

## Lesson 9: Acts 25, 26, 27 & 28

### Read Acts Chapter 25:1-12 Paul under house arrest in Caesarea meets the new Roman Governor

Reading Note: After two years of house arrest in Caesarea, the Roman capital in Judea, a new governor, Festus, was appointed to take Felix's place. King Agrippa II, the great grandson of Herod the Great, was king over the territory just north of Judea, and his visit to Festus was to welcome him to his new post. His motive for hearing Paul was curiosity.

1. Why did the chief priests ask Festus to bring Paul back to Jerusalem?
  
2. Can you think of situations today where Satan works through men using the legal and/or political system to disrupt the work of Christ in the earth?
  
3. a. Compare Acts 24:27 and 25:9. Both the old Roman governor, Felix, and the new Roman governor, Festus, have what political philosophy or method in common?
  
- b. What forces Paul to appeal to "Caesar's judgment seat" after two years in Caesarea?

### Read Acts Chapter 25:13-27 Festus and King Agrippa confer about Paul

4. Festus recounts his encounter with Paul and tells Agrippa that he can't send Paul off to Caesar without having a legitimate legal charge. How does he describe the reasons for the conflict between the Jewish leadership and Paul?
  
5. PERSONAL: Have you ever borne your witness to someone of the reality of Christ?

### Read Acts Chapter 26:1-32 Paul makes his defense before King Agrippa II

The King Agrippa of this chapter is the son of the cruel Herod Agrippa who killed James, the brother of John (Acts 12). Rome has reduced the territory he reigns over. His father pretended to be an orthodox Jew but the son was raised in Rome and was not religious, though very familiar with the things of the Jews. Bernice was his sister; he was unmarried. That there was an incestuous relationship between the two of them was widely rumored in Rome and Palestine.

6. In verses 9-11 Paul recounts how he persecuted the “saints” before his conversion. Now that you have almost finished Acts, describe what motivation and reasoning Paul might have had for such violent persecution of the followers of Jesus Christ.

7. Note: The word “saints” here is the Greek word “hagios”, which derives from the word for *pure*. Hagios has the sense of separated, holy, pure or consecrated to a holy use. Both Luke and Paul use this word to describe the members of Christ's church. Thus the saints were “the consecrated.” It is important for a latter day Saint woman to remember the meaning of the name by which she is called, and to remember that she is “a consecrated one.”

a. Name two things (or types of things) that creep into our lives causing us to forget that we are consecrated to the Lord Jesus Christ.

b. Name two specific things that you can do each day to remember that you are consecrated to the Lord Jesus Christ.

c. Why is it important for a Saint to avoid all that is impure and unholy?

8. PERSONAL: Verse 14 contains the famous phrase “kick against the pricks.” What is something in your life that has pricked your conscience for some time before you finally faced up to it and did what the Spirit wanted you to do all along?

9. What do you think kept King Agrippa from being fully persuaded that Jesus is the Messiah?

## **Read Acts Chapter 27:1-20 Sea Journey to Rome**

**Reading Note:** Trace this journey as you read by looking at the map called “Paul's Journey to Rome” or Map 13, the combined journeys. Chapter 27 again uses “we” language, so we know that Luke accompanied Paul on this journey. The descriptions are particularly vivid and the knowledge of sailing and navigating the Mediterranean are strikingly accurate. The “fast” of verse 9 refers to Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement that fell in late September/early October. Sailing was ill advised after mid-September.

10. Why do you think that the centurion, Julius, treated Paul with such respect and deference?
11. Why did Julius listen to the ship's owner and the captain more than Paul in verses 10-11?

### **Read Acts Chapter 27: 21-44 Shipwrecked on Malta**

12. Name four main points of Paul's encouraging speech in the midst of the storm.
13. The Holy Ghost clearly gives Paul the gift of discernment. How does this gift save the passengers from a second potential disaster?
14. a. How can the Holy Ghost enable a man or woman to be seen by others as a leader?
- b. What does Paul do that manifests the quality of leadership?
15. Why do you think the centurion acts to save Paul's life when the soldiers want to kill the prisoners?
16. How do you think his respect for Paul has changed over the course of the journey?

### **Read Acts Chapter 28: 11-31 Captivity in Rome**

Note: From the port city of Puteoli, the Roman authorities marched the prisoners north to Rome along the Appian Way, a famous Roman road that had way stations every ten to 15 miles. One was at the Apies forum, about 43 miles from Rome, and another was called The Three Taverns, 33 miles from Rome. In both of these, Paul found members of the church who had heard he was coming and traveled out to greet him and encourage him.

20. Why do you think it meant so much to Paul to have some of the Saints from Rome come to meet him?

21. PERSONAL: Can you think of a time when a warm reception by church members in a new place, or a visit by church friends in the midst of a trial, was an encouragement to you?

22. What freedoms did Paul have while under house arrest in Rome?

Reading Note: The Jews in Rome are uninterested in Paul's message and don't register any objections to it. This is strange in light of the disputes that flared up in all the other cities where he preached. We see why earlier in Acts when Paul meets the Roman couple, Aquila and Priscilla, in Corinth. They had been forced out of Rome by an edict of Emperor Claudius in the year 49 or 50 because riots had erupted there between Jews and Christians. After Claudius' death, they were allowed to return. However, once burned, twice shy. The Jews had no desire to start a conflict that would bring the attention of Roman authorities. So happily for the preaching of the Gospel, the Jews stayed out of the way this time.

23. a. Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 about the majority of the Jews in their response to the gospel. What do you think it means to "see and not perceive" or "hear and not understand"?

b. How does one's heart "wax gross"? (you might want to look up the meaning of "wax")

24. a) How did Paul's arrest benefit the church?

b) What lesson can you take from this for your own life?