

# Shipwrecked; Safe on Malta; Imprisoned in Rome

## Acts 27 and 28



New Testament 8  
Part 2: ABCs OF ACTS 19-28

## SUNDAY MORNING

New Testament 8 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Acts 27 and 28; 1 Kings 8:56

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house..., preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:30-31a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him" (Acts 28:30-31).

Also help the children memorize the ABCs of Acts.

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Paul Was Sailing Upon the Sea"](#)
- ["I'm a Hard Fighting Soldier on the Battlefield"](#)
- ["Thanksgiving"](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [ABCs of Acts 13-26](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "N.T. 8 Bible Facts")
- "Acts Chapter Summary" from "[Kids Prep 2](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/ Learning Centers
- [Map of Palestine](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)
- [Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)



- [Map of Paul's Journey to Rome](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)—To demonstrate Paul's trip to Rome, move a small ship (made from card stock) from place to place. Would be a good idea to mount the map onto a magnetic board, and put a magnet on the back of the ship so it will stick to the board as you tell about the places Paul stopped.
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Life of Paul (Series 2) A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- Put sand in a large plastic bin at one end, leaving about  $\frac{3}{4}$  for the "ocean." Have an electric fan handy to illustrate strong winds. (You might want to add small dollops of shaving cream to the water to illustrate high waves.) Act out the story, then let the kids tell it to you.

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can trust God and believe what He tells me in His Word because He always keeps His promises.

## LESSON STARTS HERE

### INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

Last week we talked about Paul being kept in jail for two years when he was not guilty of anything. We also talked about him trying to teach powerful Agrippa, and how Agrippa refused to listen to the Gospel. Agrippa and Festus could not find anything about Paul that would mean he should go to prison, or worse, be killed—no matter how much the Jewish leaders complained. What do you think happened to Paul after Agrippa and Festus sent him to Rome? Let's find out! [With preschool children, it would be better to split this lesson, describing Paul's time on Malta on Wednesday night.]

### INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Last week we talked about Paul being kept in jail for to two years, even though he had done nothing wrong. We also talked about Paul trying to teach powerful Agrippa about Jesus—and Agrippa refusing to listen. Agrippa and Festus could not find anything wrong that Paul had done, and certainly nothing that would require him to be imprisoned or even killed. So they sent Paul to Rome, to have a hearing before Caesar Nero. What happened on Paul's long journey to Rome? Let's look at the last two chapters of Acts to find out.

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

[Review all the ABCs of Acts. There are no alphabetical associations for these last two chapters, but it should be noted that Paul's actions in each one of the lessons in this unit (chapters 19-26) led to his journey to Rome and his eventual imprisonment and death. In each and every place where he had been, and in each situation in which he found himself, he took advantage of opportunities to teach others about Jesus.]

1. Because Paul asked to have his case heard by the Emperor of Rome (Caesar—who happened to be Nero at this time), Agrippa and Festus sent him to Rome on a ship with full protection and a letter explaining the reasons for his imprisonment. At least two of Paul's close friends,

Dr. Luke and Aristarchus, were able to travel with him. There were a total of 276 people on the ship; that number included sailors, Roman soldiers, and prisoners like Paul.



**NOTE:** Aristarchus is mentioned as one of Paul’s traveling companions in Acts 19:29; in Colossians 4:10 Paul calls him “my fellow prisoner.” Luke was also with Paul in Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; and 21:1-18. Both Luke and Aristarchus are called “my fellow laborers” in Philemon 24. The other prisoners could possibly have also been appealing to Caesar, but it is more likely that they were condemned to die in the arenas of Rome to entertain the public.

2. Julius the **centurion** in charge of the prisoners is described as kind and respectful towards Paul. This trip began just before the winter months, when storms made sailing in the Mediterranean Sea very dangerous. (According to historians, many considered the only “safe” period for such a long trip to be between May 26<sup>th</sup> and September 14<sup>th</sup>.) By the second day of the journey, the ship was able to reach Sidon, about 70 miles north of Caesarea, but thereafter had terrible problems with strong headwinds. Beginning the trip on a relatively small ship, Julius decided to put all of his prisoners on a larger ship from Alexandria, Egypt (27:6).



**Centurion:** Roman soldier in charge of 80-100 men/soldiers



**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Ships from Alexandria, Egypt carried hundreds of thousands of tons of grain to Italy every year. Alexandrian grain ships were usually 180-200 feet long, over 40 feet deep at the deepest point, and about 45 feet wide. There were few, if any, accommodations for passengers since grain was the main cargo.

3. The 130-mile voyage from Myra to Cnidus was treacherous. [They “sailed slowly many days and arrived with difficulty...” (Acts 27:7); “Passing with difficulty...” (vs. 8).] Strong winds forced the ship southward, along the southern coast of Crete; it was finally able to dock at a place called Fair Havens. Paul had already lived through three shipwrecks (2 Corinthians 11:25), so he had plenty of experience with sea travel and its dangers. He advised the centurion that to keep going would be very dangerous, but his warning was ignored. No doubt the centurion respected the abilities and knowledge of the ship’s captain more than the warnings of a prisoner. The captain of the ship probably was the owner as well, but the Roman officer charged with the prisoners’ delivery had authority to make final decisions about the voyage.



**NOTE:** The “fast” mentioned in Acts 27:9 refers to the Jewish Day of Atonement—today called Yom Kippur—which is observed in September or October.

4. The ship needed to sail 40-60 miles to a better harbor for the winter—a distance that could have been reached easily in good weather. But the calm southern wind soon turned into a powerful, violent, northeasterly storm called “Euroclydon.” [The word “tempestuous” in verse 14 is the root word of “typhoon.”] The sailors lashed cables and/or ropes across the length and width of the ship, hoping

to avoid running aground on the Syrtis Sands off the north African coast. Letting down a sea anchor, they hoped to slow down to avoid the dangers close to shore.

5. At this point, Paul had earned the respect of everyone on board, and they were much more willing to listen to him. All except Paul had given up (Acts 27:20). God had sent an angel to tell him that although the ship would be lost in the storm, no one would be killed. His confident statement (“I believe God” in Acts 27:25) and his example of confidence gave the men some encouragement. He urged everyone to eat—which they had not been able to do for 14 days. In the midst of this terrible storm, Paul prayed, “giving thanks to God.” They had already thrown non-essential equipment overboard, and after eating, they began to get rid of the cargo of wheat to lighten the ship.
6. In spite of their best efforts, the ship ran aground and broke apart. The soldiers did not want their prisoners to escape. So they planned to kill the prisoners. Because of Paul, however, the centurion prevented the killings and commanded everyone who could swim to jump overboard and try to get to shore. The rest had to float to shore on pieces of the ship as it broke apart. All 276 men were able to get to nearby land, which they soon learned was the island of Malta (or Melita), about 60 miles south of Sicily. [Today this area is called “St. Paul’s Bay.”]



**HISTORICAL NOTE:** Remember the Philippian jailor’s plan to commit suicide because he believed his prisoners had escaped (Acts 16)? Under Roman military law, any soldier charged with guarding a prisoner would receive the punishment of the one who escaped. The soldiers would not be liable if their prisoners died at sea.

7. The natives of the island were very hospitable to those who washed ashore after the shipwreck. Besides the “natives” on the island, there were also retired Roman soldiers and other Roman citizens living on Malta. They brought the desperate men food and water and started at least one fire to help them get warm. Paul decided to gather some wood to add to one of those fires.



**NOTE:** “Natives” is translated “barbarous” in the KJV and gives the wrong idea about the inhabitants of the island. In New Testament times, a “barbarian” was anyone who did not speak Greek. Wild savages did not inhabit the island, as the word implies today.

8. Then suddenly Paul was bitten on the hand by a poisonous snake that had come out from its hiding place because of the heat from the fire. The islanders immediately concluded that he must have been a murderer and was receiving his just reward. But when Paul shook off the snake into the fire and didn’t die, they suddenly changed their minds and believed him to be a god. News about this stranger with great power spread all over the island. One of the wealthy citizens of the island, Publius, provided hospitality for the weary travelers for three days. His father was very sick with a fever and dysentery. Paul went into Publius’ house, prayed over his ailing father, and the man was immediately cured. News of this miracle spread quickly; others who were sick came to Paul to be healed. Luke probably had a part in helping the sick as well.



**NOTE:** Publius’ father’s fever may have been “Maltese fever,” which was likely caused by a microorganism found in the milk of the Maltese goats.



**NOTE:** Remember the purpose of miracles: to confirm that the words spoken by God’s messengers were the words of God (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4).



**RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS:** See “[Modern-Day Miracles, Tongue-Speaking, and Holy Spirit Baptism: A Refutation—Extended Version](#)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion of the purpose and time period of miraculous activity.

9. After three months on Malta, the voyage to Rome began again. The ship docked at Puteoli (west of Naples, Italy) for seven days and then went on to Rome. The brethren there heard about Paul’s arrival and came to greet him at Three Inns (about 33 miles away) and the Appii Forum (about 43 miles away). [Remember Paul’s deep desire to see the Roman Christians one day. See Romans 15:24.]
10. Once in Rome, Paul asked all of the Jewish leaders to visit him so that he could explain why he was a prisoner. They had not received any news—good or bad—about Paul from his Jewish accusers in Palestine. Paul used other opportunities to tell the Jewish leaders about the Savior who had come and died, just as the Old Testament prophecies foretold. Some believed and some did not. During his two years in Rome, Paul was allowed to live under house arrest (i.e., the Romans provided a house instead of a jail cell, but he was still guarded by a soldier). Friends could visit him, and there were plenty of people whom he could teach about Jesus. He also used his time to write letters (in particular, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon).
11. Luke, the author of Acts, does not tell us what happened to Paul after this. If no charges were formally brought against him and his accusers did not appear, Paul would have been automatically freed at the end of two years. According to tradition, he was able to go on to Spain as he had hoped (Romans 15:24). He was later arrested again, tried and condemned, then executed by order of Nero.
12. Paul knew that God would keep His promises, and he never wavered in his belief and trust in God. God promised Paul that he and the others would survive the shipwreck, and they did. God had promised Paul that he would preach in Rome, and he did. God had promised that the apostles would be able to perform miracles and would not be hurt by snakebites (Mark 16:15-20), and Paul was living proof that God kept those promises. Today we are promised that we will be saved if we obey God’s Word (Matthew 7:21). We will get to go to heaven with Him. God has promised us many other things, including help to overcome temptations (1 Corinthians 10:13). We can be sure that God will keep His promises to us, just as He did for Paul and the other Christians in the early Church.

**PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):**

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

**Ages 2-5:**

- “[Shipwrecked Coloring Sheet](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. (“[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)” p. 24 provided in activity sheets)
- Make a cardboard “ship” out of a box which is large enough for one or two kids to get inside. While playing a CD of storm noises, let the children pretend they’re in a ship. Let them “crash”



their ship against some “rocks” and swim to safety.

- Help each child trace his/her footprint on a piece of paper. Let each one copy one of the shorter verses from the “Standing on the Promises” game in the OLDER CHILDREN’s activities. Or trace their feet around verses you have already written on paper.
- Paul’s Travels board game: Use a board game, like Chutes & Ladders® or Candyland®, to ask review questions about this and previous lessons. If your class is too large to use one board, divide the class into smaller groups and let them test their memories. Another option: Ask a review question to each child. If he answers correctly, he can roll one dice and move on the board the number of spaces indicated on the dice. For a full-color generic board game and game cards, see [dtk-bible.com/sslgame.htm](http://dtk-bible.com/sslgame.htm).

### 1st-2nd Graders:

- Continue working on ABCs of Acts booklet. (“[ABCs of Acts Booklet](#)” p. 24 provided in activity sheets)
- Paul’s Travels board game: Use a board game, like Chutes & Ladders® or Candyland®, to ask review questions about this and previous lessons. If your class is too large to use one board, divide the class into smaller groups and let them test their memories. Another option: Ask a review question to each child. If he answers correctly, he can roll one dice and move on the board the number of spaces indicated on the dice. For a full-color generic board game and game cards, see [dtk-bible.com/sslgame.htm](http://dtk-bible.com/sslgame.htm).
- Write six to eight main events from today’s lesson on ship cutouts (or strips of paper). Mix them up and have the children put them in chronological order. (Make several sets, divide the class into pairs, and have pairs work together.) (“[Ship Cutouts](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- “[Acts Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)

### 3rd-4th Graders:

- “[Standing on the Promises](#)” game: On separate cards, write God’s “promises” and the “conditions” for receiving those promises, as stated in Scripture. Give the children the Scripture references to look up and match the conditions with the promises (provided in activity sheets). References:
  - 1 John 1:9; Romans 10:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17; James 4:8a; Mark 16:16.
  - Add as many others as you have time to do after the lesson, such as Matthew 28:18; Matthew 11:30; James 1:17; Revelation 2:10b.(You could also make three columns on the board and do this as a class activity. One column would be for promises, another for conditions, and the third for the Scripture references.)
- Divide the class into small groups/pairs. Give them the following scriptures to find times when Paul had difficulties: Acts 9:23-24; Acts 14:5; Acts 14:19; Acts 16:22-23; Acts 21:30-31; Acts 23:12; Acts 24:27; Acts 27:39-44; Acts 28:2-6; 2 Corinthians 11:24-28.
- Write six to eight main events from today’s lesson on ship cutouts (or strips of paper). Mix them up and have the children put them in chronological order. (Make several sets, divide the class into pairs, and have pairs work together.) (“[Ship Cutouts](#)” provided in activity sheets)
- “[Acts Crossword Puzzle](#)” (provided in activity sheets)
- Write the letters of an important word or name vertically on the board. Ask the kids to help you make an anagram of clues about the word. Example: P A U L. Key words could be Prayerful, Patient, or Prisoner; Apostle; Under pressure or Under God’s protection; Loved God, Loved the lost, Listened to God, etc.
  - Another word might be S H I P W R E C K, with key words like Storm; Hungry; In

- danger or \_\_\_\_ ; Prayer; Wisdom of Paul; Ropes tied around ship; Escape (soldiers tried to escape); Centurion, Compassion of Paul, or Caesar (appealing to); Kindness of the centurion.
- Have the children read the following:
    - Acts 27-28 (and 25-26 if they did not do so this quarter) [This could be assigned Sunday, to be completed by Wednesday.] Print out copies of the Acts 25-28 quiz from AP's [Advanced Bible Reader](#) site for the children to take.
    - *Paul the Prisoner*, by Penny Frank, Lion Publishing

## SONGS:

### **“PAUL WAS SAILING UPON THE SEA”**

(See [www.dltk-bible.com/paulwassailing.html](http://www.dltk-bible.com/paulwassailing.html))

### **“I’M A HARD FIGHTING SOLDIER ON THE BATTLEFIELD” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: See Internet)

I’m a hard fighting soldier on the battlefield. (3X)

I keep on bringin’ souls to Jesus,  
By the service that I yield.

I’ve got a helmet on my head, in my hand a sword and shield. (3X)

I keep on bringin’ souls to Jesus,  
By the service that I yield.

You gotta walk right, talk right, sing right, pray right, on the battlefield. (3X)

I keep on bringin’ souls to Jesus,  
By the service that I yield.

If I die let me die in the service of my Lord, (3X)

I keep on bringin’ souls to Jesus,  
By the service that I yield.

### **“THANKSGIVING” ([Click to Hear](#))**

Author: Unknown\*

(Tune: “Jesus Loves Me”)

I’m thankful for this home of mine,  
Sun and moon and stars that shine,  
My parents’ loving care of me,  
And all the lovely things I see.

CHORUS:

Yes, I am thankful!  
Yes, I am thankful!  
Yes, I am thankful,  
For everything I see.

I'm thankful for my cozy bed,  
Friends and toys and milk and bread,  
For books to read, and songs to sing,  
I thank you God for everything.

(CHORUS)

\*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE "SUGGESTION" BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.





# Shipwrecked; Safe on Malta; Imprisoned in Rome

## Acts 27 and 28



New Testament 8  
Part 2: ABCs OF ACTS 19-28

## WEDNESDAY EVENING

New Testament 8 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

Acts 27 and 28; 1 Kings 8:56

### MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house..., preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28:30-31a).

OLDER CHILDREN: "Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him" (Acts 28:30-31).

Also help the children memorize the ABCs of Acts.

### SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF SUNDAY'S LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- ["Paul Was Sailing Upon the Sea"](#)
- ["I'm a Hard Fighting Soldier on the Battlefield"](#)
- ["Thanksgiving"](#)

### LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [ABCs of Acts 13-26](#) Bible fact cards (provided under "N.T. 8 Bible Facts")
- "Acts Chapter Summary" from "[Kids Prep 2](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- "Summary of the Bible" from "[Kids Prep](#)" CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from any books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/ Learning Centers
- [Map of Palestine](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)
- [Map of Paul's Evangelistic Trips](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)



- [Map of Paul's Journey to Rome](#) (provided in map section of curriculum site)—To demonstrate Paul's trip to Rome, move a small ship (made from card stock) from place to place. Would be a good idea to mount the map onto a magnetic board, and put a magnet on the back of the ship so it will stick to the board as you tell about the places Paul stopped.
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Life of Paul (Series 2) A Beka picture set (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, *not the lesson book*)
- Put sand in a large plastic bin at one end, leaving about  $\frac{3}{4}$  for the "ocean." Have an electric fan handy to illustrate strong winds. (You might want to add small dollops of shaving cream to the water to illustrate high waves.) Act out the story, then let the kids tell it to you.

### PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I can trust God and believe what He tells me in His Word because He always keeps His promises.

### INTRODUCTION:

Review [N.T. 8 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under "N.T. 8 Bible Facts" on curriculum Web site)

### POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

Review briefly Sunday morning's lesson. (See [N.T. 8 Review Questions](#) for example questions), as well as other ABCs covered to this point.

Talk with the children more about the importance of keeping promises that **they** make, the disappointment when others do not keep promises, etc. Remind them that God **never** breaks promises—which should be very reassuring because **people** often let us down by breaking promises.

Discuss also the danger of making promises as mere human beings, in light of James 4:13-16 and Matthew 5:37. Since only God knows the future, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to keep our promises, and we would not want to lie by not fulfilling a promise. We must be humble and recognize that we cannot control the future. Instead, we should use words like, "I plan to do that," and "I'll try my best" since how hard we try is something that we **can** control.

### PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- See Sunday morning's lesson.

\*\*\* IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE "SUGGESTION" BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.

