

STUDY 10 || ACTS 27-28

GOSPEL UNSTOPPABLE

The final two chapters of Acts tell of the last leg of the advance of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome. Paul travels to Rome with a few unplanned detours along the way. The obstacles to the gospel this time are natural ones. Remember, Paul is on his way to Rome to appeal before Caesar on the basis of his Roman citizenship. (Acts 25:11-12). He is going to maximise his political impact as a citizen by taking his message right to the top!

What are some things that can stop the gospel from advancing?
What are some things that can stop us from talking about Jesus?



SHIPWRECKED

Read **Acts 27:1-28:1** and quickly trace Paul's journey.



1. Paul establishes a good relationship with his captor, Julius the (Roman) centurion (verses 1-3). Why do you suppose Julius rejects Paul's advice in verses 10-11? How does this relationship ultimately prove important in the survival of the crew and passengers? (see 31-32 & 43-44)

2. Why is Paul confident of his life being constantly preserved? (see 23:11 & 27:24)

3. How does Paul use the circumstances to gospel advantage? Think of ways in which you could use your circumstances to gospel advantage?

Paul starts his journey as a prisoner but by the end of it he is giving orders - he is virtually the captain!

ISLAND STAY

Paul's brush with death doesn't end once he is safely ashore - he goes from shipwreck to snake bite. Read **Acts 28:1-16** and trace the rest of Paul's journey to Rome on the map above.

4. The islanders, after Paul is bitten, conclude that he must be a murderer. When Paul doesn't fall ill or drop dead, the islanders are convinced that he is a god. How is similar faulty logic (on both accounts) applied today?
5. What can we learn from Paul and his approach to the locals in the story of Publius (verses 7-10)?

WHEN IN ROME

Read Acts 28:16-31

6. Paul is a good Roman citizen (constant concern for the Roman sailors in Acts 27) and treated as a good Roman citizen in Rome (free to rent a house and share the gospel in Acts 28). What does he use his privilege for, and by so doing what principle does he continue to follow, even in Rome? (cf. Pisidian Antioch, Corinth and Ephesus)
7. Paul calls a meeting with Jewish leaders to explain his chains as due to the 'hope of Israel'. What does he mean by this? (cf. Verse 23)

8. What is Paul's conclusion on national Israel in verses 26 and 27? What part will Israel play in 'the Kingdom'? (Think back through the way Israelites have responded to the gospel all the way through Acts as you shape your answer.)

9. The book of Acts could have continued beyond chapter 28. Why do you think the Holy Spirit, through Luke, chose to end it with the summary in verses 28-31? How does this end fit with Acts 1:8?

10. In the light of Acts 1:8 and Acts 28:28-31, what's our job? Do you think 'Acts 29' is a good name for a mission organisation?

11. In the book of Acts the church has met with many obstacles, and God has overcome them all. The gospel is being taken to 'the ends of the earth'. How does this encourage and motivate you?

The final words of the book of Acts are 'with all boldness' and 'without hindrance'. John Stott writes that 'with all boldness' "denotes speech that is candid (no concealment of the truth), clear (with no obscurity of expression) and confident (with no fear of consequences)" 'Without hindrance' meant that, though his physical movements were controlled by the military, he was free to invite guests and openly speak of Jesus. 'This is my gospel for which I am suffering even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But God's word is not chained.' (2 Timothy 2:8-9)