

The Church Scattered

Lesson Twenty-Eight

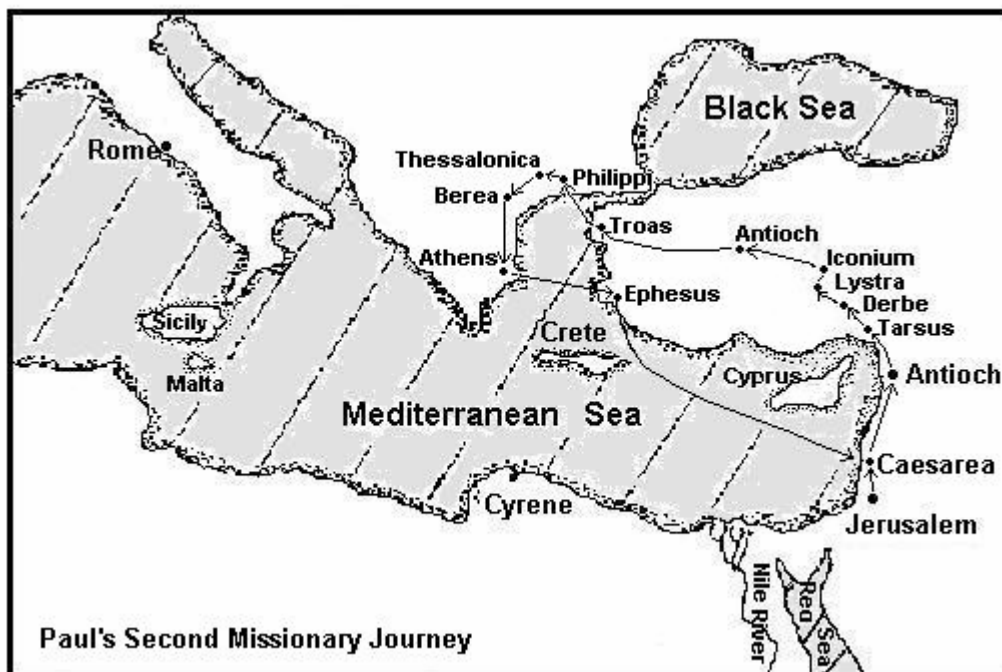
Acts 15-28

This lesson deals entirely with the ministry of Paul. The second and third missionary journeys will be studied. Time will also be given to the imprisonment of Paul and his subsequent journey to Rome to go before Caesar. It is an exciting and often dangerous time in the early church.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 15-18

The second missionary journey of Paul is much more extensive in terms of distance traveled. This journey will take about three years. Paul begins this trip with Barnabas. However, they part company in a dispute over whether or not Mark should be allowed to go along. Paul takes Silas with him on this journey. Refer to the map below during this section of the lesson.



Paul chose Silas and went through Syria and Cilicia confirming the churches. When they came to Troas, a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There stood a man of Macedonia who said to him, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." They sailed to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and preached the Gospel there. A certain woman,

named Lydia, a seller of purple, heard them. The Lord opened her heart and she attended to the things that were spoken of by Paul. She was baptized and her household.

Why do Paul and Silas go to Macedonia? _____

To which city do they go? _____

Who comes to faith? _____

Things begin smoothly enough in Philippi, but it does not stay that way for long. **Read Acts 16:22-26** to see what happens to Paul and Silas next.

What happens to Paul and Silas after they have been flogged? _____

What are Paul and Silas doing around midnight? _____

What happens? _____

What is the result of the earthquake? _____

These events were very alarming to the jailer. After all, he had been told to guard these men carefully.

*And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew out his sword and would have killed himself supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice saying, "Do yourself no harm. For we are all here." Then he called for a light and sprang in and came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas **5** and brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved and your house." He took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.*



What would have been the punishment for the jailer if the prisoners had escaped? _____

Have the prisoners escaped? _____

To whom does salvation come? _____

The magistrates who ordered the beating of Paul and Silas were potentially in lots of trouble. It was not lawful for a Roman citizen to be publicly flogged or to be flogged at all

without a trial. The magistrates were not aware that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens. Paul and Silas press the matter because they want to show that they are innocent of doing anything wrong. They probably want this to be established for the reputation of the young church in Philippi. **Read Acts 16:35-40.**

What order comes at daybreak? _____

What does Paul demand be done? _____

Do the magistrates do as Paul requests? _____

Why? _____

Where do Paul and Silas go? _____

Do they stay in Philippi long after this episode? _____

This missionary journey takes Paul as far west as Athens and to points north of there. Here is a brief summary of the rest of this journey.

Paul went to Athens. His spirit was stirred in him when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore he disputed in the synagogue with the Jews and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.

They took him and brought him to the Areopagus saying, "May we know about this new doctrine of which you are speaking?" Then Paul stood in the meeting of the Areopagus and said, "You men of Athens, as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore, you ignorantly worship, Him I declare I to you. God, who made the world and all things in it, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwells not in temples made with hands, but He is not far from every one of us. For in Him we live and move and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' Since then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like gold or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commands all men everywhere to repent because He has appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained and whom He has raised from the dead." When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. Certain men, however, became followers and believed.

After these things Paul departed from Athens and came to Corinth and continued there a year and six months. Thereafter he went down to Antioch.

What quality of the city of Athens upsets Paul? _____

Paul uses two things familiar to the citizens of Athens in his message about the Lord and his explanation of the nature of God. What are these two things?

1.) _____ 2.) _____

What part of Paul's explanation causes some of the listeners to mock? _____

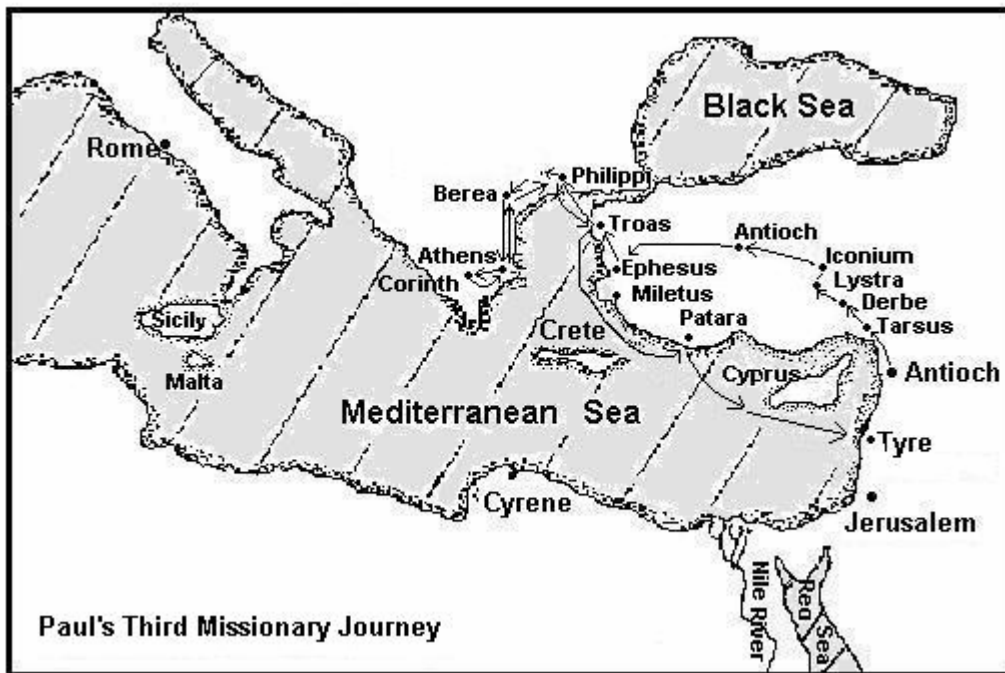
Does anyone come to faith through Paul's message? _____

For how long does Paul stay in Corinth? _____

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 18-21

Paul's third missionary journey covered much of the same area that the second journey covered. Some different cities were visited and some cities from the last journey were revisited. This trip takes about four years to complete. The trip occurs from around A.D. 53-57. Refer to the map below during this section of the lesson.



After Paul had spent some time at Antioch, he departed and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples and then came to Ephesus. The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. Many that believed came and confessed and showed their deeds. Many of them also who had used sorcery brought their

books together and burned them before all men. They counted the price of them and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.

In which city are the books burned? _____

What kind of books are they? _____

Is the church growing? _____

More trouble is brewing for the church. As the church grows, the influence of the local idols is diminished. Many people made their livings from services rendered that pertained to the worship of idols. They do not like to see their business in decline. **Read Acts 19:23-34.**

Who starts the trouble? _____

What is the problem? _____

Which particular idol are they concerned about? _____

Whom do the people seize? 1.) _____ 2.) _____

Does Paul go before the crowd? _____

For how long does the crowd keep shouting? _____

And when the town clerk had appeased the people, he said, "You men of Ephesus, you ought to be quiet and to do nothing rashly. If Demetrius and the craftsmen have a matter against any man, the law is open. We are in danger to be called to account for this day's uproar." When he had spoken, he dismissed the assembly. Paul called to him the disciples and embraced them and departed into Macedonia. When he had gone over those parts, he came to Greece and he stayed there three months.

What advice does the town clerk have for the crowd? _____

What danger does the town clerk see in the present situation? _____

For how long does Paul stay in Greece? _____

After Paul's stay in Greece, he heads slowly back to Jerusalem. He will revisit some of the churches he helped to found. **Read Acts 20:7-12** for an account of one of the things that happens on the way back to Jerusalem. This takes place in Troas.

Why is Paul up so late talking to the people? _____

Who is sitting in the window? _____

What happens to him? _____

Why? _____

What is the result of this accident? _____

What does Paul do? _____

For how long does Paul continue to talk with the people? _____

From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church. They all wept and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more. They accompanied him to the ship. They left Cyprus on the left hand and sailed into Syria and landed at Tyre.

Why are the people of Ephesus so sad as Paul leaves? _____

Paul senses that he will not be returning to Ephesus. Indeed, his trip to Jerusalem will lead to grave trouble. It will result in his imprisonment.

PAUL THE PRISONER

Acts 21-25

Paul sensed that things would not go well for him in Jerusalem. Others in the church also felt this to be true and some even warned him about returning to Jerusalem. All of their fears are well founded.

After those days they went up to Jerusalem. Paul declared to the brethren what things God had done among the Gentiles by his ministry. When they heard it, they glorified the Lord. But when the Jews saw him in the Temple, they stirred up the people and laid hands on him, crying out, "Men of Israel, Help! This is the man that teaches all men everywhere against the Law and this place." They took Paul and drew him out of the Temple. Then the doors were shut. As they were about to kill him, news came to the chief captain, who immediately took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. When they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. Then the chief captain



commanded him to be bound with two chains. He demanded who he was and what he had done. And Paul was led into the castle.

Who cause trouble for Paul? _____

Who rescues Paul from being killed? _____

The Jews know they will not have much success in pressing charges against Paul. They decide they will take matters into their own hands in order to see to it that Paul dies. **Read Acts 23:12-24** for details of their conspiracy and God's deliverance of Paul.

What will the Jews not do until Paul is dead? _____

How many people are involved in the plot? _____

Who hears of the plot? _____

Whom does he tell first? _____

Then whom does he tell? _____

Where will Paul be taken? _____

How many soldiers will be sent along? _____

Governor Felix hears the complaints against Paul. Paul makes his defense and Felix says he will decide the case. Later, Felix sends for Paul to listen to him again. What Paul says scares Felix. Felix keeps sending for Paul hoping, according to Acts 24:26, that Paul will give him a bribe. This does not happen. Acts 24:27 indicates that Felix also wanted to do the Jews a favor, so Paul is kept in prison for two years. After two years, Felix is replaced by a man named Porcius Festus.

But after two years Festus came into Felix's room. Felix left Paul bound. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove. But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, said to Paul. "Will you go up to Jerusalem and there be judged of these things before me?" Then said Paul, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged. To the Jews have I done nothing wrong as you very well know. For if I be an offender or have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die. But if there is nothing to these charges of which they accuse me, no man may deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar." Then Festus answered, "Have you appealed to Caesar? Then to Caesar shall you go."

Will Paul go to Jerusalem to be judged? _____

Where will Paul go for a judgment in his case? _____

A few days later Festus consults with a visitor about Paul's case. The visitor is Agrippa, a ruler over several Galilean cities. Agrippa seeks to hear what Paul has to say.

But when King Agrippa, with his sister Bernice came to salute Festus, Paul was brought before them. Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You are permitted to speak for yourself." Then Paul stretched forth his hand and answered for himself. Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to be a Christian."

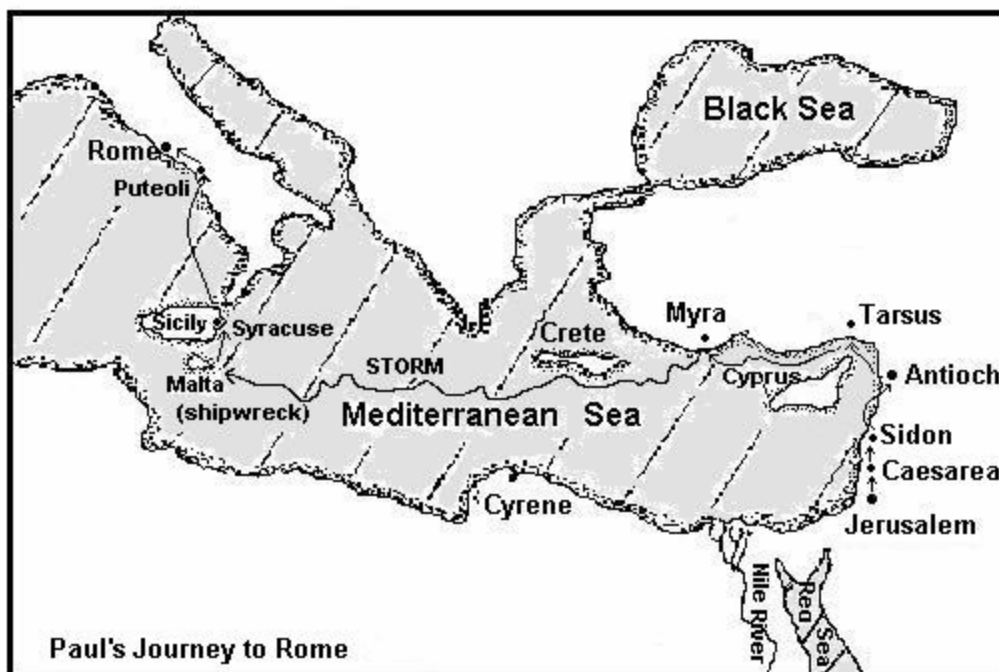
Is Paul's witness for Christ convincing? _____

It is reported in Acts 26:32 that Agrippa told Festus that Paul could have been set free except for Paul's appeal to Caesar. But Paul did appeal to Caesar, and he will be granted his request.

PAUL IS TAKEN TO ROME

Acts 27 and 28

The trip to Rome will take many months to complete. The trip will be packed with adventure and danger. Some believe that this trip to Rome and Paul's imprisonment lead to his execution. Other scholars believe that he was eventually released from prison this time and later was imprisoned again in Rome. They believe this second Roman imprisonment is the one that led to his death. In any event, the map below shows the route taken by Paul on this trip to Rome.



Read Acts 27:1-12 to see how the trip begins.

Who is in charge of the prisoners? _____

What warning does Paul give the centurion? _____

Is the warning heeded? _____

What is the problem they are facing? _____

Where do they hope to reach? _____

Paul's warning of disaster should have been heeded. The storms of winter will catch the ship and eventually cause it to shipwreck.

Not long after, there arose a tempestuous wind. When the ship was caught and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive. We being exceedingly tossed with a storm, the next day they lightened the ship. The third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. When neither sun nor stars appeared in many days and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. After long abstinence [they had not eaten for many days], Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "Sirs, you should have listened to me and not have sailed from Crete to have gained this harm and loss. Now I exhort you to be of good cheer. For there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but the ship will be lost. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, 'Fear not Paul. You must be brought before Caesar. Lo, God has given you all those that sail with you.' Therefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me. However, we must be cast upon a certain island." He took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all. When he had broken it, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat. We were in all in the ship two hundred seventy-six souls.

What trouble is the ship having? _____

What is the mood of the passengers? _____

What does Paul tell them concerning their safety? _____

Does Paul's message improve their moods? _____

How many people are on the ship? _____

Read Acts 27:39-44 to see how the shipwreck happens.

What do they decide to do with the ship? _____

What do the soldiers plan to do? _____

Who prevents them from doing this? _____

Why? _____

How many of the passengers reach the shore safely? _____

The island they have shipwrecked upon is Malta. Once there, another unusual event takes place concerning Paul.



When they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Malta. The inhabitants showed us unusual kindness. For they kindled a fire and received us, every one, because of the rain and because of the cold. When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand. When the island's inhabitants saw the venomous beast hanging on his hand, they said among themselves, "No doubt, this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow him to live." And he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm. However, they looked when he should have swollen or fallen down dead suddenly. But after they had looked a great while and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

What attaches itself to Paul? _____

What do the local people think this means? _____

They change their minds. Why? _____

Now what do they think? _____

The shipwrecked people will have to stay on the island for a while. Paul is allowed to have contact with the local population. **Read Acts 28:7-10.**

Who is the chief official of the island? _____

How long do they stay with this man? _____



Whom does Paul heal? _____

Who else? _____

The passengers of the wrecked ship stay on the island for three months. They have to stay there until winter has passed. The destination of the soldiers and Paul is Rome. And so after three months, they sail for Puteoli. From there they will travel by land to

Rome. Even though Paul has never been to Rome, there are believers there and they are ready to attend to him.

We departed in a ship and landing at Syracuse, we came to Puteoli where we found brethren. When the brethren in Rome heard of us, they came to meet us, whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage. When we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard. Paul was allowed to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house and received all that came in to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching those things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Where does Paul dwell? _____

Who stays with him? _____

For how long does Paul live there? _____

Is Paul free to teach and preach to those who come to see him? _____



This is where the book of Acts ends. There is reason to believe that Paul was allowed to leave Rome and continue his work. It is not certain, however. The rest of the New Testament contains the letters of Paul and other Christian leaders of the time. The New Testament ends with the book of Revelation. This book is the written account of the vision given to John while he was a prisoner on the island of Patmos. The book serves as an encouragement to believers in times of persecution. It was written as the church was entering a time of persecution. Christians have suffered persecution throughout the ages and continue to draw encouragement from the message of the book of the victory of our Lord over Satan and all his evil forces and of our subsequent entrance into the glory and blessedness of eternal life.

REVIEW

1. Who accompanies Paul on his second missionary journey? _____
2. How long does this journey take? _____
3. To which city in Macedonia do Paul and Silas go? _____
4. What happens to Paul and Silas in prison? _____
5. What does the jailer want to know? _____
6. Which city has an altar to AN UNKNOWN GOD? _____
7. How long does the third missionary journey take? _____
8. Why are the books burned in Ephesus? _____
9. Which silversmith is upset with the church? _____
10. What happens to the young man in Troas? _____
11. What does Paul do for the young man? _____
12. Why are the believers in Ephesus so sad? _____
13. Who stir up trouble for Paul in Jerusalem? _____
14. Why must Paul be taken to Rome? _____
15. What happens to the ship on the way to Rome? _____
16. What happens to Paul on Malta? _____
17. What is unusual about this? _____
18. For at least how long is Paul in Rome? _____
19. Where was John when he wrote the book of Revelation? _____
20. Why? _____