

Acts of the Apostles: Bible Study Outline #9

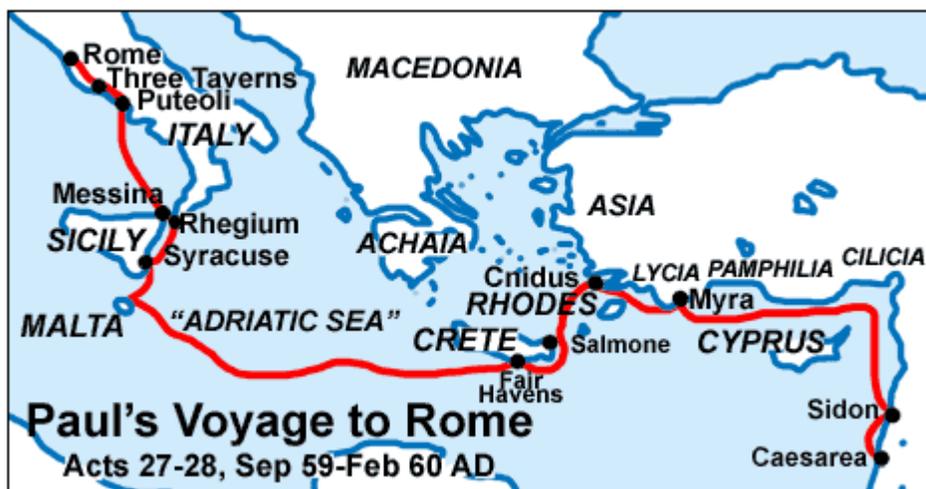
Overview / Outline

- **W. Paul's Defense before Agrippa (25:23-26:11) / In His Speech Before Agrippa, Paul Describes His Own Conversion (26:12-23) / Festus' and Agrippa's Responses (26:24-32)**

Summary: During times when tensions rose in Palestine between Jews and Romans, peace was often maintained by each side doing what they could to appease the other. In most instances Jewish courts were allowed to hand down judgment in civil and criminal cases with little or no interference from Rome. However, Rome reserved the right to intervene in Jewish legal affairs when it came to capital cases (cases demanding the death sentence), or when serious criminal charges were brought against a citizen of Rome. If the accused was a Roman citizen who was also a Jew, he was given the option of having his case tried in either a Jewish or Roman court.

When Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as governor he also sought to appease the Jews by asking Paul if he would consent to having his trial transferred back to Jerusalem (Acts 25:9). It was becoming increasingly clear to Paul that he would have difficulty finding justice in even a Roman court in Palestine. Therefore, since Paul had a legal right as a Roman citizen to have his case heard by Caesar, and since he had been reassured by the Lord that he would bear witness of Jesus Christ at Rome as he had done in Jerusalem (Acts 23:11), Paul appealed to Caesar. He told Festus, "For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar" (Acts 25:1). All that remained was for Festus to prepare a legal brief in which the charges against Paul would be detailed, and which would argue for either Paul's conviction or acquittal based on the evidence. However, to prepare this brief Festus needed to understand the allegations brought against Paul so that he could judge the merit of those allegations based on Roman law. To assist him in the matter Felix sought the council of King Agrippa, a descendant of Herod the Great and son of Herod Agrippa I. Although King Agrippa was not a Jew by birth, he had adopted the religion of the Jews as his forefathers had done, and faithfully governed large portions of Palestine by appointment of Caesar. Despite Agrippa's lavish and immoral lifestyle, and his incestuous relationship with his sister Bernice, he was well acquainted with the Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets who foretold the coming of the Messiah. For the first time since Paul's arrest in Jerusalem two years earlier, it appeared he would finally be able to present his defense before a man who was as loyal to Rome as he was to the religion and beliefs of the Jews.

- Paul speaks of his early life as a Pharisee (26:1-11)
 - v 8 - Agrippa was allied with the Sadducees, whom he appointed high priests and was likely to have rejected the resurrection of Christ and resurrections in general.
 - v 11 – force them to blaspheme – Paul tried to force them to curse Jesus or to confess publicly that Jesus was the Son of God, in which case they could be condemned for blasphemy and death. (Matthew 26:63-66)
- Paul explains his conversion (26:12-18)
 - v – 14 to kick against the goads – A Greek proverb for useless resistance – the ox succeeds only in hurting itself.
- Paul speaks of his life as an apostle of Jesus Christ (26:19-23)
- The final exchange between Festus Paul and Agrippa (26:24-32)



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- **X. Paul Leaves Caesarea for Rome on a Ship (27:1-12) / Storm Strikes the Ship (27:13-38) / The Shipwreck Experience (27:39-44)**

Summary: The story of Paul's voyage is unlike any other story in the Bible. This section of Luke's chronology does not deal with deep spiritual teachings or acts of devotion, but rather the everyday life one normally experienced at sea during that period of history. Luke gave us a detailed account of all the islands, towns and harbors along the journey. Throughout the book of Acts Luke has presented the apostles as mere men. He seemed to intentionally avoid describing these men as superheroes of the faith. Instead he describes them as men devoted to the single, holy purpose of preaching and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. The journey of Paul to Rome covered approximately 2,250 miles – all but the last 150 miles were spent at sea. The journey occurred around AD 60-61 and took the better part of 18 months to complete. Fortunately for Paul, he was not alone during this journey. Some commentators note that this section of Acts is the longest "we" section in the book, meaning Luke was Paul's companion throughout the entire journey. Although Luke and Paul were separated for a time following the apostle's arrest in Jerusalem at the conclusion of his third missionary journey, they were together again during the journey to Rome. Whether Luke made this journey at his own expense or, as some have suggested, at the expense of the Roman government, is not stated. Some suggest Luke was allowed to accompany Paul as an attendant or servant of the apostle, which was apparently a common practice in that day. One commentator even suggests that Luke, as a physician, would have been a welcomed passenger on the voyage and may have even served as the ship's physician.

- Paul sets sail with Luke and Aristarchus (27:1-12)
- Paul's warnings ignored (27:9-12)
- Sail on the Sea (27:13-38)
- Shipwreck (27:39-44)



- **Y. Ashore on Malta; Paul Survives Snakebite (28:1-6) / Healing of Publius's Father and Others (28:7-10) / Journey To Rome (28:11-16) / Paul In Rome (28:17-31)**

Summary: The site of the shipwreck was the island of Malta (called Miletta by the Romans), the largest of three islands in the Maltese group, just 58 nautical miles south of Sicily and 158 miles from the Italian mainland. During the three months Paul spent on Malta he was provided with several opportunities to demonstrate the mercy and power of God. The first incident came when Paul was bitten by a deadly viper as he was laying wood on a fire. The local inhabitants of the island assumed he must have committed some terrible crime, such as murder, and was receiving just punishment for his crimes. But when Paul suffered no harm, they quickly came to think of him as a god. The second opportunity came when Paul healed the father of Publius, a leading citizen of Malta who had welcomed Paul and his companions to stay at his estate. News of this event quickly spread among the inhabitants of the island who also came to Paul to be healed of diseases. After finally leaving Malta and arriving on Italian soil, Paul made his way to Rome. Along the way he found brethren from whom Luke says Paul "took courage." When he arrived in Rome he was placed under house arrest, and was allowed to live by himself with a soldier to guard him. Three days later Paul called for the leaders of the Jews in Rome and gave a passionate defense of the charges that had been made against him, and "solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets" (Acts 28:23). For the next two years Paul lived "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).

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- **Z. Paul in Rome, After Acts**

Summary: Although the record in Acts ends two years after Paul's arrival in Rome (AD 60-62), the Biblical record and tradition suggest Paul lived another four years. During this time it is said Paul was briefly released from prison and made additional travels before being imprisoned a second time and executed during the reign of Nero (AD 66). Critics of this view claim there is no record in Acts to support Paul's later release and additional travels. However, the record of Acts simply ends prior to the time Paul would have been released.

Among the letters Paul wrote during the six years from his first to second imprisonment (AD 60-66) are Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, 1st Timothy and Titus. When Paul wrote Philippians and Philemon (AD 61-62), Timothy was with him in Rome. However, in the Philippian letter Paul wrote he was sending Timothy to encourage the brethren in Philippi, with hopes of also joining them "as soon as I see how it goes with me" (Philippians 2:19-24). This seems to indicate Paul's appeal to Caesar was being heard, and the apostle was expecting a favorable outcome and to soon be released.

The letter of 1st Timothy (ca. AD 62) was apparently written while Paul was in Macedonia, after Timothy had returned to Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). Paul planned to join Timothy in Ephesus, and urged the young evangelist, "Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (1 Timothy 4:13). During this time Paul also wrote the letter to Titus (AD 65), whom he had left in Crete to "set in order the things that were lacking" in the churches there (Titus 1:5). However, in that letter Paul urged Titus to join him as soon as possible in Nicopolis (in Macedonia), where the apostle had chosen to spend the winter (Titus 3:12).

However, when Paul wrote 2nd Timothy (AD 66), he had once again been imprisoned. This time Paul was not placed under house arrest, but suffered under far worse conditions – suffering "as an evildoer, even to the point of chains" (2 Timothy 2:9). Tradition says Paul had been interred in the infamous Mamertine Prison in Rome – a dark, cold dungeon reserved for the worst criminals. In his final letter, Paul urged Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, and to bring the cloak and some of the books he had left in Troas (2 Timothy 4:13). Feeling deserted and all alone, except for Luke, his constant companion, Paul urged Timothy to come without delay from Ephesus and bring with him Mark, whom Paul felt would be useful to him "for ministry" (2 Timothy 4:9-11). Eusebius of Caesarea, who wrote in the 4th century AD, stated that Paul was beheaded in Rome during the reign of the Emperor Nero (AD 66), approximately two years after Nero burned Rome (AD 64), blaming Christians for the terrible destruction.

Timeline of the Apostle Paul

Year	The Apostle Paul's Life
AD 5	- Born an Israelite in Tarsus of Cilicia (Acts 22:3; Philippians 3:5) - A Roman citizen by birthright (Acts 22:28)
c. 15-20	- At the school of Galalielei in Jerusalem (Acts 22:3)
c. 30	- Became a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5)
32	- Present at Stephen's stoning (Acts 7:58-8:1)
33-34	- Persecutor of the church (Acts 8:1-3; Philippians 3:6)
34	- Paul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19)
34-37	- Traveled to Arabia and remained there (Galatians 1:17)
37	- Returned to Damascus (Galatians 1:17; Acts 9:20-25; 2 Corinthians 11:32-33) - Went to Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-29; Galatians 1:18) - Returned to Tarsus for safety (Acts 9:30)
37-46	- In Tarsus
46	- Barnabas traveled to Tarsus to seek Paul (Acts 11:25)
47	- Went to Antioch with Barnabas teaching many people (Acts 11:26) - Agabus prophesied of a famine (Acts 11:27-28) - Aid sent to Jerusalem through Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:29-30) - Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch with John Mark (Acts 12:25) - Barnabas and Saul sent out – John Mark was with them (Acts 12:25 – 13:2-3)

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First Missionary Journey	
47-48	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traveled from Antioch to Seleucia, then to Cyprus (Acts 13:4) - While on Cyprus they went to Salamis and Paphos (Acts 13:5-12) - From Paphos they went to Perga of Pamphylia where John Mark departed for home (Acts 13:13) - Ministry in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:14-50) - At Iconium (Acts 13:51 – 14-6) - Fled to Lystra and Derbe, preaching the gospel (Acts 14:6-7) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Lystra Paul and Barnabas are mistaken for gods (Acts 14:19-20) - Stoned at Lystra, supposed to be dead, but re-entered the city (Acts 14:19-20) - Departed with Barnabas to Derbe, preaching the gospel (Acts 14:20-21) - Returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch to strengthen disciples and appoint elders (Acts 14:21-24) - From Pisidia they returned to Antioch of Syria and reported their journey to the church (Acts 14:24-28)
Interlude	
49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Went to the Jerusalem council with Barnabas (Acts 15:1-29; Galatians 2:1) - Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch of Syria, teaching and preaching (Acts 15:30-35; Galatians 2:11-14) - Contention over John Mark cause Barnabas and Paul to separate, Barnabas and John Mark sailed to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-39)
Second Missionary Journey	
49	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paul and Silas depart and went through Syria and Cilicia strengthening the churches (Acts 15:40-41) - Went to Derbe and Lystra and picked up Timothy, strengthening the churches (Acts 16:1-5) - Went to Troas where Paul saw a vision of a Macedonian man (Acts 16:16-25) - Sailed from Troas to Neapolis (Acts 16:11) - Went to Philippi where Paul meets Lydia (Acts 16:12-15) - Paul and Silas imprisoned after casting demon out of a slave girl (Acts 16:16-25) - Prison doors opened miraculously and jailer and his family were baptized (Acts 16:25-34) - Departed from Philippi (Acts 16:35-40) - They passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia (Acts 17:1) - At Thessalonica they preached Christ, but had to flee (Acts 17:1-10) - At Berea where Paul left Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:1-17) - At Corinth and rejoined with Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:1-17) - Spent 1 ½ years working with the church in Corinth <p style="text-align: right;">Wrote Galatians 1 & 2 Thessalonians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Returned to Antioch after stopping at Ephesus, Caeserea and Jerusalem (Acts 18:18-22)

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Third Missionary Journey	
53	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Traveled through Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples (Acts 18:23) - Passed through the upper regions on his way to Ephesus (Acts 19:1)
53-56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-41) <p style="text-align: right;">Wrote 1 Corinthians</p>
56	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Went to Macedonia (Acts 20:1) - Traveled to Greece (Acts 20:2) - Returned to Macedonia (Acts 20:3) - Went to Troas to break bread with disciples on first day of the week (Acts 20:4-12) - Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Togyllium (Acts 20:13-15) - Paul exhorted the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts 20:15-28) - Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Phoenicia (Acts 21:1-2) - At Tyre (Acts 21:3-6) - At Ptolemais (Acts 21:7) - At Caesarea (Acts 21:8-14) <p style="text-align: right;">Wrote 2 Corinthians Romans</p>

Arrest and Imprisonment	
57	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-25) - Paul was arrested in the temple and beaten by mob (Acts 21:26-36) - Addressed the mob (Acts 21:37-22:21) - Paul's citizenship saved him from scourging (Acts 22:22-29) - Before the Sanhedrin (Acts 22:30-23:10) - Jesus told Paul he will bear witness of Him in Rome (Acts 23:11) - The plot against Paul's life (Acts 23:12-22) - Sent safely to Felix the governor (Acts 23:23-35) - Paul before Felix (Acts 24:1-27)
59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paul before Festus (Acts 25:1-12) - Paul appeals to Caesar (Acts 25:11-12) - Paul before Agrippa (Acts 25:13-26:32)

Journey to Rome	
59	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paul departed for Rome and sailed to Myra (Acts 27:1-5) - Sailed to Fair Havens on Crete (Acts 27:6-8) - Rather than winter at Fair Havens, sailed on despite Paul's warning (Acts 27:9-12) - During a terrible storm they took measures to save the ship but eventually shipwrecked on the island of Malta (Acts 27:13-28:1) - On Malta 3 months (Acts 28:2-10) - Sailed to Syracuse (Acts 28:11-12) - Sailed to Rhegium then Puteoli and met brethren on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13)

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First Imprisonment at Rome	
60	- Arrived in Rome (Acts 28:14-16) - Met with leading Jews (Acts 28:17-29)
61-61	- Preached the gospel without hindrance for 2 years in his own rented house (Acts 28:30-31) Wrote Philemon Colossians Ephesians Philippians 1 Timothy Titus
Interlude	
63-65	- Released from imprisonment - Further missionary work
Second Imprisonment at Rome	
66	- Imprisoned again (possibly Mamertine Prison in Rome) Wrote 2 Timothy - Martyred (history says Paul was beheaded by Nero)

Disclaimer: The dates below are not certain and are based on AD 30 as the date of the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2) and the establishment of the church (Acts 2:47). Luke did not provide detailed information about when the events in Acts occurred. The approximate dates come from the events recorded by Luke and by comparing those events with secular history. Even though immense research has been done to arrive at these dates in the chronology of Paul's life, "scholars" do not entirely agree.