

²²But we want to hear what you believe, for the only thing we know about this movement is that it is denounced everywhere.”

²³ So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul’s lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening. ²⁴ Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe.

9. Discussion: (a) What did Paul say was the reason why he was bound with a chain? (b) What do you think Paul hoped to accomplish by giving his fellow Jews in Rome a summary of his life’s journey? (c) What rumors had the Jews already heard about Paul? (d) If your life depended on it, how would you explain the basis of your own faith?

Scriptures from the
Holy Bible, New Living Translation (NLT)
copyright © 1996, 2004 by [Tyndale Charitable Trust](#).
Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers.

Study Guide Copyright © 2011 David B. Fenwick
Published and Distributed by
Yeshua Glow, Inc. 5718 Monterey Road, Los Angeles, CA 90042

An Interactive Life Application Bible Study of the Acts of the Apostles for Small Groups

Key: Blue = New Testament Red = Words of Jesus

Green = Old Testament Quotes

Lesson 33

1. Background: Lesson 32 ended with Paul on board a ship heading for Rome, but they were faced with a terrible storm. The situation was so desperate they had thrown nearly all the cargo overboard.

2. The Shipwreck

Acts 27:39-44 When morning dawned, they didn’t recognize the coastline, but they saw a bay with a beach and wondered if they could get to shore by running the ship aground. ⁴⁰ So they cut off the anchors and left them in the sea. Then they lowered the rudders, raised the foresail, and headed toward shore. ⁴¹ But they hit a shoal and ran the ship aground too soon. The bow of the ship stuck fast, while the stern was repeatedly smashed by the force of the waves and began to break apart.

⁴² The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners to make sure they didn’t swim ashore and escape. ⁴³ But the commanding officer wanted to spare Paul, so he didn’t let them carry out their plan. Then he ordered all who could swim to jump overboard first and make for land. ⁴⁴ The others held onto planks or debris from the broken ship. So everyone escaped safely to shore.

3. Discussion: (a) If you identify with Paul because you have also experienced a dangerous life or death situation, tell about it. (b) Why do you think the commanding officer wanted to spare Paul? (c) What place does faith in God play when faced with serious danger?

4. Paul on the Island of Malta

Acts 28:1-30 Once we were safe on shore, we learned that we

were on the island of Malta. ² The people of the island were very kind to us. It was cold and rainy, so they built a fire on the shore to welcome us.

³ As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand. ⁴ The people of the island saw it hanging from his hand and said to each other, "A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live." ⁵ But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. ⁶ The people waited for him to swell up or suddenly drop dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw that he wasn't harmed, they changed their minds and decided he was a god.

⁷ Near the shore where we landed was an estate belonging to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us and treated us kindly for three days. ⁸ As it happened, Publius's father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on him, he healed him. ⁹ Then all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. ¹⁰ As a result we were showered with honors, and when the time came to sail, people supplied us with everything we would need for the trip.

[Note: God does not always prevent bad situations. He sometimes wants to use them to build faith. In Mark 16:18 Jesus promised that those who have faith in him would be able to "handle snakes with safety." Keeping the deadly snake away from Paul would have kept a miracle from taking place.]

5. Discussion: (a) Can you tell about a time when God was honored by allowing you to face a difficult situation? (b) When Paul was on the island of Malta, how was God honored by a poisonous snake and also by a serious illness?

6. Paul Arrives at Rome

Acts 28:11-16 It was three months after the shipwreck that we set sail on another ship that had wintered at the island

—an Alexandrian ship with the twin gods [Castor and Pollux].as its figurehead. ¹² Our first stop was Syracuse, [on the island of Sicily]. where we stayed three days. ¹³ From there we sailed across to Rhegium [on the southern tip of Italy]. A day later a south wind began blowing, so the following day we sailed up the coast to Puteoli [chief port 75 miles from Rome]. ¹⁴ There we found some believers, who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵ The brothers and sisters in Rome had heard we were coming, and they came to meet us at the Forum [about 43 miles from Rome] on the Appian Way. Others joined us at The Three Taverns [35 miles from Rome]. When Paul saw them, he was encouraged and thanked God.

¹⁶ When we arrived in Rome, Paul was permitted to have his own private lodging, though he was guarded by a soldier.

7. Discussion: Paul was encouraged several times by fellow believers as he approached Rome. Tell about some times when you have been encouraged by fellow believers.

8. Paul Preaches at Rome under Guard

Acts 28:17 Three days after Paul's arrival, he called together the local Jewish leaders. He said to them, "Brothers, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Roman government, even though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors. ¹⁸ The Romans tried me and wanted to release me, because they found no cause for the death sentence. ¹⁹ But when the Jewish leaders protested the decision, I felt it necessary to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no desire to press charges against my own people. ²⁰ I asked you to come here today so we could get acquainted and so I could explain to you that I am bound with this chain because I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come."

²¹ They replied, "We have had no letters from Judea or reports against you from anyone who has come here.