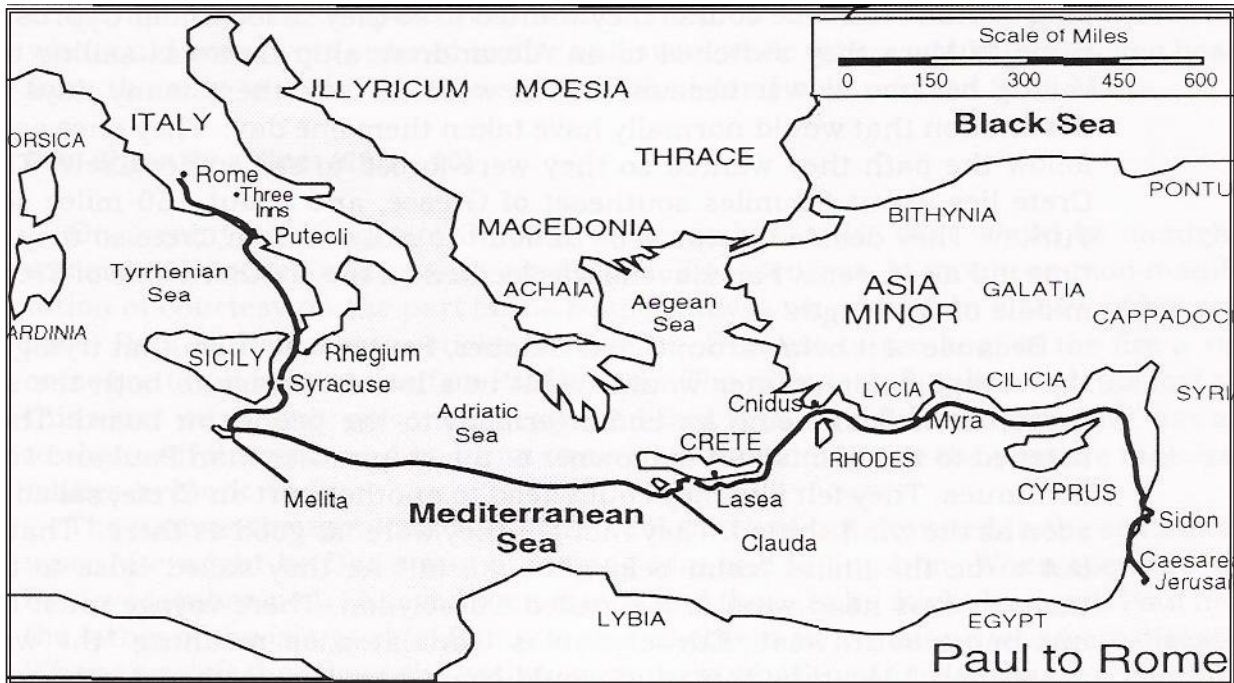


Lesson 13

**VI. PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME AND ROMAN IMPRISONMENT  
(ACTS 27:1 - 28:31)**



**A. Paul's Perilous Voyage (27:1 - 44)**

In our last study, Paul had made his appeal to Caesarea. He had stood before Agrippa Herod Agrippa II who said he might have been set free had he not appealed to Caesarea. Paul would now get his trip to Rome, he had been wanting to make for some time. Paul's prayer was about to be answered. God's promise to him in the prison of Claudius Lysias of testifying in Rome, like he had done in Jerusalem, was about to be realized. McGarvey says *"This was being accomplished, not by any direct divine interference, but by a providential combination of circumstances. The machinations of the Jews, the corruption of Felix, the indecision of Festus, the prudence of Paul, and the Roman statute in behalf of citizens, had all most strangely, yet most naturally, combine to fulfill a promise of God made in answer to prayer."* **Original Commentary on Acts, J.W. McGarvey** page 282

Chapter Twenty seven begins with the decision being made. It was time to set sail for Italy. It is difficult for people today to imagine the type of structure used for sailing in Paul's day. There were no engines. All power for the trip was via either wind, human muscle or if lucky a canal ship that would be towed by horses. Sail boats in that day had one large mast and one large sail that put most all the strain on the small part of the keel and hull where the mast would be attached.

I am sure we would have a hard time comprehending the volume of commercial traffic that would be on the Mediterranean. It has been estimated that the commercial craft of the day would have a hauling capacity of between 500 to 1,000 tons.

Scholars estimate that a ship could travel 100 to 162 miles in the Summer. It would take four days to go from Alexandria, Egypt to the island of Crete. It would take three days to travel from Carthage, on the north coast of Africa, to Rome. It would take only nine days to go from Puteoli, Italy to Alexandria Egypt.

Most shipping would originate in Egypt because of the fruitful Nile Valley. The Nile would be a

great source for wheat and corn. In this chapter the Alexandrian ship, the centurion found, would be such a ship. There were no ships that would be just for hauling passengers.

Luke doesn't tell us the circumstances as to why the Centurion showed kindness to Paul. At Sidon he allowed Paul to visit with friends. Because of strong winds the ship couldn't take the course they wanted to so they sailed under Cyprus. When they came to Myra they switched to an Alexandrian ship that was sailing to Italy. The sailing became slower because of the wind. It took them many days to sail to a destination that would normally have taken them one day. They once again couldn't follow the path they wanted so they were forced to sail under Crete. The island of Crete lies about 80 miles southeast of Greece, and about 150 miles southwest of Turkey. They decided it would be difficult to sail out from Crete so they spent some time in Fair Havens. Fair Havens was located on the southern side of Crete about the middle of the length.

Because of it being around mid October, Paul warns them that trying to continue the voyage before winter would result in a lot of damage to both the ship and its cargo, as well as being an endangerment to the people on board. The centurion listened to the helmsman and owner of the ship rather than Paul and so the voyage continues. They felt like they could head to another port on Crete, called Phoenix, as soon as the wind shifted. They thought they were "as good as there." That would turn out to be the literal "calm before the storm!" As they sailed close to the shore, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon. Their voyage must have started out being south west. Euroclydon is translated as meaning "the wave stirring easterly." Meaning this wind would come from the northeast heading southeast, would alter their course considerably. McGarvey says such winds still exist on the Mediterranean. After they decided to let the ship drive they were able to go under an Island called Clauda where they could begin some evasive measures that they would not be able to do in the open sea. They were able to (1) hoist up the "boat" called the skiff which may have been gotten ready for them to debark at Phoenix. 2 They were able to strengthen the ship's hull. This they would accomplish by passing cables or ropes around it, drawing them tight, with the hope of keeping the timber from splitting a part and separating. 3 the cargo was thrown overboard in order to lighten the ship so as not to take on more water. 4 Spare parts for repairs the tackle was discarded into the sea the next day. Sailors, at this time, had no compasses to use and relied on the Sun and Stars to let them know where they were. Since it was a storm and cloudy it would be a long time before they would know where they were. Their greatest fear would be that they would be driven into the northern coast of Africa which contains quicksand. They had given up all hope of coming out of the storm alive.

After they had been without food for a long time, Paul reminds them that they should have listened to him. Paul's reminder was meant as both a rebuke and a reminder that what he said would happen, did. This would lead credibly to what Paul would further tell them. Paul tells them that an angel of God had told him not to be afraid that he must be brought before Caesar and that God had granted all those that sail with him their lives. Paul told them to take heart but it would be just as God told him that they must run aground on a certain island. After they had been driven in the Adriatic Sea for fourteen days the sailors realized they were nearing land and secretly planned to abandon the ship. Paul told the soldiers that if the sailors abandoned the ship no one would be saved. Without experienced crew members all would be doomed and lost! The soldiers thwart the sailors' plans by cutting away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off. Paul urges all to take nourishment. Paul's confidence is readily seen by his thanksgiving to God and imploring that all two hundred and seventy six people eat. The rest of the food was then thrown overboard to lighten the ship further. When day broke they saw land but didn't recognize the land. There was a beach that they thought might be a good place to run the ship aground. Just as God had told Paul, the ship was wrecked despite the skill of the crew. To prevent the escape of any prisoners the soldiers advised the centurion to kill the prisoners. The centurion desiring to spare Paul would not allow them to kill the prisoners. Those who could swim were ordered to dive and swim while others would use broken boards from the ship to make it to the safety of the island now referred to as Malta.

## **B. Paul Bitten By a Viper (28:1 - 10)**

On a rainy cold night of October or November, a fire that would be enough to warm two hundred and seventy six drenched passengers, in an uncommon manifestation of courtesy on the part of the island natives was made. In a show of his gratitude, Paul gathered some sticks for the fire. Because of the heat of the fire a viper comes out and fastens itself on Paul's hand. The islanders, familiar with the fact that this viper was highly poisonous, expected that Paul would drop dead. Paul was able to shake off the viper and no harm came from the bite. Notice the promise that Jesus makes in Mark 16:20.

The natives thought Paul was a criminal who had not drowned in the sea but this viper bite might be God's way of judging him and killing him. When they saw that Paul was unharmed, changed their minds and thought he might be a god. Paul heals the father of the island chief Publius, and all others on the island who were diseased. When they left the island the natives gave them what they needed for their continued trip.

## **C. Paul Welcomed By The Saints (28:11 - 15)**

After three months, spring arrives. A ship which had wintered on the island, called Twin brothers or called by some "Castor and Pollox" another ship of Alexandria, took Paul and the others toward Rome. No record is made of their stay in port at Syracuse, or Rhegium. With favorable winds, they sailed from Rhegium to Puteoli, a distance of one hundred and eighty miles in one day. Paul found disciples at Puteoli. The centurion further showed favor to Paul by allowing him to stay with the disciples there for seven days. Rome was situated another one hundred and fifty miles inland from Puteoli. After traveling thirty three miles, they found a paved road. Brethren from Rome came out and met them at the Appi forum, forty three miles from Rome and at the Three Inns which was approximately thirty three miles from Rome. Paul saw the brethren, thanked God and was able to take courage Acts 28:15 .

## **D. Paul A Prisoner In Rome (8:16 - 31)**

Unlike other prisoners when Paul reached Rome the centurion permitted Paul to dwell by himself with a prisoner to guard him Acts 28:16 . Some have thought how tired a soldier might have gotten being chained to the apostle Paul and hearing the gospel preached to him.

An amazing thing that gives an indication that Peter had not been in the papal chair in Rome for 30 years as some teach. When Paul met with the leaders of the Jews the only thing they knew about the church was it was spoken against everywhere. Paul explained to them why he was a prisoner. He explained how he was arrested in Jerusalem and why he had appealed to Caesar Acts 28:17 20 . They knew, through a study of the Old Testament, that prophecy had pointed to the Messiah that was to come, the hope of Israel. Paul knew and told them that the hope of Israel had come. They told Paul that no letters had come giving charges brought against Paul.

Paul then begins from the Old Testament Scriptures, which they already believed *"So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening."* Acts 28:23 . Paul's preaching made an impact. Some were persuaded and some disbelieved.

## Letters Written During Paul's Roman Imprisonment

### Colossians

<b>Background:</b>	Questions are often ask as to whether Paul every went to Colosse? While Paul was in Ephesus the scriptures say that "all of Asia heard the word Acts 19:10 . It is quite possible that during this time Paul traveled to Colosse. We know that Epaphras had worked with them 1:7 .
<b>Date:</b>	62 AD
<b>From:</b>	Rome while in Prison
<b>Theme:</b>	The preeminence of Christ Colossians 1:14 22

Luke ends his discourse, not with telling us what happened with Paul's appeal, but with the fact that "*Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.*" Acts 28:30 31 .

We know from references made in his epistles to Timothy and Titus that other events and journeys took place that are not recorded in the book of Acts. It appears that Paul was released from his Roman imprisonment, then later arrested and imprisoned again. During his second Roman imprisonment he writes to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:6 "*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.*" 2 Timothy 4:6 .

## Letters Written During Paul's Roman Imprisonment

### Ephesians

<b>Background:</b>	Paul visited Ephesus at the close of his second preaching journey Acts 18:18 21 . Aquila and Priscilla taught Apollos there Acts 18:24 28 . Paul came back on his third preaching journey and stayed for three years Acts 19:1 41 . While there silversmiths stirred up a riot when they thought they were losing trade because of Paul. Paul left and went to Miletus where he met with elders from Ephesus Acts 20:17 38.
<b>Date:</b>	62 AD about 5 years from the last time he was there.
<b>From:</b>	Rome while in Prison
<b>Theme:</b>	Christ is the head of the church Ephesians 1:20 23

Soon after this writing, tradition tells us Paul was executed by being beheaded by order of Nero in Rome in approximately 68 AD.

## Letters Written During Paul's Roman Imprisonment

### Philippians

- Background:** The church in Philippi was established during Paul's second Preaching journey Acts 16 . The church had remained a good and faithful church. The church sent support and encouragement to Paul after he left and when he was in Thessalonica and possibly while he was in Corinth. Paul went back through Philippi on his third preaching journey Acts 20:6 . Epaphroditus came to Rome as from the church at Philippi with another offering Philippians 4:10 14 . Paul sends Epaphroditus back with this letter thanking them for their support Philippians 2:25 30; 4:17 18
- Date:** 62 AD about 10 years after the church was established.
- From:** Rome while in Prison
- Theme:** Rejoice in the Lord Philippians 4:4 7

## Letters Written After Paul Is Released from Prison

### I Timothy

- Background:** Timothy's home was Lystra where it is thought that he had been converted when Paul and Barnabas were there on the first preaching journey. Timothy joined Paul and Silas when they came back to Lystra on the second preaching journey. Timothy would be Paul's companion in labor after this. Paul referred to him as a "son in the faith" 1 Timothy 1:2
- Date:** 63 64 AD After Paul's release from Roman Prison
- From:** Possibly Ephesus
- Theme:** Take heed to yourself 1 Timothy 4:16

## Letters Written After Paul Is Released from Prison

### Titus

- Background:** See remarks about I Timothy It is thought that Titus was a Gentile from Antioch Galatians 2:1,3 . He was taught by Paul Titus 1:4 . It is thought that Titus bore the books of I and II Corinthians to the church at Corinth 2 Corinthians 2:13 . We know that Titus later preached the gospel on the Island of Crete Titus 3:10 and also in Dalmatia 2 Timothy 4:10
- Date:** 63 64 AD After Paul's release from Roman Prison
- From:** Probably from Macedonia

## Letters Written During Paul's Second Imprisonment in Rome

### II Timothy

**Background:** See remarks about I Timothy  
**Date:** 64 AD? After Paul's release from Roman Prison  
**From:** Rome before His execution  
**Theme:** Preach the Word 2 Timothy 4:1-5

## Letters Written Before Paul's Death

### Hebrews

**Background:** This book was written to encourage immature Jewish Christians. It was to encourage them to remain faithful in spite of persecution. Thirty years had passed since the crucifixion of Christ, more than enough time for a second generation of Christians to develop that needed to be encouraged. The fall of Jerusalem was about to happen and they were called on not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. Although no salutation is given it is thought to have been written by Paul.

**Date:** Prior to 70 AD possibly as early as 63 AD  
**From:** Rome possibly during Paul's first imprisonment  
**Theme:** God Speaks today through Jesus his son Hebrews 1:1

### Paul's Voyage to Rome and Roman Imprisonment Lesson 13

#### I. ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS GIVING SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1. What was the name of the group of which Julius had charge? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Where is Phenice located? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did Paul have the crew throw things overboard? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How many lives were lost when the ship sank? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What was there location on the 14th night? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How did they all get to shore? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. What opinion did the natives have about Paul at first? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Who was healed in chapter 28? \_\_\_\_\_

9. When the group arrived in Rome, what was done with the prisoners? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Where did Paul dwell while in Rome for two years? \_\_\_\_\_

**II. TRUE OR FALSE**

\_\_\_\_\_1. Paul sailed on two different ships in chapter 27.

\_\_\_\_\_2. The ships in that time were coal burners.

\_\_\_\_\_3. Paul said the ones who stayed with the ship would be assured of safety.

\_\_\_\_\_4. Paul visited a tavern while on the island of Melita.

\_\_\_\_\_5. There was no church in Rome when Paul arrived there.

### III. RESEARCH

Where did Paul quote from in Acts 28:26,27? \_\_\_\_\_

### IV. THOUGHT QUESTION

Why didn't Paul die when the viper bit him? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_