

# Where's Your Chair?

Acts 23 1-11



But my eyes are turned to you, Lord God;  
in you I take refuge; do not leave me defenceless.  
Psalm 141:8

## **Praising:**

Point us to Christ, in whose  
passion we see  
forgiveness and mercy both  
priceless and free.

At last may we stand in the light  
of his face,  
in kinship created, and forgiven  
by grace.

## **Reading:**

Acts 23:1-11

Paul before the Jewish cohort

Several times, Paul provokes his  
accusers by calling them brothers  
(putting himself on an equal  
footing with them). It seems that  
tombs were whitewashed so that  
people knew to avoid touching  
them and making themselves  
ritually unclean. Presumably the  
insult works for Ananias because  
he had someone else strike Paul  
rather than touch him himself.

Paul then insinuates that no man  
like Ananias could possibly be  
high priest. What really turns the  
tide for Paul though, is the one  
issue guaranteed to divide his  
accusers. Paul's proclamation of  
a risen Lord sets Sadducees  
against Pharisees and wins the  
Pharisees over to Paul. Chaos  
between the two theological sides  
descends, and Paul is again  
removed for his own safety by the  
'impartial' Roman observers.  
Overnight, Paul senses the Lord  
promising him that he will live to  
testify another day – in Rome.

## **Listening:**

## **Praying:**

Lord save us from the sin of  
spiritual superiority

- grant us an honest appraisal  
of our weakness, our  
inadequacy and our  
unworthiness
- free us from ever thinking we  
are less in need of God's  
mercy than anyone else
- show us how to make good on  
our failings and shortcomings  
in the power of your Spirit

Father: not only am I every bit as  
much a sinner as anyone else,  
but I cannot depend on your  
grace without accepting my need  
of it – and living a life of worship  
and gratitude in return. Amen

## **Doing:**

Friday, 01 July 2016