

Pastor's Bible Study
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
December 10, 2009

Acts 27:1—28:31

Divine guidance, angelic intervention, and Paul's closing statement.

1. The final two chapters of Acts is the story of Paul's trip to the city of Rome. Acts 27 is the story of Paul on board a ship that runs into dangerous seas. Pay special attention to the details (Jewish sages believe that God is in the details!). Notice the following sequence of events:
 - a. At a port named Fair Haven, Paul warns the crew that the ship will be in danger if it proceeds (27:9).
 - b. The Roman centurion pays more attention to the pilot and the owner of the ship, and the crew decides to press on (27:11-12).
 - c. The storm takes its toll on the ship and its crew (27:13-20).
 - d. Paul speaks what the angel of the Lord told him, that God has "granted safety" to Paul and all on the ship. However, this word from the angel of the Lord is conditional (the ship would have to be run aground on some island. (27:21-26).
 - e. This time, the crew listens to Paul's advice! (27:27-44). Why now and not earlier?

2. What are some key points we may learn from the story in Acts 27? Pay special attention to the idea of guidance from God (through an angel, in this case) and how people should respond to God's guidance.

3. In Acts 28:7-10, Paul prays for the father of Publius, who is cured of his disease. Also, other people are prayed for and are cured. Why does this story appear in this chapter? What may we learn from it?

4. Read Paul's closing statement (Acts 28:25c-28). Notice that Paul refers to a passage in Isaiah 6:9-10. According to this passage, who inspired Isaiah the prophet? What do you think Paul hopes to accomplish by quoting this passage?

5. Recommended Reading:

N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1992).