

Getting There is Half the Fun

Session Twenty

“If only Rome could be thoroughly evangelized, Paul must have thought to himself, and its church enlarged, consolidated and fired with a missionary vision, what a radiating center for the gospel it could become! ‘To a Roman the city of Rome was the center of the world; from the golden milestone in the Forum at Rome roads went out in all directions to all parts of the Empire’” (Stott, 384).

“Jerusalem was the goal of Jesus’ ministry, while Rome was the goal of Paul’s. Although the journeys of Jesus and Paul differed from one another in their ultimate direction and destination, they also resembled one another in their pattern, for both included a resolute determination, an arrest, a series of trials in Jewish and Roman courts, and even death and resurrection. For Paul’s descent into the darkness and danger of the storm was a kind of grave, while his rescue from shipwreck and later springtime voyage to Rome were a kind of resurrection” (Stott, 385).

Acts 27:1-12

T / F Luke and Aristarchus accompanied Paul in this journey to Rome. (See 20:4.)

The prevailing wind in the summer was from the _____. Myra (the place where Paul changes boats) had a large grain storage capacity and it was im“port”ant as an alternative to hugging the coast; some ships sailed directly to Alexandria from there.

The Fast (v. 9) refers to Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and fell in the latter part of September or October. One historian puts the date of the Fast at Oct. 5th. “The Romans considered sailing after Sept. 15th doubtful and after Nov. 11th suicidal” (CSSB, 1709). What’s clear to everyone is that they aren’t going to make it to Rome. They are going to have to stay the winter somewhere. The only matter was finding a suitable port.

Acts 27:13-26

Apparently, a lifeboat (v. 16) was towed behind the ship, but it was interfering with steering and may also have been a risk of crashing into the ship, so it is secured. List the four other emergency actions taken:

- | | |
|----|----|
| 1) | 3) |
| 2) | 4) |

How long does one verse take? Taking into account v. 27, the many days mentioned in v. 20 is actually _____ days!

Paul’s pep talk is a combination of “I told you so” and “Thus saith the Lord”. How does this vision reaffirm what he has already heard Jesus say? What content is new?

Acts 27:27-32

A conservative estimate is that Paul had already spent 3,500 miles at sea on his previous missionary journeys.

The sailors try to abandon ship, but when Paul warns the centurion (Julius) and soldiers the *sailors* must stay for the *soldiers* to survive, the soldiers cut the ropes to the lifeboat and it drifts away.

Acts 27:33-44

Interesting how the first supper (in 14 days) has a Last Supper feel!

“But not a hair of your head will perish.” --Jesus, Luke 21:18

“Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head.” --Paul, Acts 27:34

How many people are on board the S.S. Paul? _____

(A large but not unusual number. Josephus refers to another ship that had 600 people aboard.)

Why do they throw the grain overboard in order to lighten the ship?

They all arrive safely, just as the angel said they would. And like Paul said, they did run aground on some island—Malta!

Acts 28:1-10

Friendly islanders build a fire amidst the rain and wind.

Once bitten, twice shy...unless you're Paul. Remember, Luke is a physician. The snake bite (with no harmful effects) must have intrigued him especially. But what does the home crowd think of Paul and why?

Who is Publius?

Whom does Paul heal?

They will winter in Malta for three months before setting sail again for Rome. The islanders honored Paul and company by giving them supplies for the remainder of the journey.

When God Sets the Course

Why this meandering, dangerous, painfully slow route to Rome? What did God accomplish with it?

Ever wonder why the path between Point A and Point B in our life is never as direct as we would like it to be? What does God accomplish in the process of journeying with Him?