

Summary: Acts Chapters 27-28 -- Paul is taken to Rome

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Paul's perilous journey and shipwreck on Malta (27:1-44)

- Having appealed to the Emperor, Paul is now sent to Rome under the authority of a kindly centurion named Julius. It is a "we" narrative, so Luke is with him, as is another companion. The "winds were against them," but moving up the Mediterranean coast from Caesarea, they stop in Sidon, and reach the Anatolian port of Myra, where Paul's party is transferred to an Alexandrian ship bound for Rome and apparently to another centurion of goodwill.
- It is rough sailing as winter approaches, but they reach the port of Fair Haven on Crete. Winter is approaching, when sailing is dangerous and ceases until the spring. Paul advises that going forward with the trip will be dangerous and costly, but the centurion and pilot ignore him and proceed. The ship is driven hard by a storm into the central Mediterranean. The crew throws cargo and supplies overboard to lighten the ship.
- When "all hope" was lost and they hadn't eaten for days, Paul addresses the crew and chides them for not listening to his advice but tells them to keep up their courage, promising there would be no loss of life. He reports that an angel has appeared to him and told him that he would appear before the emperor and that everyone on board would be saved.
- After 14 days, as the ship approaches the reefs near Malta, some sailors try to escape in boats. Paul tells them and the centurion that they should stay on the ship
- In a scene that evokes the eucharist, Paul advises all on board to strengthen themselves by eating. He takes bread, gives thanks, breaks it and eats it. All 276 on board join him.
- The ship runs aground within sight of land. The soldiers plan to kill the prisoners, to be sure none escape, but the centurion "wishing to save Paul" instead tells the prisoners to swim for land with the sailors to follow. Everyone makes it safely ashore.

Paul continues his journey to Rome and ministers there (29:1-31)

- The locals on Malta are kind to the shipwrecked party. It is rainy and cold so they build a fire. Paul is bitten by a viper hidden in some brush that he is about to throw in the fire. The locals assume he will die from the venom and conclude Paul must be a murderer and the gods are exacting justice. When nothing happens they revise their theory and conclude he must be a god himself.
- The leading man of the island, Publius, entertains the travelers and when Paul learns that Publius' father is ill, Paul heals him, which prompts all the islanders to bring their sick to Paul for healing.
- After three months on the Island, they sail north for Rome, heading up the west coast of Italy. At the port of Puteoli (modern Pozzuoli, near Naples) Paul's party is hosted by some believers for seven days.
- When he reaches Rome, Paul is allowed to live by himself, under guard of a single soldier. He calls together some leaders of the Jews to explain his unjust circumstances, caused by the Jews in Jerusalem. They've never heard of him, but want to know more about this Christian sect "which is everywhere spoken against."
- Paul preaches to the Jews, explaining Jesus as a fulfillment of the law and the prophets. Some are convinced. Others were not. This prompts Paul to cite verses from Isaiah (6:9-10): "you will listen, but never understand...people's hearts have grown dull..." He concludes that "this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

- Paul continues proclaiming the Kingdom of God for another two years without hindrance, but at his own expense.