

K.E.Y. Bible Study

Description: K.E.Y. Bible Study introduces the essential biblical narratives, concepts, and themes, and teaches the student how to apply the message of the Bible to daily living. Each teaching session is self-contained, which allows participants to join in the study at any time during the five years.

Purpose: To teach the most significant events, passages, and doctrines of the Bible in a manner and using methods which encourages and empowers the student to:

- Keep the faith that we have received
- Be Equipped to serve the Body of Christ
- Become Yoked, or connect, with others for the purpose of ministry

The Prisoner Who Set People Free Acts 28:11-31 May 18, 2016

General Background

What appears to be the end of the story regarding the spread of the Gospel in the first century is really the beginning of a new chapter of kingdom growth. It is a reminder that the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ is forever.

Specific Background

The former persecutor of Christians, who is now a missionary, church planter, and most famous Christian of his generation due to a series of unusual circumstances, was sent to Rome to have his legal case heard before the court of Caesar. While most of the charges against Paul were religious matters that were ordinarily handled by the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem, the religious authorities also attempted to have Paul tried before the Roman authorities who could offer stiffer penalties, including the death penalty. Even though he was never found guilty of any of the charges by the local governmental officials, he was kept under arrest for political reasons. Paul, being a Roman citizen, asked to have a hearing before the court of Caesar in Rome. On the journey to Rome, the ship on which he was traveling was wrecked, but Paul and the other passengers survived. The passengers and crew were stranded on the island of Malta, but God provided for all of their needs. Then, they left Malta and continued on to Rome.

Who

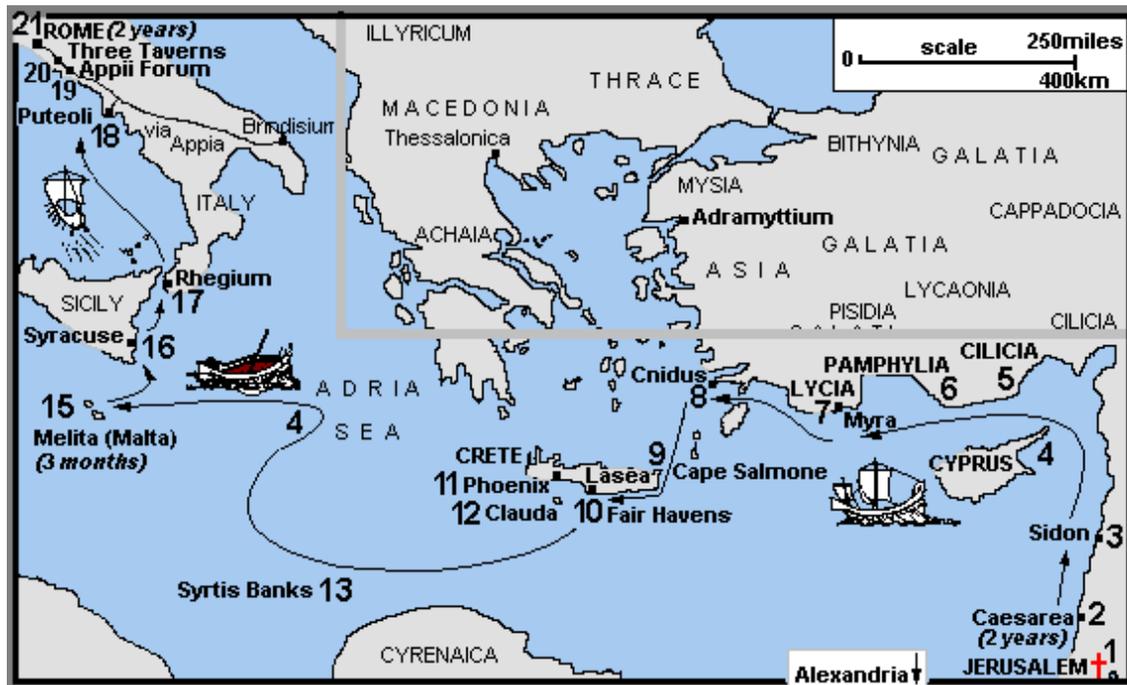
- God, as revealed in Jesus, the Christ, and proclaimed through the power of the Holy Spirit, is the central character
- The Apostle Paul is a secondary character.

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When

These events occurred in approximately 61 A.D. - 62 A.D.

Where



What Happened

Acts 28:11-16: The Continued Journey Toward Rome

- Compared to the first part of the journey, this portion of the trip was uneventful. Luke told us that they found “brothers” along the way, showing that the Christian faith had reached this region.
- The “we” language, indicating that Luke was with Paul, ended with Acts 28:16. However, from Colossians and Philemon, it appears that Luke and Aristarchus were with Paul most of the time in Rome, and occasionally they were joined by Epaphras, John Mark, Demas, and Jesus, who was surnamed Justus.
- Acts 28:16 provides insight into how Paul could have been so prolific in his writing and personal ministry while in Rome: “When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.” He had time and opportunity to minister. The Roman government occasionally offered this type of treatment to non-violent

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prisoners if the prisoner or his supporters paid for the food and lodging of both the prisoner and the guard.

Acts 28:17-31: The Ministry In Rome

- **Acts 28:17-20: Paul took the initiative in meeting the Jews in Rome.**
He explained the charges that were made against him by the Jewish leaders and again asserted his innocence. Note that in verse 20b he says: “It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.” This is how he presented Jesus as the hope of Israel. Paul did not need to defend himself before this group of people, as they were powerless to harm him while in Rome. He convened them in order to tell them of the hope of Israel.
- **Acts 28:21-24: The leaders of the Jewish community in Rome told Paul that the leaders in Jerusalem had not informed them of the charges against him.**
The Jewish leaders in Rome wanted to continue discussing his views because there was much conversation regarding the sect of Christians.
 - These verses reveal that the Christian movement was growing in Rome and that the Jews perceived the Christians to be a Jewish sect rather than a new religion.
 - At the request of the Jewish leaders in Rome, there was a second meeting.
 - “From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets” (Acts 28:23b). Note the emphasis on the “kingdom of God.” This was central to the preaching of Jesus.
 - Paul showed that Jesus was the completion of the law, not a contradiction to the law.
 - Some believed and some did not, as was expected.
- **Acts 28:25-28: The reaction by the Jewish leaders to Paul’s preaching.**
 - There was dissension within the Jewish group.
 - Paul’s quotation from Isaiah was a reminder that they had chosen to reject God’s truth.
 - Paul concluded by telling the Jewish leaders that “...God’s salvation has been sent to Gentiles.” One of the continual points of emphasis throughout Acts is that the Gospel is for all people.
 - Some early manuscripts add the following verse (Acts 28:29): “After he said this, the Jews left, arguing vigorously among themselves.”

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- **Acts 28:30-31: These verses are Luke's postscript.**
 - Paul continued in Rome under house arrest and still received many people.
 - Luke did not tell us what happened to Paul. Some believe that Paul was executed at the end of the two years. Others believe that his case never came to trial, and he was released. Remember, Luke was not writing Paul's story; he was writing the story of how the Gospel spread.
 - Acts 28:31 may be the key verse of the book: "Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ." Because of the Holy Spirit, the early Christians preached with boldness. Even though Paul was under house arrest, he still was not hindered.

K.E.Y. Truth

Because the power and person of God through the person of the Holy Spirit is dwelling within Christians, we never have a reason to lack courage or to think that circumstances can hinder us from proclaiming the kingdom of God.