

Acts 27-28 Bible Study

1. Share one thing that has really struck you about the book of Acts.



2. Read Acts 27:1-20. Why was Paul's advice in v.10 ignored?

He was a prisoner, there were economic considerations (the owner's profit), perhaps Paul was not taken seriously in anything he said.

3. By verse 20, what might people have been thinking of Paul's warning? How might you have expected Paul to respond to being proven right?

For those who had a mind to think back, they would have realised Paul was right and probably realised there were more important things in life than financial profit! Paul could easily have resorted to a self-righteous "I told you so" attitude.

4. Read Acts 27:21-44. Why do you think God waited till now to give this vision? Compare v.20 with 2 Cor 1:8-9. Have you ever been in complete despair and found that God was your true hope?

*Perhaps to show that Paul's word was reliable so that maybe they would take him seriously in other areas. At least those with eyes to see could have acknowledged that when all hope was gone, there was **still** hope – in God.*

5. How is Paul treated in these verses? How can you explain the difference between his original warning in v.10 (that there would be loss of lives) and v44?

Julius takes his word as true – even being prepared to cast away their only lifeboat, others find encouragement in his words. Verse 43 shows Paul's words as coming true. V.10 is what their actions would have resulted in, v43 is the result of God's grace, possibly in answer to Paul's prayers – see v24. Paul was going to survive, but God graciously spares everyone else too!

6. Read Acts 28:1-16. "... and so (ie in this way) we came to Rome." List the things that might have prevented Paul's arrival and (humanly speaking) the things that made it possible. Would it have been easy for Paul to trust God that he would make it to Rome (23:11, 27:24)?

Being handed over to the Jews in Jerusalem - appeal to Caesar upheld; ship being lost at sea - reaching Malta; ship wreck if sailors had abandoned ship - soldiers cutting away lifeboat; execution by soldiers - centurion sparing Paul; snake bite - no ill effects. There are always things that put pressure on faith, and it seems Paul was still afraid (27:24 Paul did not have to repeat the first 5 words the angel said!), but trust can persevere through these things, as Paul's did.

7. Read Acts 28:17-31. Why do you think so little attention was paid to Paul's visit of the Christians from Rome (vv14-15) compared to the meeting with the Jews?

Probably to emphasise Paul's preaching to those who had not yet heard the gospel (Rom 15:20) and that Paul maintained his method of ministry – to Jews first, then Gentiles. After this meeting he was free to preach to "all who came to see him" (v.30) ie Jew and Gentile.

8. In v.22 Christianity is called a 'sect'. This most likely implies it is a branch within Judaism (see Paul in Acts 26:5) What does Paul say about this? Are there similarities with how some people today try to define Christianity and what we must say in response?

*Christianity is the **fulfilment** of Old Testament faith – Law and Prophets, not a sect within it. People today try to make Biblical Christianity one faith among all faiths, but it is the one true way to relationship with God. And so people will always "talk against this".*