

A SURVEY OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

15. PAUL GOES TO ROME Acts 27 – 28

Adult Sunday School
Gethsemane Baptist Church
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Acts 27 – 28

“Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.” (Acts 28:28)

By the time chapter 27 begins Paul has been before the Jews in Jerusalem testifying to them of the truth of the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, and he has spent two years in the coastal city of Caesarea as a prisoner. While there he witnessed to kings and rulers about the grace of God. He answered the charges of the Jews but was unable to satisfy their enmity. The only choice he had was to appeal his charges to Caesar in Rome. *“Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.” (26:32)*

Chapter 27 recounts the events in Paul’s voyage from Caesarea to Rome. “The fact that Luke tells in detail about this trip shows how important it was for his purpose. The motif of the journey, in Luke’s account is not the initial evangelization of the Roman capital but the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews in Rome and its acceptance by the Gentiles. This brings to a

climax one of the central motifs of the entire book – the rejection of Israel and the rise of the Gentile church.” (Wycliffe P. 1173) Because the record is so detailed and because this study is intended as a survey of Acts 27 and 28, rather than a detailed study, we will attempt instead a listing of the significant events and the lessons we should learn.

I. PAUL’S ADMONITION (27:7-13)

The trip was being attempted late in the sailing season. Verse 9 speaks of the “fast” being past. This was probably the fast associated with the Day of Atonement which fell late in September or early in October. At this time of year the winds were not generally favorable to westward travel. The Lord revealed to Paul that the trip would have many difficulties and should not be undertaken. *“And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.”* (27:10)

II. PAUL’S ANGEL (27:14-16)

As they sailed by Crete they were caught in a terrible storm called Euroclydon. It battered the ship for several days. *“And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.”* (vs. 20) They were

without hope. At this desperate time God sent an angel to stand by Paul and give him encouragement. Paul said, *“And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.”* (Vs. 22) He reaffirmed his faith in God and his determination to serve Him. The storms of our lives give us opportunity to demonstrate to others the reality of our faith and the God we serve. Paul restated the conviction of his callings. *“Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”* (Vs. 24)

III. PAUL'S ALERT (27:30 – 37)

The storm caused the sailors much fear. Several of them tried to abandon the ship and the rest of the passengers. (Vs. 30 – 31) Paul told them that if they left the boat they would never be saved. *“Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.”* (Vs. 31) It reminds us that if we are to be saved from our sin we must remain in the ship of our salvation. Jesus is the only way of salvation. Paul gave encouragement to the passengers to prepare them for the ship wreck that was to follow. (Vs. 35-37)

IV. PAUL'S ISLAND ADVENTURE (28:1-15)

The ship grounded in the inlet of an island. The passengers all abandoned ship and made it to safety while the ship was destroyed. The adventure started for Paul with his deliverance from the bite of a venomous snake. The people of the island began to honor him as a god. Paul used this as an opportunity to minister to the needs of the people. They were healed of their diseases. This was both miraculous as well as medical. Paul prayed for Publius (Vs. 8) and he was healed as a result of Paul's prayers. Later others came and were "healed" (Vs.9. That is, "treated and cured.") The people honored the castaways and helped them for three months until they could take passage in the spring.

V. PAUL'S APPOINTMENTS (Vs. 28:17 – 24)

On the third day after Paul's arrival in Rome he had opportunity to testify of the "hope of Israel". The Jews of Rome were interested, having heard of "*this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against.*" (Vs. 22) Paul's message had predictable results. "*And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.*" (Vs. 24) Paul summarizes this reaction by quoting Isaiah 6:9, 10. "*Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and*

say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive:

For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”(26-27)

Paul remained under house arrest in Rome for two years.

“It has been much disputed whether Paul endured two Roman imprisonments, from A.D. 62 to 68, or one. The tradition from Clement to Eusebius favors two imprisonments with a year of liberty between. Erdman (W.J.) has pointed out that the leaving of Trophimus sick at Miletus, mentioned in 2 Tim. 4:20, could not have been an occurrence of Paul’s last journey to Jerusalem, for then Trophimus was not left (Acts 20:4; 21:29), nor the journey to Rome to appear before Caesar, for then he did not touch Miletus. To make this incident possible there must have been a release from the first imprisonment, and an interval of ministry and travel.” (Scofield’s notes on Acts 28:30)

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