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THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY

A SURVEY OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Pastor Dan Betzer, Instructor

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Study Number Nine / THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES Part Two / February 25, 2009

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The book of Acts is THE PATTERN BOOK for the New Testament Church, that is, the church today that claims to be the body of Christ. That most certainly would include First Assembly of God Ministries in Fort Myers and Southwest Florida. Remember that the Book of Acts is the story of the Holy Spirit's work primarily through Peter and Paul. It is the "Tale of Two Cities," that is, Jerusalem and Antioch and the Pentecostal churches of each one. It is the Church at Antioch that concerns us and after which we pattern First Assembly of God in Fort Myers.

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Acts 13 gives us the springboard for MISSIONS. Note carefully the report of the scripture: **Acts 13:1-3**

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Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. [2] As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. [3] And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Thus the first two missionaries for Christ were Barnabas and Paul. The two remained together for their first missionary journey and then split up for the second and third. Here is a synopsis of Paul's three sojourns, which we will study as thoroughly as we can in this study:

FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 13 and 14: Paul and Barnabas headed for Cyprus and then Turkey (Asia Minor). At first their method of evangelism was to preach in the town synagogues. But when they were rejected there, the attention of the missionaries was drawn to the Gentiles. Because of Paul's bold witness, Saul the Persecutor became Paul the Persecuted. He was arrested again and again, beaten, imprisoned and even stoned and left for dead. But

1 through all these sufferings, Paul steadfastly continued preaching Christ. **2 Cor. 4:8-12**

2 **We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in**
3 **despair; [9] Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; [10] Always**
4 **bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus**
5 **might be made manifest in our body. [11] For we which live are always delivered**
6 **unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our**
7 **mortal flesh. [12] So then death worketh in us, but life in you.**

8
9 Paul's ministry to Gentiles brought controversy over who could be saved and how to
10 become a follower of Christ. *Between his first and second journey, he participated in a*
11 *conference in Jerusalem discussing this issue. The final consensus was that the*
12 *Gentiles could receive Jesus without submitting to Jewish customs.*

13 14 **SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY**

15
16 Acts 15:36 - 18:22: Paul stayed in Antioch for a time, strengthening the believers there,
17 but the Holy Spirit kept prompting him to make another missions trip. He asked
18 Barnabas to join him, revisiting the churches of their first missions outreach. However,
19 a disagreement over Mark (Barnabas' relative), who had dropped out of the first missions
20 journey, caused the two men to separate their efforts. Barnabas and Mark returned to
21 Cyprus while Paul chose Silas to go with him as they invaded Europe for the first time
22 with the Gospel. In northern Greece, at Philippi, Paul and Silas were beaten and
23 imprisoned. At midnight, they sang to the Lord. A God-sent earthquake opened the
24 doors of their dungeon and freed them. Many converts came to the Lord through this.

25
26 From there Paul went to Thessalonica and Berea, establishing works for God, and then he
27 headed south to Athens where he preached on Mars Hill, adjacent to the Acropolis. Paul
28 then went to the great city of Corinth and established perhaps the strongest Pentecostal
29 church of that time in that city.

30 31 **THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY**

32
33 Acts 18:23 - 20:38: During Paul's third journey (perhaps there were others, but we
34 don't know for sure), he preached across Turkey. In the huge city of Ephesus, there was
35 such a revival that the silversmiths (idol-makers) fomented a riot in the stadium. At the
36 end of Paul's third journey, he realized that he would one day be imprisoned and
37 executed. Meeting for the last time with the Ephesian believers, Paul said: **Acts**
38 **20:18-24**

39 **And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day**
40 **that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, [19]**

1 **Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations,**
2 **which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: [20] And how I kept back nothing**
3 **that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly,**
4 **and from house to house, [21] Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks,**
5 **repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. [22] And now,**
6 **behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall**
7 **befall me there: [23] Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that**
8 **bonds and afflictions abide me. [24] But none of these things move me, neither count**
9 **I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the**
10 **ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of**
11 **God.**

12 13 **CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

14
15 I often refer to Acts 13 as a “watershed” chapter, that is, a “transitional” move in the
16 scripture.

- 17
18 • Notice in verse 1 the divergence of those in the Antioch church: you have rich and
19 poor, various races, and social strata differences. That’s the way the Church of our
20 Lord should be, a true reflection of the society around it.
- 21
22 • During this time, the Holy Spirit made it clear to the congregants that God wanted
23 their pastors, Barnabas and Paul, to begin global evangelism. Acts 13:4 Sent off
24 on their new assignment by the Holy Spirit, Barnabas and Saul went down to
25 Seleucia and caught a ship for Cyprus.
- 26
27 • On the Island of Cyprus, Barnabas, Paul and Mark were invited to appear before the
28 Roman ruler, Sergius Paulus, who was interested in their message. When a court
29 attendant, a demon-possessed man named Elymas, attempted to circumvent Paul’s
30 witness, he was stricken blind. That was enough for Sergius Paulus! He believed!
31
- 32 • From Cyprus, the missionary troupe sailed north into Pamphylia (Turkey). *It was at*
33 *this point that young John Mark left them and went home to Jerusalem, an act which*
34 *cut short Paul’s appreciation of him and would cause the dissension at the start of the*
35 *second missionary journey between Paul and Barnabas. It was not until the last act*
36 *of his life, when he was on death row in Rome, that Paul was willing to re-consider*
37 *Mark again as a worthy missionary.*
- 38
39 • Read Paul’s message to the lost in Perga, verses 16-41. Result: Acts 13:44-45
40 **When the next Sabbath came around, practically the whole city showed up to**

1 **hear the Word of God. [45] Some of the Jews, seeing the crowds, went wild with**
2 **jealousy and tore into Paul, contradicting everything he was saying, making an ugly**
3 **scene.**

- 4
- 5 • Verses 50 and 51 tell us that when Paul and Barnabas were asked to leave the city to
6 avoid conflict, “they shook the dust of their feet against them and came to
7 Iconium.”
- 8

It is my feeling that people who have had an adequate witness of the Gospel should not expect to keep hearing it over and over until everyone has had the opportunity to hear it at least once.

9 CHAPTER FOURTEEN

- 10
- 11 • Today Iconium is a city in Turkey of about 1.5 million people. In Paul’s day it was
12 much smaller, but still vital. Here Paul and Barnabas faithfully declared the Gospel.
13 While many were convinced of Christ, still others rebelled and started to riot. So:
14 **Acts 14:5-7 One day, learning that both the Jews and non-Jews had been**
15 **organized by their leaders to beat them up, they escaped as best they could to the**
16 **next towns—Lyconia, Lystra, Derbe, and that neighborhood— [6] [7] but then**
17 **were right back at it again, getting out the Message.**
- 18
- 19
- 20 • The next stop was Lystra: **Acts 14:8-11 There was a man in Lystra who couldn't**
21 **walk. He sat there, crippled since the day of his birth. [9] He heard Paul talking,**
22 **and Paul, looking him in the eye, saw that he was ripe for God's work, ready to**
23 **believe. [10] So he said, loud enough for everyone to hear, "Up on your feet!"**
24 **The man was up in a flash—jumped up and walked around as if he'd been**
25 **walking all his life.**
26 **[11] When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they went wild, calling out in their**
27 **Lyconian dialect, "The gods have come down! These men are gods!"**
- 28
- 29

30 One thing that is consistent about people is this: they are not consistent. In the former town of Iconium the people wanted to kill Paul and Barnabas; but in Lystra they called Barnabas the god Jupiter and Paul Mercury. (Verse 11) Every Christian leader learns quickly not to pay much attention to either accolades or criticisms.

1 Paul and Barnabas made it clear they were simply people “like you,” they said. SO
2 HOW INCONSISTENT WERE THE PEOPLE? In verse 11 they thought the
3 missionaries were gods; in verses 18 and 19 they stoned them, leaving Paul “for dead”
4 by the side of the road.

- 5
- 6 • Now the missionaries backtracked across southern Turkey and returned to Antioch to
7 give a verbal report to the church that sent them.
- 8

9 CHAPTER FIFTEEN

- 10
- 11 • Back in Antioch, an envoy was sent to the church from Jerusalem made up of
12 believers who were legalists and said that no one could become a Christian without
13 being circumcised - a religious rite that has to do with surgery on genitalia -
14 especially that of males in Jewish religion.
- 15
- 16 • It was Paul’s contention throughout the book of Acts that it was Christ and His shed
17 blood that saves us, not some medical procedure. The Apostle Peter rose to make a
18 rather long speech defending this principle: verses 7 - 21.
- 19
- 20 • The bottom line was that the church ruled out circumcision as a salvation method, but
21 insisted upon holy living, once the convert came to Christ.
- 22

23 THE SPLIT BETWEEN PAUL AND BARNABAS

24 Acts 15:36-41 (The Message)

25 **After a few days of this, Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go back and visit all our**
26 **friends in each of the towns where we preached the Word of God. Let's see how**
27 **they're doing."**

28
29 **[37] Barnabas wanted to take John along, the John nicknamed Mark. [38] But**
30 **Paul wouldn't have him; he wasn't about to take along a quitter who, as soon as the**
31 **going got tough, had jumped ship on them in Pamphylia. [39] Tempers flared, and**
32 **they ended up going their separate ways: Barnabas took Mark and sailed for**
33 **Cyprus; [40] Paul chose Silas and, offered up by their friends to the grace of the**
34 **Master, [41] went to Syria and Cilicia to build up muscle and sinew in those**
35 **congregations.**

- 36
- 37 • Differences of opinion on non-essentials of the Gospel should not hinder the church
38 nor alienate those on either side. While the Gospel itself cannot and must not be
39 changed, methods of implementing the Gospel vary widely.
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CHAPTER SIXTEEN
The Second Missionary Journey

- Now Paul and Silas leave Antioch, going overland back through Tarsus, returning to places from their first journey - Derbe, Lystra and Iconium (Galatia) - but also hitting some new territories farther west and eventually becoming **THE FIRST MISSIONARIES ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE**. It was early in this journey that Paul encountered the young man who would become his protégé, Timothy.
- On this journey, his second, now with Silas and Timothy - soon to be joined at Troas (port city) by the Greek physician Luke, Paul was determined to make some changes on this time around. He would stay longer in each city, if possible, to make sure the converts had their roots planted deep into the soil of scripture and faith. And he hoped to develop young missionaries who would continue his work where he could not reach.
- Paul wanted to go 250 miles west in Turkey to the great city of Ephesus. But the Holy Spirit said, “No,” and directed them instead to Europe through the Macedonian city of Neapolis (present-day Kavala) and on over the mountains to Philippi. The missionary troupe left Asia Minor (Turkey) from the port city of Troas.

At Troas Luke slips into the picture. In the best tradition of historians he never thrusts himself forward and thus leaves his origins open to speculation. It is known that he was a doctor: Paul calls him the “beloved physician” and he shows close attention to medical detail. He was a Greek. Early tradition makes him a citizen of Antioch in Syria. It has been suggested that Titus was Luke’s brother whom he did not wish to mention unless it seem family pride. He must have met Paul, Silas and Timothy at Troas by coincidence, for they had no intention of going there.

THE MAN WHO SHOOK THE WORLD / JOHN POLLACK / VICTORY BOOKS / PAGE 91

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The addition of Luke would be a great boon to Paul, whose health was deteriorating and often hindered him from travel. Now the little quartet of missionaries leave Turkey and sail for Neapolis, Greece.

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They landed the second evening at Neapolis, a new harbor tucked close under a ridge of the Pangaeian range which they climbed next day with the broad Via Egnatia (an incredible highway built by the Romans, starting in Rome in the west and ending in Istanbul in the east - DB). From the top of the pass they saw the city of Philippi.

1 *Beyond lay the narrow plain where the world's fate had been settled at the Battle of*
2 *Philippi when Octavian (Augustus) defeated the murderers of Julius Caesar. The city*
3 *stood compact in granite glory on either side of the reoad, below an acropolis a thousand*
4 *twenty feet high. Philippi, named for Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great,*
5 *had become a Roman colony after the battle and was a bustling center of military activity.*
6 *It was self-governing, a little Rome, which used Latin for all official business. It was a*
7 *place where Romans were held in high honor.*

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9

- 10 • The first-known convert in Europe was a businesswoman named Lydia who owned a
11 textile mill in Thyatira. **Acts 16:13-15** **On the Sabbath, we left the city and**
12 **went down along the river where we had heard there was to be a prayer meeting.**
13 **We took our place with the women who had gathered there and talked with**
14 **them. [14] One woman, Lydia, was from Thyatira and a dealer in expensive**
15 **textiles, known to be a God-fearing woman. As she listened with intensity to what**
16 **was being said, the Master gave her a trusting heart—and she believed!**
17 **[15] After she was baptized, along with everyone in her household, she said in a**
18 **surge of hospitality, "If you're confident that I'm in this with you and believe in**
19 **the Master truly, come home with me and be my guests." We hesitated, but she**
20 **wouldn't take no for an answer.**
- 21
- 22 • It was in Philippi that Paul and Silas were severely beaten after delivering a slave girl
23 from demon possession. The warden of the prison did now know that Paul was a
24 Roman citizen and could not legally be beaten. At midnight, Paul and Silas began
25 singing in the prison: **Acts 16:25-34** **Along about midnight, Paul and Silas**
26 **were at prayer and singing a robust hymn to God. The other prisoners couldn't**
27 **believe their ears. [26] Then, without warning, a huge earthquake! The jailhouse**
28 **tottered, every door flew open, all the prisoners were loose.**
29 **[27] Startled from sleep, the jailer saw all the doors swinging loose on their**
30 **hinges. Assuming that all the prisoners had escaped, he pulled out his sword**
31 **and was about to do himself in, figuring he was as good as dead anyway, [28]**
32 **when Paul stopped him: "Don't do that! We're all still here! Nobody's run**
33 **away!"**
- 34 **[29] The jailer got a torch and ran inside. Badly shaken, he collapsed in front of**
35 **Paul and Silas. [30] He led them out of the jail and asked, "Sirs, what do I have**
36 **to do to be saved, to really live?" [31] They said, "Put your entire trust in the**
37 **Master Jesus. Then you'll live as you were meant to live—and everyone in**
38 **your house included!"**
- 39 **[32] They went on to spell out in detail the story of the Master—the entire family**
40 **got in on this part. [33] They never did get to bed that night. The jailer made**
41 **them feel at home, dressed their wounds, and then—he couldn't wait till**

1 morning!—was baptized, he and everyone in his family. [34] There in his home,
2 he had food set out for a festive meal. It was a night to remember: He and his
3 entire family had put their trust in God; everyone in the house was in on the
4 celebration.

- 5
- 6 • Upon his release from prison, Paul left Philippi and headed west where he would
7 minister in the great city of Thessalonica (currently second in Greece only to Athens
8 in size) and then on to Berea.
- 9

10 CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

11 - Thessalonica

12 - Berea

13 - Athens

- 14
- 15 • In both Thessalonica and Berea, Paul was able to get a foothold for Christ and His
16 Church; however, in Thessalonica there was again trouble from the religious leaders
17 and, to some extent, in Berea as well. After doing what God sent him there to do,
18 Paul left both cities and headed for Athens.
- 19
- 20 • In Athens, Paul preached on Mars Hill - a spot directly next to the Acropolis and
21 Parthenon. This is where the “intelligentsia” would meet to debate issues. Paul got
22 a good hearing from them until he mentioned Christ’s resurrection.

23 Acts 17:32-34

24 At the phrase "raising him from the dead," the listeners split: Some laughed at
25 him and walked off making jokes; others said, "Let's do this again. We want to hear
26 more." [33] But that was it for the day, and Paul left. [34] There were still others, it
27 turned out, who were convinced then and there, and stuck with Paul—among them
28 Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris.

29

30

31

Luke’s somewhat off-hand remark about the people of Athens bears some attention:
Acts 17:21 (For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their
time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) It seems to me
as a more than casual observer that Americans today have a case of “galloping
Athenianism.” There are more interested in some “new thing” or some “new
revelation” (of which there are none!) than the revealed mind of God has given us in
Scripture. We don’t want the “old” but we search for some “new thing.” It was fatal
to the people of Athens and it will be fatal for us as well if we don’t get into God’s
written Word and learn it very, very well!



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

- The map of Greece resembles a somewhat distorted hour-glass, large at the top and bottom with a narrow piece of land called an isthmus connecting them. On that narrow strip was located ancient Corinth, the Ionian Sea on the west and the Aegean Sea on the east. Hence Corinth was a major seaport. (Today those seas are connected by a very narrow canal - about four or five miles long. See picture to left - Athens would be on the left, east, about 20 miles away and Corinth to the right, west, about ten miles away.) In the days of Paul's ministry, Corinth was a huge city, given over to the licentious worship of Apollo, whose temple adorned the massive volcano-shaped acropolis, visible on a clear day from Athens.

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17
18 In Corinth, Paul met a married couple who would soon be numbered among his very best
19 friends, Aquila and his wife Priscilla. They had once lived in Rome but had been
20 expelled from there when Claudius made all Jews leave the city. The three of them, by
21 trade, were tentmakers, probably working out of a shop on the main street in the market
22 place.

Acts 18:1-5

25 After these things (that is Paul's ministry in Athens) Paul departed from Athens,
26 and came to Corinth; [2] And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus,
27 lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had
28 commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. [3] And because
29 he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation
30 they were tentmakers. [4] And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and
31 persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. [5] And when Silas and Timotheus were come
32 from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus
33 was Christ.

- Paul ministered in Corinth for 18 months. Trouble-makers there made charges against Paul; however, the Roman magistrate Gallio dismissed them.
- Verses 18 through 23 report that Paul and his co-laborers returned once again to Antioch, reporting on his second missions journey.

- 1 • In the meantime, an Egyptian-born Jew named Apollos - a great man of God - came to
2 Ephesus and started a church there, a small work that Paul would come to during his
3 third missions sojourn, which we read about in chapter 19, and where there would be
4 a huge outbreak of the Holy Spirit.

5
6 **CHAPTER NINETEEN**

7
8 **Acts 19:1-7**

9 **While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior provinces.**
10 **Finally, he came to Ephesus, where he found several believers. [2] "Did you receive**
11 **the Holy Spirit when you believed?" he asked them.**

12 **"No," they replied, "we don't know what you mean. We haven't even heard that**
13 **there is a Holy Spirit."**

14 **[3] "Then what baptism did you experience?" he asked.**

15 **And they replied, "The baptism of John."**

16 **[4] Paul said, "John's baptism was to demonstrate a desire to turn from sin and**
17 **turn to God. John himself told the people to believe in Jesus, the one John said**
18 **would come later."**

19 **[5] As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**

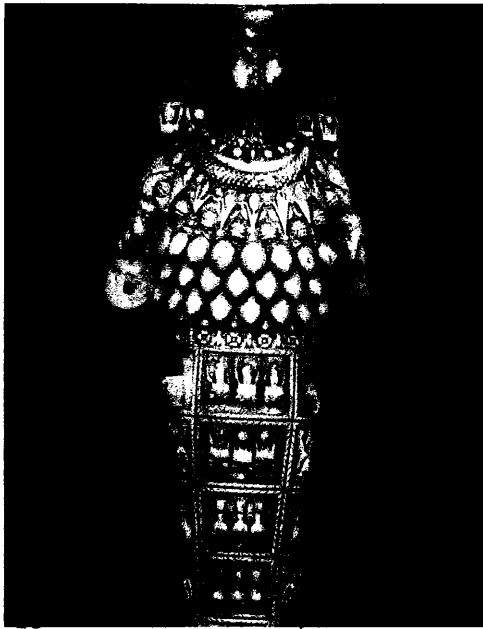
20 **[6] Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they**
21 **spoke in other tongues and prophesied. [7] There were about twelve men in all.**

- 22
23 • I have been in ancient Ephesus quite a few times. Our ship has landed at Kusadasi, a
24 port on the west coast of Turkey. Ephesus is a few miles inland. *However, in*
25 *Paul's day, Ephesus was located on the sea; over the centuries the harbor has filled*
26 *with silt and is now very fertile farmland.* Ephesus was one of the main cities of the
27 Roman Empire and was the home of the Temple of Artemis (Diana), one of the
28 ancient seven wonders of the world. Today, a rusty sign and some broken columns
29 are all that remain of the temple. But in its heyday, the temple was 400 feet long and
30 nearly 200 feet wide. Each of the temple's massive ionic columns were 60 feet tall.
31 It was larger than the Parthenon in Athens.

- 32
33 • When Paul arrived in Ephesus, a major revival broke out, so much so that thousands
34 of people were leaving the idol worship of Diana and seeking Jesus. This caused a
35 major conflict in the city:

36 **Acts 19:23-28**

37 **But about that time, serious trouble developed in**
38 **Ephesus concerning the Way. [24] It began with**
39 **Demetrius, a silversmith who had a large business**
40 **manufacturing silver shrines of the Greek goddess**



Artemis. He kept many craftsmen busy. [25] He called the craftsmen together, along with others employed in related trades, and addressed them as follows:

"Gentlemen, you know that our wealth comes from this business. [26] As you have seen and heard, this man Paul has persuaded many people that handmade gods aren't gods at all. And this is happening not only here in Ephesus but throughout the entire province! [27] Of course, I'm not just talking about the loss of public respect for our business. I'm also concerned that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will lose its influence and that Artemis—this magnificent goddess worshiped throughout the province of Asia and all around the world—will be robbed of her prestige!"

[28] At this their anger boiled, and they began shouting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

While there were many who wanted Paul's arrest and possible execution, the town elders exhibited common sense and dismissed all charges against Paul and the Christians.

Chapter Twenty

At this point in Acts, Paul heads back for Jerusalem where he knows he will be arrested on various charges and face possible death. So he backtracks through Greece and once again into Turkey. In Troas, a very unusual thing happened:

Acts 20:5-12

They went ahead and waited for us at Troas. [6] As soon as the Passover season ended, we boarded a ship at Philippi in Macedonia and five days later arrived in Troas, where we stayed a week.

[7] On the first day of the week, we gathered to observe the Lord's Supper. Paul was preaching; and since he was leaving the next day, he talked until midnight. [8] The upstairs room where we met was lighted with many flickering lamps. [9] As Paul spoke on and on, a young man named Eutychus, sitting on the windowsill, became very drowsy. Finally, he sank into a deep sleep and fell three stories to his death below. [10] Paul went down, bent over him, and took him into his arms. "Don't worry," he said, "he's alive!" [11] Then they all went back upstairs and ate the Lord's Supper together. And Paul continued talking to them until dawn; then he left. [12] Meanwhile, the young man was taken home unhurt, and everyone was greatly relieved.

- 1 • Once back in Turkey, Paul revisited Ephesus and the church leaders. It was a sad
2 visit as Paul knew he would probably never see them again.

3 **Acts 20:22-27**

4 **"And now I am going to Jerusalem, drawn there irresistibly by the Holy Spirit,**
5 **not knowing what awaits me, [23] except that the Holy Spirit has told me in city**
6 **after city that jail and suffering lie ahead. [24] But my life is worth nothing unless I**
7 **use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others**
8 **the Good News about God's wonderful kindness and love.**

9 **[25] "And now I know that none of you to whom I have preached the Kingdom**
10 **will ever see me again. [26] Let me say plainly that I have been faithful. No one's**
11 **damnation can be blamed on me, [27] for I didn't shrink from declaring all that God**
12 **wants for you.**

13
14 **CHAPTERS TWENTY ONE AND TWENTY TWO**

- 15
16 • The first part of Chapter 21 concerns Paul's return to Israel, arriving in the port city of
17 Caesarea. His journey from Ephesus took him down that narrow channel of the
18 Aegean in which a ship sails past Greece on the right and Turkey on the left. The
19 traveler almost feels that he can reach out and touch both countries. I have often
20 made that journey. Paul stopped briefly on Rhodes and then on to Cyprus and from
21 there to Tyre (in Lebanon, just north of the Israeli border) and then to Caesarea.
22 From there Paul traveled overland to Jerusalem, where he reported to the church
23 leaders.
- 24
25 • Paul's travail began in verse 27. He had gone into the Temple in Jerusalem to pray.
26 Some of Paul's enemies saw him there and accused him of bringing into the sanctuary
27 a non-Jew, which was forbidden, and which Paul did not do. A riot quickly started
28 and Paul would have been torn to pieces had it not been for the Roman soldiers
29 stationed at the Fortress Antonia, right north of the Temple itself.

30 **Acts 21:31-36**

31 **As they were trying to kill him, word reached the commander of the Roman**
32 **regiment that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. [32] He immediately called out his**
33 **soldiers and officers and ran down among the crowd. When the mob saw the**
34 **commander and the troops coming, they stopped beating Paul. [33] The commander**
35 **arrested him and ordered him bound with two chains. Then he asked the crowd who**
36 **he was and what he had done. [34] Some shouted one thing and some another. He**
37 **couldn't find out the truth in all the uproar and confusion, so he ordered Paul to be**
38 **taken to the fortress. [35] As they reached the stairs, the mob grew so violent the**
39 **soldiers had to lift Paul to their shoulders to protect him. [36] And the crowd**
40 **followed behind shouting, "Kill him, kill him!"**

- 41
42 • In Chapter 22, Paul attempted to make his case to the rioters, but they would not

1 listen. When the commander of the Roman garrison learned that Paul was a Roman
2 citizen, he had the chains removed from him and Paul now was taken to the Sanhedrin
3 to explain his work to them.

4 5 CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

- 6
7 • As Paul made his defense to the Sanhedrin, that August group of 70 leaders were
8 unable to agree about him.

9 Acts 23:9-10

10 So a great clamor arose. Some of the teachers of religious law who were Pharisees
11 jumped up to argue that Paul was all right. "We see nothing wrong with him," they
12 shouted. "Perhaps a spirit or an angel spoke to him." [10] The shouting grew louder
13 and louder, and the men were tugging at Paul from both sides, pulling him this way
14 and that. Finally, the commander, fearing they would tear him apart, ordered his
15 soldiers to take him away from them and bring him back to the fortress.

16
17 I have been told by some of my Israeli friends that if you have two Jews in one room, you
18 will have THREE opinions. That could well have been the case in the above verses.

- 19
20 • But a group of those against Paul learned that the Romans would transfer him to the
21 main garrison in Caesarea. They determined to assassinate him enroute.

22 Acts 23:12-16

23 The next morning a group of Jews got together and bound themselves with an
24 oath to neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. [13] There were more than
25 forty of them. [14] They went to the leading priests and other leaders and told them
26 what they had done. "We have bound ourselves under oath to neither eat nor drink
27 until we have killed Paul. [15] You and the high council should tell the commander
28 to bring Paul back to the council again," they requested. "Pretend you want to
29 examine his case more fully. We will kill him on the way."

30 [16] But Paul's nephew heard of their plan and went to the fortress and told Paul.

- 31
32 • The Romans made short work of that plan and had Paul escorted (verse 23) to
33 Caesarea by 200 foot soldiers, 70 cavalry and 200 archers. The captain of the
34 Jerusalem garrison sent a letter to the Roman procurator (governor) in Caesarea:

35 Acts 23:26-30

36 "From Claudius Lysias, to his Excellency, Governor Felix. Greetings! [27] This man
37 was seized by some Jews, and they were about to kill him when I arrived with the
38 troops. When I learned that he was a Roman citizen, I removed him to safety. [28]
39 Then I took him to their high council to try to find out what he had done. [29] I soon
40 discovered it was something regarding their religious law—certainly nothing worthy
41 of imprisonment or death. [30] But when I was informed of a plot to kill him, I
42 immediately sent him on to you. I have told his accusers to bring their charges

1 **before you."**

2
3 **CHAPTERS TWENTY FOUR THROUGH TWENTY SIX**

- 4
5 • In these three chapters, Paul spends two years in Caesarea, awaiting his opportunity to
6 be shipped to Rome to a personal hearing before Nero.
7
8 • During those two years, he meets Governor Felix and then Governor Festus (who had
9 replaced Felix). Both of these men were perplexed about what to do with Paul. He
10 had not done anything to warrant arrest, let alone execution, and further, he was a
11 Roman citizen who had all the rights accorded such people. However, the Jews in
12 Jerusalem wanted Paul to be killed.
13
14 • In Chapter 25 King Agrippa and his wife Bernice came to Caesarea to visit Festus and
15 the governor thought that perhaps the King would have a solution. He had Paul
16 appear before them.
17
18 • In Chapter 26, Paul gave his testimony to the King, which Festus interrupted:

19 **Acts 26:24-28**

20 **Suddenly, Festus shouted, "Paul, you are insane. Too much study has made you**
21 **crazy!"**

22 **[25] But Paul replied, "I am not insane, Most Excellent Festus. I am speaking the**
23 **sober truth. [26] And King Agrippa knows about these things. I speak frankly, for I**
24 **am sure these events are all familiar to him, for they were not done in a corner! [27]**
25 **King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do—"**

26 **[28] Agrippa interrupted him. "Do you think you can make me a Christian so**
27 **quickly?"**

28
29 The King quickly rebuked Festus and said (verse 32), "This man might have been set
30 at liberty if he had not already appealed to Caesar."
31

32 **CHAPTERS TWENTY SEVEN AND TWENTY EIGHT**

- 33
34 • In Paul's day, one did not simply go to Tel Aviv international airport and fly to Rome
35 in a couple hours. One went by ship, from point to point to point. Paul's ship left
36 from Caesarea, where today one may stand on the very pier from which he boarded
37 the vessel. A Roman centurion named Julius was put in charge of getting Paul to
38 Rome and they set sail in the last week of August, 59 AD.
39
40 • The ship was propelled by both sail and slave power manning the oars. What should
41 have been a trip of a month or two turned into months and months because of stormy
42 seas. In fact, they were shipwrecked off the coast of Malta.

- 1 • There, on the coastline, the travelers, crew and prisoners made a fire. Paul was
2 collecting wood when he was bitten by a snake. The witnesses, horrified, expected
3 Paul to die. However, he merely shook the snake off into the fire and continued on,
4 which gave him a great opportunity for witness.
5
- 6 • Soon after, Paul's ship arrived in Rome. Luke's history of the early church is
7 brought to an end here. What happened to Paul afterwards is generally believed to
8 be the following: He remained in confinement in Rome for two years but was able to
9 receive visitors and preach the gospel to them. During that time he wrote the letters
10 to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and to Philemon. Then Paul was acquitted
11 and set free. For the next few years he continued his missionary endeavors, perhaps
12 going to Spain as he had planned (Romans 15:28). During this period he wrote I
13 Timothy and Titus. Paul was again arrested about 67 AD and taken back to Rome.
14 In his death cell he wrote II Timothy. Paul's life and imprisonment ended with his
15 martyrdom (beheading).
16
- 17 • NOTE THERE IS NO ENDING TO THE BOOK OF ACTS. YOU AND I ARE
18 LIVING IN THE INCOMPLETE, UNFINISHED 29TH CHAPTER OF ACTS. GOD
19 EXPECTS US TO HAVE THE SAME GLOBAL SUCCESS AS DID PAUL AND
20 HIS COHORTS. LET US BE ABOUT OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS!
21
22

23 ***Next Wednesday night, March 4th, THE BOOK OF ROMANS!***
24
25