

# Women's Bible Study

A TWO-YEAR JOURNEY THROUGH  
THE STORY OF GOD

## Week 10 | Unleashed and Unhindered | Acts 27:1-28:30

The book of Acts has recounted the dramatic history of God's Kingdom and the gospel of Jesus being unleashed to the whole world, starting in Jerusalem, spreading to Judea and Samaria, and flowing out into the Gentile world—an astounding fulfillment of Jesus' words in Acts 1:8.

God pronounced to Paul in Acts 23:11 that Paul would proclaim the good news of Jesus in Rome, the hub of the known world. When the gospel message reached Rome, it was then positioned to spread to the ends of the earth. Reaching Rome represented the Kingdom truly being unleashed to the ends of the earth.

The Kingdom of God is expanding. Nothing can stop it. Nothing can hinder it. Nothing can thwart God's plan to build His Kingdom.

### 1. UNHINDERED BY STORMS. Read Acts 27:1-26

- a) How did the Roman centurion Julius show kindness to Paul? (27: 3)
  
- b) What descriptive terms does Luke use to describe their voyage? (Acts 27:4-8)
  
- c) Paul warns that leaving their port in Fair Havens will bring damage and great loss. How did the centurion make his decision? (Acts 27:11-12)

When the ship set sail from Fair Havens, the weather seemed moderate and in their favor. Then suddenly, a violent storm swept down upon them, and the ship was in danger of being broken apart. What steps did the crew take to try to survive the storm? (27:15-19)

After several days of battling the raging storm, what was the emotional state of the crew and passengers? (27:20)

- d) How did God provide encouragement to Paul and, through him, to the crew and passengers? (27:21-26)
  
- e) Personal Reflection: With a savage storm whirling around him, Paul remains calm and clear because of the God's words to him and God's purpose for his life. How can you go about developing that hope and confidence? What life patterns or disciplines would serve to help you develop that hope and confidence?

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## 2. UNHINDERED BY SHIPWRECKS. Read Acts 27:27-44

- a) The storm raged on until 14 days had passed. When the sailors realized that they were approaching land, they made a plan to abandon the ship. How did Paul prevent this from happening?" (27:31-32)
- b) As they were driven closer to land, how did Paul encourage the crew and passengers both physically and spiritually? (27:33-38)
- c) The landing scene reads like a script to a movie. Paul's journey to Rome and his very life were at risk. What was the ultimate outcome? (27:43-44)
- d) Personal Reflection: Notice God's gracious hand in so many details of this terrifying journey:
  - It was God's purpose that the ship be destroyed and that the gospel would spread on Malta. (27:22,26)
  - Though the ship was destroyed, God was able to preserve the lives not only of His missionaries, but also the lives of every one of the 276 people on board—soldiers, sailors, tradesmen, good and bad, Jew and Gentile, slave and free.
  - God had appointed as Paul's escort a man of honor—the centurion Julius. This man protected Paul and the other prisoners from being killed (27:42-43)
  - One would expect, when the ship ran aground, that the desperate sailors and passengers would be looking out only for themselves. However, God provided wisdom through Julius to implement a plan that enabled even non-swimmers to be delivered safely to land. (vs. 44)

When in your own life have you sensed God's gracious hand supporting and encouraging you as you walked through a difficult situation?

## 3. UNHINDERED AND UNSTOPPABLE. Read Acts 28:1-10.

- a) All 276 people on board the ship reached the island safely. What additional blessing from God did they encounter on Malta? (28:1-2)

When Paul was bitten by a serpent, what did the islanders assume? (28:4)

Personal reflection: Sometimes we can tend to lack compassion for those who suffer because we assume we know the reason for the suffering and can even assume the suffering person deserves what he is experiencing. When we do that, we are embracing a judgmental attitude. Examine your own heart. Is a judgmental attitude preventing you from having compassion for those in need?

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- b) How did Paul bring blessing to the people of Malta even though he was still a prisoner? (28:7-9)
  
- c) Personal Reflection: Paul's time at Malta was an unexpected, unplanned-for diversion from his planned course of action; however, God brought eternal fruit from Paul's stay there. Has there been a time in your life when blocked goals resulted in great benefit in your life?

Consider your life today. Are you dealing with the frustration of a blocked goal? Can you find contentment by trusting in God's good purposes for your life?

## 4. UNHINDERED TO ALL PEOPLE. Read Acts 28:11-30.

- a) Paul was delayed in Malta for three months, and God used that time in a mighty way to expand the Kingdom message. When Paul finally disembarked in Italy and they continued on their way to Rome, how did God provide encouragement to Paul? (28:15-16)
  
- b) What was Paul's living situation in Rome? (28:16)
  
- c) Paul was still a man falsely accused of being an enemy of the Jews. How was Paul proactive in presenting his case? (28:17-22)

What did Paul profess to be the reason he was in chains? (28:20)

For deeper thought: For those of you familiar with the Old Testament, what did Paul mean by his statement? What is the hope of Israel? How would the Jews have understood it?

- d) When Jews came to meet with Paul and to hear his argument, what was his message to them? (28:23)

What was their response? (28:24)

- e) How was the response of the Jews a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy? (28:25-28)

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What is God's wider purpose for His offer of salvation? (28:28)

5. PERSONAL REFLECTION: The good news of Jesus and His Kingdom is offered to ALL people, Jews and Gentiles, you and me. This good news, or gospel, declares that Jesus died and rose again to provide salvation for all who will respond to Him—salvation that includes forgiveness of sin, permanent adoption as a child of God, the on-going presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and an eternal place in the Kingdom of God. We have observed varying responses to this incredible message. Have you responded to His offer to you of salvation and eternal relationship?

Take this moment to express in prayer your response to His calling on your life:

*Lord Jesus, Son of God, I understand that your death created the way for me to be part of the family of God. I want to know you and be a part of that forever family. I recognize, because of the darkness and brokenness of my own life, I cannot achieve that on my own. Forgive me and embrace me for Your Kingdom. I trust in you alone for my salvation and eternal future.*

6. FINAL REFLECTION: Paul remained in prison, but the message of Jesus didn't. The good news of the Kingdom was unleashed to the city of Rome and from there to the ends of the earth. (28:30-31)

Write out Acts 28:31 word for word to summarize the message of the book of Acts that **WE have benefitted from and can now participate in – unhindered and UNLEASHED.**

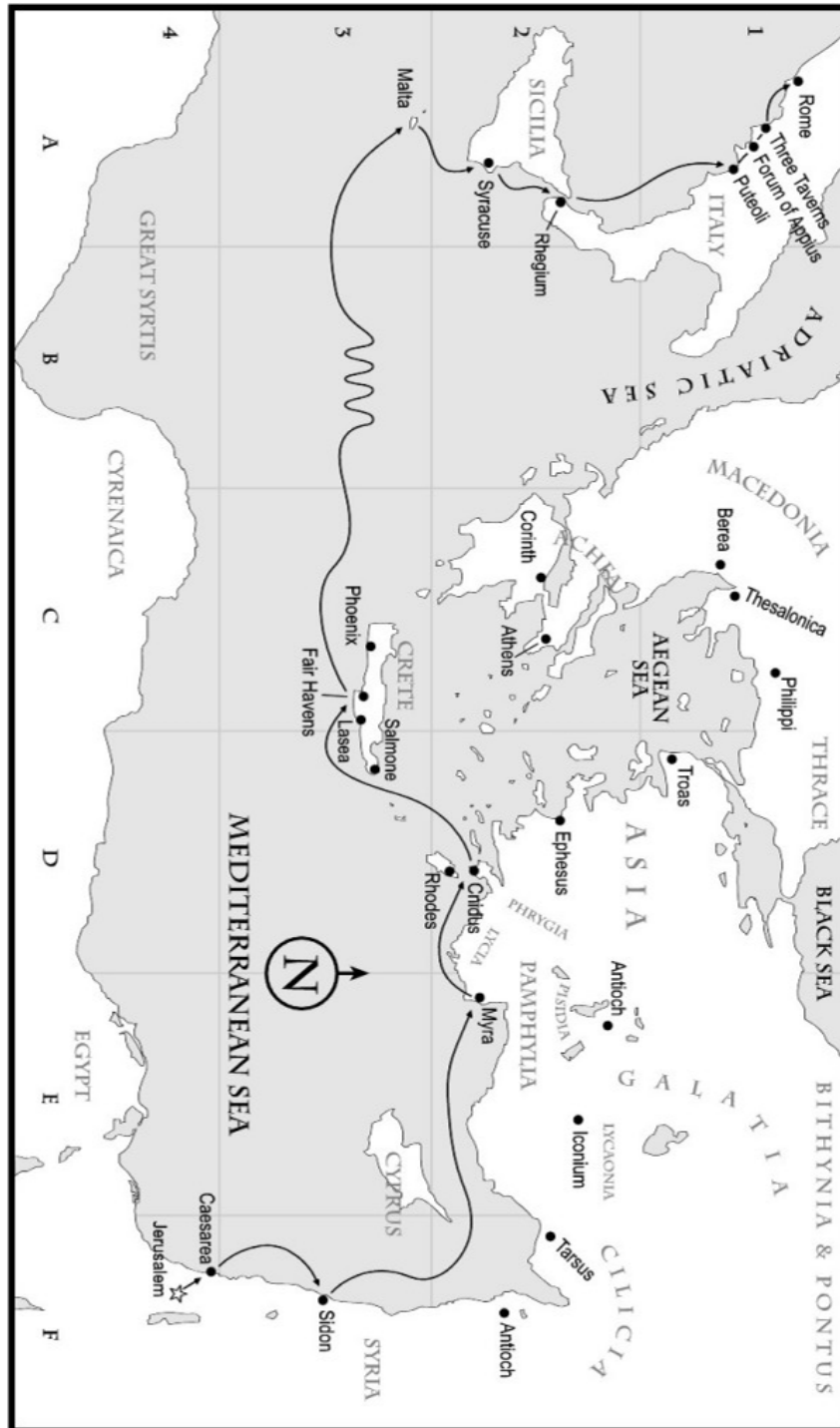
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Journey to Rome  
Biblical Studies Press. (2005). The NET Bible First Edition; Bible. English. NET Bible.; The NET Bible. Biblical Studies Press.

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