

Bible Stories for Adults

Journey to Rome & Shipwreck

Acts 27-28

Opening

Gathering: How can difficult times serve as effective outreach opportunities?

Today's Focus: Paul made it to Rome as he hoped, but as a prisoner and through a life threatening storm at sea. He saw and used his situations as outreach opportunities.

Key Verses: *Boldly & without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about Jesus. Acts 28:31*

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. It has become clear to everyone that I am in chains for Christ. Philippians 1:12-13

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Finish the Race (Acts 20-21)

Did Paul have any idea that going to Jerusalem would bring prison and hardship?

Acts 20:22-24

How certain was he that this would happen?

Acts 20:25

How did Christians respond to the fate that awaited Paul in Jerusalem?

Acts 21:10-12

Did all of this change Paul's mind?

Acts 21:13-14

Arrested (Acts 21-24)

What caused Paul to be arrested?

Acts 21:27-29, 31, 35

What did the Jerusalem commander do when he couldn't decide what to do with Paul?

Acts 23:25-30

With no basis to punish Paul, but in trouble with the Jews for other reasons, what did Felix do?

Acts 24:22-23, 27

With Paul tied up in prison these two years, what did Luke likely do?

Luke 1:1-4

Trial Before Festus (Acts 25:1-12)

How long did it take for the new governor to learn about Paul's case?

Acts 25:1-2

What did the Jewish leaders ask Festus to do?

Acts 25:3-5

How did the prosecution and defense arguments go during this trial?

Acts 25:7-8

Faced with upsetting his new constituency with an inevitable acquittal, what did Festus do?

Acts 25:9

What did Paul think of this idea?

Acts 25:10-12

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Festus Consults King Agrippa (*Acts 25-26*)

Who came to visit the new governor just a few weeks after Festus took office?

Acts 25:13

Why was Paul brought to trial before King Agrippa?

Acts 25:24-27

How did King Agrippa reply after Paul told his story?

Acts 26:28-29

What did King Agrippa think about everything he had heard?

Acts 26:30-32

With Nero as Caesar, why would Paul have been so quick to appeal to Caesar?

Emperor Nero was too young to rule at this time, so his tutor, Seneca, led in his place

Seneca was a positive and just leader, Paul would have stood trial before Seneca

Seneca's brother was Gallio, Achaia proconsul who sided with Paul (*Acts 18:12-17*)

Besides acquitting Paul, winning the appeal would recognize Christianity distinct from Judaism

Paul Sails for Rome (*Acts 27:1-5*)

How was Paul to get to Rome for trial before Caesar?

Acts 27:1-2

Being shipped with other prisoners (Greek means other types), was Paul treated as a criminal?

Acts 27:3

Why didn't the ship sail directly across the sea to its destination at Myra?

Acts 27:4-5

Note: Mediterranean sailing was difficult after mid-September and impossible after mid-November

On a Huge Grain Ship (*Acts 27:6-12*)

What did Julius do in Myra to keep from being stuck by winter weather on a puddle-jumper ship?

Acts 27:6

Was this large ship able to make better headway?

Acts 27:7-8

What insight did Paul share with the others on the ship?

Acts 27:9-10

Why should Julius and the ship's crew listen to a land-based tent maker?

2 Corinthians 11:25

Did they take Paul's advice and decide to stay the winter in Fair Havens?

Acts 27:11-12

The Storm (*Acts 27:13-26*)

How well did this short journey up the coast go?

Acts 27:13-17

Did things improve the next day?

Acts 27:18-20

What did Paul think about all of this?

Acts 27:21-26

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Shipwreck (Acts 27:27-44)

How much longer did the storm last?

Acts 27:27-29

How was the safety of the passengers threatened by this news?

Acts 27:30-32

How did this man who began the journey as a prisoner become the leader?

Acts 27:33-38

What happened at daylight?

Acts 27:39-41

Did everyone on board reach land safely as Paul promised?

Acts 27:42-44

Malta (Acts 28:1-10)

Where had they landed?

Acts 28:1-2

How did these *unusually kind islanders* learn that Paul was someone special?

Acts 28:3-6

How did this lead to further special treatment?

Acts 28:7

How did this further open the door to a new effective ministry for Paul?

Acts 28:8-10

Off to Rome (Acts 28:11-16)

How did they get to Rome after the seas were safe again in February?

Acts 28:11-14

Note: Puteoli was on Bay of Naples, near Herculaneum and Pompeii

Herc. and Pompeii were buried under lava by eruption of Mt. Vesuvius around 20 years later

Digging in Herculaneum found home with outline of a metal cross in wall over small altar

Did the Christians in Rome know that Paul was on his way?

Acts 28:15

Was Paul treated as a common criminal in Rome?

Acts 28:16

A Missionary's Work is Never Done (Acts 28:17-29)

Finally in Rome, did Paul start working with the Roman Christians he had longed to see?

Acts 28:17-20

Were these Jews ready to kill Paul as the Jews in Jerusalem had been?

Acts 28:21-22

How interested were they in hearing what Paul had to say?

Acts 28:23-24

What happened as a result of this day-long seminar?

Acts 28:25-28

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A Speedy Trial? (*Acts 28:30-31*)

How long did Paul have to wait to get his day in court before Nero?

Acts 28:30

How did God use this to further His purpose?

Acts 28:31

Did Paul recognize that God was using his situation to spread His Gospel further?

Philippians 1:12-14

Questions Luke Didn't Answer:

Why might it have taken two years for Paul to have his day in court?

Claudius had been poisoned 5 yrs earlier by his wife, Agrippina II (Caligula's sister)

As Paul arrived in Puteoli, Nero and his mother, Agrippina II, were vying for power

Nero sent her across the bay on a boat designed to sink, levers didn't work

She escaped by swimming, but was clubbed to death in bed by Nero's marines

Nero stayed out of Rome (in southern Italy) for 18 months after this

Was Paul convicted or acquitted?

Jewish accusers might not have bothered to testify against Paul in Rome

Ananias had been deposed, his successor might not have been interested

Filmsy charges were okay in Caesarea, but were penalized in Rome

Paul likely met Nero in court and was acquitted on lack of grounds

Then what happened to Paul after being released?

After release, Paul returned to the East via Crete, leaving Titus in Crete - *Titus 1:5*

Paul stopped in Ephesus and left Timothy while he went to Macedonia - *1 Timothy 1:3*

Paul planned to visit Colossae and Philippi - *Philemon 22, Philippians 2:24*

Paul proceeded to Nicopolis in Epirus (Western Greece) - *Titus 3:12*

According to tradition, Paul next may have visited Spain as he planned - *Romans 15:28*

Paul circled back through Miletus, Troas and Corinth - *2 Timothy 4:13, 20*

Paul was imprisoned and tried again in Rome - *2 Timothy 1:17, 4:16-18*

Paul expected death and was later executed under Nero - *2 Timothy 4:6-8*

Tradition says Paul was decapitated by sword, buried by friends along the Ostian Way

Marble slab from time of Constantine (300 AD) covers Paul's presumed sepulcher

Possible Route: Rome, Spain, Crete, Miletus, Colossae, Ephesus, Philippi, Nicopolis, Rome

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I ignored good advice and followed bad advice?
(*Acts 27:9-11; 1 Kings 12:1-24; 22:1-28; Proverbs 12:5*)
2. When have I had discernment to recognize and follow good advice?
(*Acts 27:21-26, 30-32, 33-38; Proverbs 9:7-9; 12:15; 19:20*)
3. When has God given me peace during difficult times?
(*Acts 27:21-25; Psalm 85:8; Mark 6:47-51; John 14:27; 16:33; Philippians 4:6-7*)
4. How have I welcomed or helped strangers in need?
(*Acts 28:2, 7, 10; Job 31:32; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2*)
5. In what ways have I boldly told others about the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ?
(*Acts 28:31; 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27; 14:3; Ephesians 6:19-20; Philippians 1:14*)