

1. Earlier we completed a study of The Trials of Paul and now we are ready to review Paul's last days beginning with his trip to Rome.
2. I want to review some of that learned and then begin new material at point twenty-two on page four.

The Trials of Paul

1. After the Third Missionary Journey Paul returns to Jerusalem in hopes of gaining access to the hearts and minds of the many Jewish converts living in the city.

1.1 Paul spends several days in the Temple participating in a purification rite, the purpose of which is to assure his Jewish brethren that he is not a heretic.

2. The Jews at Jerusalem are however implacable and outraged thinking that Paul had taught the Jews of Asia Minor to turn away from Moses.

3. An angry mob gathers outside the Temple to confront Paul. On the steps of the Temple Paul is physically accosted. Paul is rescued by a platoon of Roman soldiers. Acts 21:31-36

4. Paul's first defense therefore is before an unruly mob; first on the steps of the Temple and later from the steps of Fort Antonia. Paul is mistaken for an earlier Egyptian heretic. Acts 21:38-40

5. Paul witnesses to the angry mob telling them of his conversion experience. Acts 22:2-21

6. All seems well until he mentions he took the Gospel to the gentiles, then the Jews go berserk. Acts 22:22

7. Paul is saved from the crowd by Roman soldiers who take him into custody. Paul declares himself a Roman citizen and the Centurion becomes concerned that he has bound a Roman without just cause. Acts 22:25-29

8. Paul is brought before the Sanhedrin. Acts 22:30-23:5

9. Paul decides to divide the Sanhedrin by letting it be known he was a Pharisee who was on trial because he believed in the resurrection of the dead. Acts 23:6-7
10. The Jews were so divided they became violent; soon Paul's life was in jeopardy so the Roman officer in charge ordered his men to take Paul into Fort Antonia. Acts 23:10
11. The Lord visits and comforts Paul in a night vision.
12. Paul is removed from Jerusalem under armed guard because a plot to kill Paul is discovered. As a result, Paul is taken to Caesarea. Acts 23:12-35
13. At Caesarea Paul first appears before Felix. Acts 23:25-35
14. Felix was the Procurator of Judea under Claudius and Nero. The descriptions by Tacitus are classic. "He thought he could do any evil act with impunity," and "(He) exercised the power of a king in the spirit of a slave."
 - 14.1 Felix listened to Paul's defense and postponed any decision pending more information from Lysias, the Roman commander in Jerusalem. Felix then remands Paul to Herod's judgment hall to await his accusers. Felix then sends for Ananias the Chief Priest.
15. Ananias arrives from Jerusalem with his chief prosecutor. Paul is accused by chief prosecutor Tertullus who accuses Paul of disturbing the quietude, profaning the Temple and inciting sedition among the Jews throughout the world. Acts 24:1-9
 - 15.1 Paul defends himself before Felix. He first denies the charges ... he further makes the point there was not sufficient time to have done all concerning with which he was charged. He admits raising the question of the resurrection. Acts 24:17-23
16. Paul witnesses to Felix and Drusilla. Acts 24:24-26
17. Paul is placed in a Caesarean prison.



17.1 Felix was recalled to Rome by the emperor Nero under accusation by the Jews of bad administration. Porcius Festus succeeded him as procurator of Judea in c. A.D 60. Though Felix knew that justice required Paul's dismissal, he left him in prison because he saw that he could thereby ingratiate himself with the Jews. Acts 24:27

17.2 While this two-year incarceration must have been very trying on Paul, one redeeming feature was that throughout this entire time Luke was with the apostle.

17.2.1 Quite certainly Luke used this time to gather information about the life and ministry of Jesus and to compile notes about the life of the early church. This material later appeared in the Gospel of Luke and in the Book of Acts.

18. Festus soon after taking over from Felix goes to Jerusalem where he parties for several days with the Jewish leadership and agrees to a second trial. Acts 25:1-5

19. Paul is again tried but this time before Festus.

19.1 Festus could find no offense against Paul but wanted to please the Jews therefore, he orders that Paul be returned to Jerusalem to be judged before the Sanhedrin. Paul refuses and demands he be sent to Caesar.

Acts 25:6-12.

20. About this time, King Agrippa and his sister (probably his wife) Bernice arrive at Caesarea. Act 25:13

20.1 Before Paul could be sent to Rome, a native king, Agrippa, came to Caesarea to greet Festus as the new Roman governor. Herod Agrippa II was the son of the first persecutor of the church (his father Agrippa I) being infamous for the execution of James and the imprisonment of Peter.

20.2 When Agrippa I died, his kingdom was not bestowed upon his son but was placed under Roman governors. In A.D. 53 Agrippa II was given the rulership of a small area north of Palestine called Abilene. Later, certain towns in Galilee and Perea were added to his domain.

20.3 In addition, he was entrusted with the important function of supervising the temple treasury in Jerusalem. He was also given the responsibility of appointing the High Priest. This gave him significant influence in Jewish affairs, and his interests thus overlapped with those of Festus.

20.4 Bernice, sister of Herod, had been wife of an uncle, Herod of Chalcis. Her husband had died, and she was now living with her brother in Caesarea Philippi. Many historians believed she was living in an incestuous relationship with her brother Agrippa II.

21. Festus and King Agrippa review Paul's case. Agrippa agrees to hear Paul. Acts 25:14-22

New Material

22. Paul is sent to Rome.



Voyage to Rome

Caesarea To Crete

Acts 27:1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment.

Acts 27:2 We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.

Acts 27:3 The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs.

Acts 27:4 From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us.

Acts 27:5 When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia.

Acts 27:6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board.

Acts 27:7 We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone.

Acts 27:8 We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.

Acts 27:9 Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them, Acts 27:10 "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also."

Acts 27:11 But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship.

Acts 27:12 Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.

Acts 27:13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete.

The Storm

Acts 27:14 Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island.

Acts 27:15 The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along.

Acts 27:16 As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure.

Acts 27:17 When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.

Acts 27:18 We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard.

Acts 27:19 On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.

Acts 27:20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

The Leadership of Paul

Acts 27:21 After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

Acts 27:22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.

The Vision of Paul

Acts 27:23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

Acts 27:24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

Acts 27:25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Acts 27:26 Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

The Sailors Prepare

Acts 27:27 On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land.

Acts 27:28 They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep.

Acts 27:29 Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight.

Acts 27:30 In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow.

Acts 27:31 Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved."

Acts 27:32 So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away.

Food Is Served

Acts 27:33 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food -- you haven't eaten anything.

Acts 27:34 Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head."

Acts 27:35 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat.

Acts 27:36 They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves.

Acts 27:37 Altogether there were 276 of us on board.

Acts 27:38 38 When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.

A Beach Is Sighted

Acts 27:39 When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could.

Acts 27:40 Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach.

Acts 27:41 But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.

Acts 27:42 The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping.

Acts 27:43 But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land.

Acts 27:44 The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety.

On the Island of Malta

Paul is bitten by a poisonous snake and miraculously delivered. A man named Publius who lived on the Island is miraculously healed as well as many others who suffered from various diseases. Paul is received with honor.

Acts 28:1 Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta.

Acts 28:2 The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold.

Acts 28:3 Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand.

Acts 28:4 When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live."

Acts 28:5 But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects.

Acts 28:6 The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

Acts 28:7 There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and for three days entertained us hospitably.

Acts 28:8 His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him.

Acts 28:9 When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured.

Acts 28:10 They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

Arrival at Rome Acts 28:15

The brethren meet Paul and the great Apostle give thanks to God.

Acts 28:15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

Paul arrives at Rome and is placed under house arrest.

Acts 28:16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

Preaching in Rome Acts 28:17-31

Paul first witnesses to the Chief of the Jews and several of his key disciples, some believed and others did not. Acts 28:17-24

Acts 28:24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.

Paul remains under house arrest for approximately two more years. He continues to witness to both Jew and Gentile.

In Rome Paul writes the four prison epistles: Philemon, Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians.

He is released from prison for some one to two years during which time he travels to Greece, Crete and Dalmatia and perhaps other places not documented.

He wrote the Book of Titus during this period and sometime after the writing of this book he will again be incarcerated by Nero in Rome where he is ultimately executed.

There is a great deal of disputation concerning whether Paul endured two Roman imprisonments from 60 AD to 68 AD or just one imprisonment. Our position recognizes two imprisonments with an approximate year of liberty between the two.

We do not authorize any third party to solicit donations on behalf of the Westbank Bible Church.