

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Lesson 18 w/Answers

Acts 27-28

This week we conclude our study of Acts as we look at the last two chapters, which describe Paul's return to Rome, and his imprisonment there. It has been quite a study, seeing the church grow from a handful of seemingly disorganized disciples to a church that, 28 chapters later, is spreading throughout the Roman Empire on a grand scale.



What is especially striking is the commitment and faith demonstrated by Paul, Peter, and the other Apostles as they faced persecution, suffering, even death – convinced of the truth of the Gospel: that Jesus is indeed the Messiah, the coming King, the Savior of mankind.

For our last lesson in Acts, let's read chapters 27 and 28 and consider the following:

1. Since Paul had actually done nothing wrong, and there was clearly nothing that he could be imprisoned for, why was he sailing to Rome under Roman guard as a prisoner? (Acts 26:31-32)
 - a. ANSWER: Before they pronounced sentence on him, they wanted him to stand trial in Jerusalem. He instead claimed his right as a Roman Citizen and filed an appeal - an appeal to Caesar in Rome.
2. In the first verse of Chapter 27, it states that it was decided that "we" would sail for Italy. Aside from Luke, who was with him? Do the verses that follow tell us who else is traveling with him? Where have we encountered this name before? (Acts 27:1-2, and Acts 19:29).
 - a. ANSWER: We know at least Paul, Luke and Aristarchus from Macedonia were traveling together. Aristarchus was mentioned earlier as a traveling companion of Paul's on his last missionary trip.
3. In Acts 27:4-13, we observe that as they are sailing the seas, the weather gets bad. What does Paul advise them to do or not to do, and how do they react?
 - a. ANSWER: Paul warns them about impending disaster and indicates to them that they should not sail. The guard and the captain of the ship ignore him.
4. What actually happens after Paul's advice is ignored? (Acts 27:14-20)
 - a. ANSWER: The ship sails through a very rough storm over several days and eventually runs aground on an island.
5. What does Paul tell them about the danger that they are in and why the danger will pass without them being harmed? (Acts 27:21-26)
 - a. ANSWER: Paul informs them that the angel of God, the God that he spoke about, told him that all would be fine; however, they would be cast on a certain island.
6. How many days had they been at sea in the storm before Paul spoke to them and told them that they would be safe? How many more days were they in the storm until the journey ended at the island? (Acts 27:19-20, 27)
 - a. ANSWER: It was probably well over 3 weeks that they were tossed about at sea in a very bad storm.
7. After all this time at sea in this very bad storm, the crew feared that the ship was about to run aground so they dropped four anchors and prepared to abandon the vessel. What did Paul warn them about this time, and did they listen? (Acts 27:28-32)
 - a. ANSWER: He instructed them to cut the anchors, get back in the ship, and remain there if they wanted to be saved -- and they listened to him this time.

8. Because of the very rough seas, how long had everyone gone without eating by the time (evening) that Paul told them to stay in the ship in order to be safe? (Acts 27:33)
 - a. ANSWER: It had been 14 days.
9. When Paul told them to eat, what else did he do with the entire ship's crew and passengers? In total, how many people were on the ship? (Acts 27:34-38)
 - a. ANSWER 1: Paul gave thanks to God for watching over them and for providing for them.
 - b. ANSWER 2: There were 276 souls were on board.
10. So, after three weeks in a violent storm at sea, the ship crashes, runs aground on a sand bar, and breaks in pieces. What do the soldiers believe they should do with the prisoners, like Paul, who are on the broken ship? (Acts 27:39-42)
 - a. ANSWER: They want to kill all of them, in order to keep them from escaping.
11. Who saves Paul, and how do they all get off the ship? (Acts 27:43-44)
 - a. ANSWER 1: Again, one of the least-likely people, a Roman guard, helps Paul.
 - b. ANSWER 2: They get to shore by swimming, and those who could not swim grabbed broken boards and floated to shore.
12. How long do they stay on the island? Why would they have stayed that long? (Acts 28:11)
 - a. ANSWER: Three months, because this gets them through the winter.
13. What happens on the island while they are there? (Acts 28:1-10)
 - a. ANSWER 1; Paul is bitten by a snake, but it doesn't affect him. As a result, people believe that he is a god.
 - b. ANSWER 2: Paul heals his host's father; he also heals many others during the three-month stay.
 - c. ANSWER 3: When they prepare to depart, the folks of the island honor Paul and the travelers with him by providing provisions for the ship.
14. When Paul finally arrives in Italy, how do we know that there are already churches and Christians in Italy prior to his arrival? Who do you suppose the earlier believers in Rome were? (Acts 28:14)
 - a. ANSWER 1: We know that there are Christians there because Luke tells us that Paul is met by some "brothers" who invite Paul and his fellow Christian travelers to spend time with them.
 - b. ANSWER 2: The first Christians in Rome were likely Jews who had returned from the Pentecost celebrations in Jerusalem.
15. Paul is placed under house arrest in Rome and assigned a full time Roman Guard. Once he is in the house, what is his approach to preaching the Gospel, i.e., how does he go about doing it? (Acts 28:16-29)
 - a. ANSWER: Paul invites the Jewish leaders to come to his home, since he cannot go to the synagogue. His practice remained the same at each place he visited, take the good news to the Jewish leaders first, and trying to convince them of the truth. Once rejected, he takes the same message to the Gentiles.
16. How long does Paul stay in Rome, and what does Luke say he did the entire time he was there? (Acts 28:30-31)
 - a. ANSWER: Paul spent two years in Rome, "preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching".

This wraps up our study of the book of Acts. I pray that we find Paul's and the early apostles' persistence and boldness in preaching the Gospel to be an example for us today!

Yours in Christ,

Wes