

## The Historical Stories of the Acts of the Apostles

### Lesson 16 Acts 27:2 – Acts 28:31

Paul is in the custody of Julius, a centurion of the Augustan cohort, and they begin the journey to Rome by boarding an Adramyttian ship. Luke and Aristachus are with Paul but they are not under arrest.

#### Caesarea to Sidon to Myra

**Acts 27:2** And embarking in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to sail to the regions along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica. **3** And the next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and receive care. **4** And from there we put out to sea and sailed under the shelter of Cyprus because the winds were contrary. **5** And when we had sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia.

The first ship to carry Paul on his journey to Rome belongs to the city of Adramyttium. Many of the port cities owned ships as sources of supplemental income to support their towns. In Paul's day, it was very rare for a ship to sail straight from Caesarea to Italy, making it necessary for Julius to find passage for his prisoners and fellow soldiers from port to port. From Caesarea the ship sails north about 150 miles to the city of Sidon where Paul has many friends. Julius is so secure in Paul's trustworthiness that he allows him to visit his Sidon friends for the day. Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus return to the ship and sail about 450 miles to the city of Myra where the centurion secures a different ship for the journey.

#### Myra to Cnidus to Fair Havens

**Acts 27:6** And there the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy, and he put us aboard it. **7** And when we had sailed slowly for a good many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, since the wind did not permit us *to go* farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone; **8** and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

The Alexandrian ship is a grain ship on its way to Italy.<sup>199</sup> The Egyptian-owned ship makes regular stops at ports to pick up and sell grain all along its journey in the Mediterranean Sea. Grain ships also carry passengers when room is available and this ship has enough space for Julius, Paul, Luke, Aristachus, and the prisoners. It is a slow and difficult westward journey because of the winds. Finally, they arrive off the coast of Cnidus, 150 miles from Myra. The captain decides to try to sail south hoping to catch the winds that will drive his ship to the west. About 200 miles south of Cnidus the winds begin to drive them west and they make port in Fair Havens on the island of Crete, five miles from Lasea.

#### The fast is already over

**Acts 27:9** And when considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Paul *began* to admonish them,

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<sup>199</sup> Acts 27:38

<sup>10</sup>and said to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage will certainly be *attended* with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

The trip from Caesarea has already taken far longer than expected. Days have passed and Luke indicates that the "fast" is already over. In the New Testament this reference always means the Day of Atonement, a Jewish holiday. In AD 60, the Day of Atonement occurred on October 6. Sailing the seas of the northeast Mediterranean from October through January is always treacherous and so it is with this journey even though Paul has the Lord's promise that he will witness in Rome.

Paul suggests that they winter in Fair Havens. For Paul to be in the position to even make a suggestion to the captain indicates that he is not considered a normal prisoner; he is roaming the ship as he pleases. He uses the word "perceive" to indicate that if they continue on the journey their ship will be lost as well as their lives. Paul is not making a prophecy; rather, he is speaking from his experience as a spectator since he has been on at least three long voyages before. His experience is ignored and they set sail for Italy because of the harbor conditions in Fair Havens.

### **Fair Havens is not a suitable harbor**

**Acts 27:11** But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain of the ship, than by what was being said by Paul. <sup>12</sup>And because the harbor was not suitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter *there*.

The port of Fair Havens faces the east and the violent action of the westerly winds drives the waves into the port making it undesirable. The port of Phoenix faces the west where the waves pass outside the harbor and large boats are much safer there. Crete is only 140 miles long and Phoenix is just 40 miles to the west. Julius, the pilot and the captain decide to head for Phoenix for the winter.

### **Trouble on the trip**

**Acts 27:13** And when a moderate south wind came up, supposing that they had gained their purpose, they weighed anchor and *began* sailing along Crete, close *inshore*. <sup>14</sup>But before very long there rushed down from the land a violent wind, called Euraquilo; <sup>15</sup>and when the ship was caught *in it*, and could not face the wind, we gave way *to it*, and let ourselves be driven along.

The Euraquilo is the wind that blows down the Adriatic Gulf on the east side of Italy. At times, its force is as great as a typhoon or hurricane. The trip from Fair Havens to Phoenix requires the ship to sail to the northwest. With the typhonic winds coming from the northwest, the Alexandrian ship is driven south into the Mediterranean Sea away from Crete.

**Acts 27:16** And running under the shelter of a small island called Claudia, we were scarcely able to get the *ship's* boat under control. <sup>17</sup>And after they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on *the shallows* of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor, and so let themselves be driven along. <sup>18</sup>The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they began to jettison the cargo; <sup>19</sup>and on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. <sup>20</sup>And since neither sun nor stars

appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing *us*, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

Just southwest of Crete is the small island of Clauda. Seven miles long and three miles wide, the island offers little help against the winds. The ship is driven south within 40 miles of the African coast and the crew fears they will hit the shallows of Syrtis, the shallow sandy areas in the Mediterranean Sea near Carthage on the African coast. To keep from being stuck in the sand, the crew throws much of the cargo overboard, thinking they will all surely die.

### Paul encourages with a word from an angel

**Acts 27:21** And when they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete, and incurred this damage and loss. **22**"And yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship. **23**"For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me, **24**saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.' **25**"Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God, that it will turn out exactly as I have been told. **26**"But we must run aground on a certain island."

Paul speaks a word of prophecy and encouragement to the sailors, promising that they will all live despite the complete loss of the ship. An angel had visited Paul that night and told him that the ship would be tossed in the tempest and run aground on an island.

### An attempt to abandon ship

**Acts 27:27** But when the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors *began* to surmise that they were approaching some land. **28**And they took soundings, and found *it to be* twenty fathoms; and a little farther on they took another sounding and found *it to be* fifteen fathoms. **29**And fearing that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished for daybreak. **30**And as the sailors were trying to escape from the ship, and had let down the *ship's* boat into the sea, on the pretense of intending to lay out anchors from the bow, **31**Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved." **32**Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the *ship's* boat, and let it fall away.

After 14 days the ship is finally in the Adriatic Sea. Today, the maps indicate the Adriatic Sea as the body of water between Italy and Asia Minor, but in Paul's day it was called the Adriatic Gulf. The Adriatic Sea lies at the bottom of the gulf where the water pours into the Mediterranean Sea between Italy and Greece, west of Crete. Most likely, the center of the typhoon has passed and they are on the opposite side of the storm, blowing the ship in a northwesterly direction. The sailors do not know where they are, but the rope measurements indicate that they may soon run aground. Near morning, the sailors, soldiers and prisoners try to abandon the ship. Paul cautions them to remain onboard. Heeding his warning, they remain, cutting away the lifeboat to lighten the load on the ship.

### Paul encourages the sailors to eat food

**Acts 27:**<sup>33</sup>And until the day was about to dawn, Paul was encouraging them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been constantly watching and going without eating, having taken nothing. <sup>34</sup>"Therefore I encourage you to take some food, for this is for your preservation; for not a hair from the head of any of you shall perish." <sup>35</sup>And having said this, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and he broke it and began to eat. <sup>36</sup>And all of them were encouraged, and they themselves also took food.

The fight against nature has consumed the time and energy of the sailors for 14 days. Not one minute has been spared to eat. Paul has noticed their lack of food and encourages them to eat for their preservation. In the midst of the storm, the man of God prays over the food and begins to give it to the men.

### Two hundred and seventy-six on the ship

**Acts 27:**<sup>37</sup>And all of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six persons. <sup>38</sup>And when they had eaten enough, they *began* to lighten the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea. <sup>39</sup>And when day came, they could not recognize the land; but they did observe a certain bay with a beach, and they resolved to drive the ship onto it if they could. <sup>40</sup>And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea while at the same time they were loosening the ropes of the rudders, and hoisting the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the beach. <sup>41</sup>But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern *began* to be broken up by the force of *the waves*. <sup>42</sup>And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, that none of *them* should swim away and escape; <sup>43</sup>but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land, <sup>44</sup>and the rest *should follow*, some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And thus it happened that they all were brought safely to land.

Trying to save their lives, the crew begins to lighten the ship, hoping to save it in spite of Paul's prophecy. Even though they can see land, they bring the draft of the ship up high enough to traverse the shallow waters. The grain is cast into the sea as well as the anchors. Although it is a common practice to kill prisoners in a time of disaster or calamity to prevent their escape, Julius does not allow this to happen and gives them the freedom to get to shore the best way they can.

### Shipwrecked on Malta

**Acts 28:**<sup>1</sup>And when they had been brought safely through, then we found out that the island was called Malta. <sup>2</sup>And the natives showed us extraordinary kindness; for because of the rain that had set in and because of the cold, they kindled a fire and received us all.

The 14 day journey has landed them on the island of Malta, 600 miles south of their intended destination. The typhoon has sent the ship over more than 800 miles of water.

Today, we know the island by the name of Malta, but in Paul's day the island was called Melita. The bay where the shipwreck occurs is called St. Paul's Bay to this day. It is about two miles long and one mile wide. The first settlers of this island were the seagoing

Phoenicians. In 736 BC the Greeks took possession of the island followed by the Cathaginians in 528 BC and finally the Romans in 242 BC. The natives who are kind to Paul and all his shipmates are a mixture of the various bloodlines that had moved to the island over the years. They are superstitious people, believing in the various gods of the ancient world.

### **Maltan natives think Paul is a god**

**Acts 28:**<sup>3</sup> But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. <sup>4</sup> And when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they *began* saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live." <sup>5</sup> However he shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm. <sup>6</sup> But they were expecting that he was about to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and *began* to say that he was a god.

The Lord's protection of Paul's life as well as the miracles which Paul has performed in his ministry draws the attention of onlookers with awe and superstition. The natives are always looking for the gods to appear in their midst and bring them great blessing. Little do they know that God has, in fact, invaded their midst with one of His chief ministers to share the gospel of His Son with all of Malta. It is not the first time Paul has been mistaken as a god.<sup>200</sup> In Lystra, the people believe Paul is the god Mercury, and when he proves not to be, they stone him.

### **Publius' father is healed along with others**

**Acts 28:**<sup>7</sup> Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the leading man of the island, named Publius, who welcomed us and entertained us courteously three days. <sup>8</sup> And it came about that the father of Publius was lying *in bed* afflicted with *recurrent* fever and dysentery; and Paul went in *to* see him and after he had prayed, he laid his hands on him and healed him. <sup>9</sup> And after this had happened, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases were coming to him and getting cured.

Publius is the "leading man" of the island, a Maltase term which corresponds to our word "governor." The governor entertains the group for three days while they are looking for long term housing on the island. We do not know whether Publius entertains all the 276 shipmates or just Paul's inner circle which includes Luke and Aristachus. Nevertheless, the stay with Publius is profitable. When the governor's father becomes ill, Paul heals him, an act which naturally starts the trail of sick people seeking a miracle from Paul.

### **Three months on Malta**

**Acts 28:**<sup>10</sup> And they also honored us with many marks of respect; and when we were setting sail, they supplied *us* with all we needed. <sup>11</sup> And at the end of three months we set sail on an Alexandrian ship which had wintered at the island, and which had the Twin Brothers for its figurehead.

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<sup>200</sup> Acts 14:11-19

The three month stay on Malta is peaceful for Paul and the others. Another Alexandrian ship has harbored in the bay and Julius is able to secure passage for his prisoners on board. It is another grain ship with a distinguishing feature, the Twin Brothers figurehead.

The phrase Twin Brothers is found throughout ancient Greek literature and art. It represents the twin sons of Zeus, Castor and Pollux. On this Alexandrian ship the two sons are mounted on the prow as the deities of the sailors aboard. They are the deities of the ship; they also give the ship its name.

### **From Malta to Syracuse, Rhegium, Puteoli, and Rome**

**Acts 28:** <sup>12</sup>And after we put in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days. <sup>13</sup>And from there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium, and a day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. <sup>14</sup>There we found *some* brethren, and were invited to stay with them for seven days; and thus we came to Rome.

Syracuse is the capital of Sicily in Paul's day and it is eighty miles from Malta. Standing on the east side of the island, it is only another 50 miles to the bottom toe of the boot of Italy, but that is a long way from Rome by land. Julius needs to sail closer to Rome before making a land journey. Why they stay in Syracuse three days we do not know. Perhaps the winds are not favorable for the ship, or perhaps they are unloading or loading cargo during this time.

When they do set sail, their port of destination is Rhegium about eighty miles away, but they are unable to sail a straight course. They sail around the island and finally arrive in Rhegium on the west side of the toe of Italy.

With the winds blowing from the south, the ship sets sail for Puteoli, 182 miles north of Rhegium. With a good strong wind, the ship can make it in about 26 hours and that agrees with Luke's record. Julius allows Paul to stay with fellow Jewish believers for a week and then they make their journey 130 mile up one of the great Roman roads to the city of Rome.

### **The brethren come to meet Paul**

**Acts 28:** <sup>15</sup>And the brethren, when they heard about us, came from there as far as the Market of Appius and Three Inns to meet us; and when Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

Paul is about to accomplish his long time goal of visiting Rome. Before he arrives, the believers hear that he is on the way and go to meet him on the road at the Market of Appius and the Three Inns.

The Market of Appius is about 90 miles from Puteoli and 40 miles from Rome on the great stone Roman road called the Appian Way constructed by Appius Claudius in 312 BC and known as an area filled with thieves and bandits. Several believers meet Paul there. On down the road at Three Inns, about ten miles from the Market of Appius on the way to Rome, more believers join Paul, Luke, Aristachus and the caravan of prisoners.

### **Paul stays by himself**

**Acts 28:16** And when we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

If the protocol is followed, Julius will present all the prisoners to the captain of the Peregrini, people who are not Roman citizens. They are second-class people in the Roman Empire and the captain's job is to oversee these people. Roman prisoners who are given the death penalty are downgraded to the class of Peregrini.

Since Paul is not carrying a death penalty, Julius probably presents him to Burrus, the Prefect of the Praetorian Guard who holds this position from AD 51-62. Julius' report about Paul reveals his integrity so Paul is allowed freedom to rent his own room in Rome although a soldier is with him at all times.

With Paul finally in Rome waiting for his audience with Nero, what will he do in the meantime? He calls a meeting with the Jews of Rome.

### **Paul gives his testimony to the Jews of Rome in his home**

**Acts 28:17** And it happened that after three days he called together those who were the leading men of the Jews, and when they had come together, he *began* saying to them, "Brethren, though I had done nothing against our people, or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. **18**"And when they had examined me, they were willing to release me because there was no ground for putting me to death. **19**"But when the Jews objected, I was forced to appeal to Caesar; not that I had any accusation against my nation. **20**"For this reason therefore, I requested to see you and to speak with you, for I am wearing this chain for the sake of the hope of Israel." **21**And they said to him, "We have neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren come here and reported or spoken anything bad about you. **22**"But we desire to hear from you what your views are; for concerning this sect, it is known to us that it is spoken against everywhere."

More than ten years before, Claudius Caesar had ordered all the Jews out of Rome. With his death in AD 54, Jews began returning to Rome in large numbers. All the Jews have heard the reports about Paul, and they are intrigued by this man who has evaded persecution so long. They want to hear Paul's testimony for themselves and take Paul up on his invitation.

### **Some accept and some reject**

**Acts 28:23** And when they had set a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God, and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening. **24**And some were being persuaded by the things spoken, but others would not believe.

Once again, Paul, doing the work of the evangelist, shares the good news of the living Savior with his countrymen and bloodline. His appeal includes his usual testimony concerning Moses, the Prophets and Jesus. As in every town, some Jews become believers and some do not.

## Paul's parting word

**Acts 28:**<sup>25</sup> And when they did not agree with one another, they *began* leaving after Paul had spoken one *parting* word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, <sup>26</sup>saying,

'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;  
<sup>27</sup>FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM." ' <sup>28</sup>"Let it be known to you therefore, that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen."

The all-day meeting with Paul comes to an end with the Jews arguing with each other. Paul's last word to them comes from the Old Testament and the prophet Isaiah.<sup>201</sup> The prophet is directing the Lord's message to the Jews in 650 BC. Jesus uses the Isaiah passage when speaking with the Jews to explain His parables.<sup>202</sup> Jesus also uses the same passage to point out the Jew's disbelief in Him as Messiah.<sup>203</sup> Paul adds his own words in verse 28. The fate of the Jews is sealed. Most have rejected the Savior and the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles who will listen to the message and believe.

## Paul remains in under arrest for two years

**Acts 28:**<sup>29</sup> [~~And when he had spoken these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.~~] <sup>30</sup> And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters, and was welcoming all who came to him, <sup>31</sup>preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

Paul spends two years in custody in his own rented room before Luke writes this history of the stories of the *Acts of the Apostles* to Theophilus in AD 63. Although Luke brings an end to the letter, Paul's ministry is not over. In addition, Luke fails to mention the four letters that Paul had written to churches he had founded on his missionary journeys. All is not well in the first century church as theological problems abound. Three of his prison letters address these problems and the fourth addresses three friends.

## The Prison Letters

### The Book of Ephesians – AD 61-62

Paul's letter to the Ephesians gives the Asian Christians the instruction from the Lord in how to deal with the fiery attacks that he prophesied would come at their last meeting in Miletus.<sup>204</sup> He loves the church in Ephesus and shares with them how the Holy Spirit has

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<sup>201</sup> Isaiah 6:9-10

<sup>202</sup> Matthew 13:14-15; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10

<sup>203</sup> John 12:40

<sup>204</sup> Acts 20:29-30



given special gifts to all the churches for edification.<sup>205</sup> Ephesus is under attack and they need this letter from Paul.

### **The Book of Philippians – AD 61-62**

The Philippians are in sad shape, poor and destitute for the most part in their economic slump. They send Epaphroditus with a small limited contribution to meet the needs of Paul. They are sad that it is so small. Paul sends the letter back with Epaphroditus to encourage them, reminding them that they were the first church established in his European ministry, and they had collected a great sum in the past to help the needs of the saints. It is a cheerful guide that has helped Christians through the centuries down the rugged journey of life in Christ.

### **The Book of Colossians – AD 61-62**

Paul has heard of the false teaching occurring in the Colossian church by the Judaizers, but the teaching is far worse than just the doctrines of the Jews; the new teaching includes oriental mysticism promising the members the enjoyment of a higher spiritual life and deeper insight into the world of the spirits.

### **The Book of Philemon – AD 61-62**

Paul has encountered a run-away slave, Onesemus, in Rome and leads him to the Lord. The slave belongs to his old friend Philemon and his wife who live in Colossae. He sends Onesemus back to Philemon with this letter asking Philemon to return Onesemus to him because Onesemus is useful in Paul's labors in Rome. It is a wonderful example of how Christians should speak with other Christians when difficult circumstances occur.

## **Synopsis of the remaining history of the New Testament**

### **Paul's Release from Prison – AD 63 – 67**

For whatever reason, Paul's imprisonment comes to a close, probably because there are no witnesses to appear against him before Nero. Within the year Rome burns and Nero attributes its destruction to the Christians. We do not know all the places Paul will travel, but we can piece together some of the details from his letters to both Timothy and Titus.

### **The Book of Acts - AD 63**

With Paul's release from house arrest, Luke writes his second letter to Theophilus. We call the letter the Acts of the Apostles. Luke defends Paul's apostleship in the letter by comparing his ministry with that of Peter.

### **The Book of Hebrews – AD 64**

The letter to the Hebrews is anonymous; however, Paul is the likely author. The request for Timothy to come see the author at the end of the letter is characteristic of Paul's writing and his relationship with Timothy. If Paul is the author, he is once again trying to win his Israelite kin to Christ. The letter shows the true purpose of the Mosaic Law and how the Levitical priesthood is fulfilled in Christ. The first two chapters also show the purpose of the Holy Spirit and His work in the lives of all mankind.

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<sup>205</sup> **Ephesians 4:**<sup>11</sup> And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers ...

## **Peter's letters**

### **The Book of 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter – AD 65**

Peter's first letter to the Hebrew Jews of the Dispersion is written from Babylon on the Euphrates, which is one of the largest gatherings of Jews and Jewish learning. He is writing to the Jews in Asia Minor where Paul labored for three years on his third missionary journey. Peter's purpose is to confirm the true teachings that they have already received from Paul.

Peter's second letter to the Hebrew Jews, written shortly before his death, continues to affirm the true teachings and he includes a remarkable reference to their teacher, Paul.<sup>206</sup>

## **More letters from Paul**

### **The Books of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy and Titus – AD 66-67**

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul has left Ephesus on his way to Macedonia, which probably means Philippi, Berea, or Thessalonica. From one of these cities Paul writes to Ephesus where he has left Timothy as pastor of the congregation. The letter deals with worship and the organization of the church as well as encouraging the congregation to maintain sound teachings.

His letter to Titus is written at Nicopolis, a town in Macedonia not identified on available maps. Paul had left Titus on the island of Crete several years before. His letter gives the church a detailed list of qualifications for the selection of officers to hold the offices within the church.

## **Paul's Imprisonment and one last letter – AD 67**

### **The Book of 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy – AD 67**

The persecution of Nero lasts for several years, and Paul is once again arrested and put in prison for his Christian faith. During this final imprisonment, Paul probably writes his second letter to Timothy.

The second letter, delivered by Tychicus, pleads for Timothy to come to him by winter and to bring John Mark with him. Paul is anticipating his impending death and he strives to encourage Timothy to be diligent, steadfast, and patient under persecution throughout his ministry.<sup>207</sup>

## **Paul is beheaded – AD 67**

No doubt Paul stands before Nero once again, but this outcome is different from the first. Paul is delivered to the executioner for a crime not identified and he is beheaded three years before the fall of Jerusalem at the hands of a new Caesar.

## **Jude's letter**

### **The Book of Jude – AD 68**

Jude is the brother of James and the half-brother of Jesus. His letter is written in Palestine as a warning to the Christian Jewish community concerning the people who are infiltrating the church with false theology, trying to shipwreck the fellowship of believers.

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<sup>206</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:15-16

<sup>207</sup> 2 Timothy 4:6

## **John's letters**

### **The Gospel of John – AD 90**

John is the last apostle alive and his gospel fills in the rest of the ministry of Jesus before his ascension. Matthew, Mark and Luke basically cover the Galilean ministry and John deals with the Judean ministry. It was probably written in Ephesus where he eventually died after AD 96.

### **The Books of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> John – AD 95**

John's first letter gives believers a way to know if they are living in the salvation of the Lord or not. His second letter warns against false teachers trying to infiltrate the church. The third letter is an example of how to introduce Christians to each other.

### **The Revelation of John – AD 95-96**

John's Revelation covers the final events of the end times. The rest of the Bible affirms the words in this last book forecasting doom for the unbelievers and victory for the saints.