

Acts 27-28

Finally, Paul is at long last on the way to Rome. No doubt with mixed feelings as this would result in either being freed or executed - in Paul's day there was no system of imprisonment as punishment with parole for good behaviour. Prison is where criminals were kept until they were executed or after trial, declared to be innocent and freed. So, for Paul, this was 'crunch time' - albeit rather a prolonged crunch time as he first had to get to Rome and then the trial could take place at any time over the next two years. After that (if not tried) he would be set free as his opponents had to present their case within two years. Allowing for the time taken for them to get to Rome, Paul could expect at least six months wait and maybe as much as two years. However, he first had to get to Rome....

Our first chapter today deals with the disastrous voyage to Rome that delayed Paul but gave ample opportunity for ministry en route. The second chapter completes the voyage and sees Paul at last in Rome awaiting his future, but in the meantime telling everyone he could about Jesus.

Read Acts 27.1-12

What sort of things decided when they would sail to Italy do you think?

Who else is going?

Why do you think Julius was kind to Paul?

Why did they have so much trouble proceeding and how did Paul react to that?

Read Acts 27.13-26

With such a storm as this, what do you think Paul and Luke and others did?

Do you think that even Paul fitted into Luke's description in v.20?

Is this speech by Paul a "told you so" speech or is what he is saying strengthening his case for later?

Read Acts 27.27-44

If everyone had been ignoring Paul before (after all he was a prisoner) why are they taking note now?

What is Paul doing in this situation with food and why is this so important?

Paul had been promised everyone's life by God - how does this work out here

Read Acts 28.1-10

How does God show continued faith to Paul when they land on Malta?

What does Paul do - if you were wet and cold would you behave this way?

How do the islanders react both immediately and later?

Read Acts 28.11-16

How does the long sea journey finally end and why does Julius let them stay for a week in Puteoli?

What is Paul's situation in Rome?

Read Acts 28.17-31

What does Paul do when he has settled in and why?

What is Paul's message to the Jews and why is this important?

What does Paul then do and how successful is it?

Reflect on how Paul in even the worst of situations trusts God and maintains his prayer life.