, part of Paul’s family was still supportive and sympathetic to Paul’s cause. Was Paul’s nephew a believer? Was Paul’s sister? How much influence had Paul had on his immediate family?
- Paul is in prison, but actually being held in custody until his trial. So, Paul is able to receive visitors.
- Paul’s nephew is taken to **Claudius Lysias**, the Tribune or Roman Commander
- Claudius Lysias realizes this Jewish plan is not only a danger to Paul but also:
  - A threat to his soldiers, who likely will be attacked in the ¼ mile between Fort Antonius and the “Chamber of Hewn Stone”
  - A threat to the peace and stability of Jerusalem during these tense times (Again, the Jewish Wars with Rome will break out in 9 years.

## Acts 23:23 – Paul’s Transfer from Fort Antonia (Tribune Claudius Lysias) to Caesarea (Governor Felix)

23:23 –

- “200 light-armed troops” is from the Greek **dechiolabous** which means literally “holding in the right hand” which would seem to refer to troops with a javelin to throw or a sling to hurl stones.
- The total number of Roman soldiers protecting/escorting Paul from Jerusalem to Caesarea is 470. Lysias believes this is what is needed to protect Paul from 40 Jewish rebels who are willing to die for the cause.
- Caesarea was the seat of the Roman proconsul, who at this time was Felix.
- Caesarea was the Roman judicial and administrative center for the province of Judea.

23:25 – Claudius Lysias’ wording in the letter to Governor Felix gives the impression Paul was rescued because he was a Roman citizen.

- Luke uses the phrase “**typos**” which is translated “*He wrote a letter as follows*”...this indicates Luke had in his possession the exact letter written by Lysias to Felix as is recorded in Acts

23:26 – “To His Excellency” is a translation of the Greek “**kratistos**” which is a title of respect for Roman citizens of the aristocratic equestrian order and for those who held high office (again, usually men of the equestrian order, which was the elite class among the Romans that was based on the founders of Rome and the families of the Senators.)

- “**kratistos**” or “most excellent” is the same title Luke uses to address the person who is receiving this two volume set of works: Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts (Luke 1:3 and Acts 1:1)

23:31 – Antipatris was 35 miles north-west of Jerusalem and ten miles from the coast. This is the OT city of Aphek (Joshua 12:18) renamed by Herod the Great for his father Antipater.

- The second day’s journey would be about 27 miles.

