August 9

To Rome

Shipwrecked!

The wind blew relentlessly, they had secured the lifeboat and lowered the anchor, they were afraid of being blown aground by Syrtis; they just let the wind carry them along. The next day they started throwing cargo and then the next day tackle overboard. Then Paul gave an “I told you so speech” and encouragement – Read: Acts 27:21-26.

Two weeks had passed, they realized they were headed toward a shore because the water was getting shallower, some sailors tried to make an escape but Paul pointed out – Read: Acts 27:31-32. It had been two weeks since they had eaten so Paul took food and gave thanks and they all ate and then they threw grain into the sea to lighten the load. The ship ran aground, away from an island this was bad for the prisoners – Read: Acts 27:42 the ships officer was on their side – Read: Acts 27:42-44.

We must not abandon the ship of the Lord, for we will be lost too.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Acts 27:22

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank-you, dear Lord, for a safe ship through this life during rough weather and smooth sailing.

August 10

Paul

Friendly Natives

When they arrived safely to show by swimming and floating on boards they found themselves on Malta. The Native citizens built a fire for them to dry off, when Paul put a bundle of wood on the fire, a snake came out of the heat and grabbed onto Paul’s hand, the natives thought he was really bad because they thought he would die, Paul just shook it off with no problems – Read: Acts 28:6.

The head guy of the island, Publius, welcomed the group into his home for three days, Paul healed Publius’ father – Read: Acts 28:9. Paul was probably quite busy. They stayed on the Malta for three months, when finally they were ready to sail on a ship from Alexandria that had wintered in Malta; the Maltin's outfitted the ship for the voyage to Italy.

After making some stops, they arrived in Rome, after about two weeks, believers welcomed Paul all along the route.

The Maltin’s set a good example for us to follow, to welcome strangers into our homes and make them comfortable. We can also aid people we cannot welcome into our homes, the homeless and starving through organizations crated to help them.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Acts 28: 10

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O lord, to always be attuned to others and their needs let me help them to the best of my ability.

August 11

Paul

A Day’s Work

Paul was allowed to live in a rented room, under guard. After three days Paul invited the Jewish leaders of Rome to meet with him. Paul told them how the Jewish people of Jerusalem had him arrested and even though the Romans could find nothing to hold him on the Jews forced him to appeal to Caesar.

The Roman Jews were surprised to hear of Paul’s dilemma because they had no letters or visitors with any bad news of Paul and they were eager to hear Paul’s ideas.

They set aside a day and Paul spent the entire day trying, from the teaching of Moses and the Prophets to convince them about Jesus. As usual some believed but others could not be convinced. They left arguing among themselves – Read: Acts 28:25-28.

We must always be aware that if the Jews would have been totally receptive to the message of Salvation, we Gentiles would perhaps never been offered a chance to hear the message! We must keep our hearts and minds open to God’s message.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Acts 28:31

PRAYER THOUGHT: Praise the Lord! You gave your Son, your love and mercy to all people! May I never close my heart to you!

August 12

Paul

Through Faith

Paul wrote the book of Romans as a letter to the Romans when he hoped to visit them. It may be such a thing that Paul appealed to Caesar at the end of his third journey, to make this desire to go to Rome come true for him.

The book of Romans is said to be the most important and complete statement of the Gospel.

Paul opens his letter with praise of the Romans, how the whole world was hearing of their faith and how much Paul wanted to visit them.

Paul points out how they could benefit from each other’s faith – Read: Romans 1:12. We too must help each other out in our own group of believers; we can pray for one another, comfort and strengthen our own church. That is one reason for establishing ourselves in a church.

Paul was an enthusiastic preacher, we too should be eager and enthusiastic to tell others how faith can put them right with God – Read: Romans 1:16, 17. What a glorious message to tell.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 1:15.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to kindle enthusiasm to tell other the Gospel and keep the faith unto eternal life.

August 13

Romans

Evildoing

Paul, after the praise went right to the matter of how angry God gets with evildoers. There is no excuse for not knowing – Read: Romans 1:18-20. And that goes for us too.

How people who think they are wise are worshipping idols and doing evil but they are really foolish and because of their foolishness God gives them over to their evil.

Paul denounces homosexuality and all perverted ideas – Read: Romans 1:26, 27.

God destroyed the world once because of the evil in it. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their perverted ways – (Read: Genesis 19:1-29 for that story)

Our society has grown to accept homosexuality, what is in store for us? Are we going to destroy ourselves from within? The hope is for Jesus to return and save us from all that pain and strife. (Just a note – this was originally written in the mid 1980’s at a time when individuals that were practicing homosexuals would not have been approved for the ministry – now we have openly practicing homosexuals as ministers! One wonders when it will all end – perhaps soon!)

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 1:32.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, not to turn myself over to any kind of wickedness and help others from committing evil deeds.

August 14

Romans

God’s Judgment

With the second coming of Jesus comes the judgment of God.

We prepare for our judgment results by how we live now – Read: Romans 2:6-8.

We have once again the dilemma about the law, the Jews live by the law, so they’ll be judged by the law, we the Gentiles don’t have the law, as our rules but as our conscience – Read: Romans 2:14-16.

Jews depend on obeying the laws and circumcision to save them, we Christians depend on faith and the saving grace of Jesus.

The preparation we need to make for the judgment is to seek the Lord, strive to follow his example and to live within His will, that is a pretty tall order but with God’s help and forgiveness we can do it!

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 2:9

PRAYER THOUGHT: Let the law be my conscience, O Lord, and guide me into a positive judgment. Help me to show others how to use the law for our conscience.

August 15

Romans

Righteousness?

Just the time we have our shoulders back in confidence, thinking we are doing pretty good, then comes reality – Read: Romans 3:23. This brings an honest person back to reality of human failings. We don’t have to feel guilty about failing because – Read: Romans 3:10-12.

We must not use this scripture to admit defeat and not even try to rise above sin, because there is a way out, Paul shows us how – Read: Romans 3:24.

How can we receive God’s grace? Read: Romans 3:25-26.

The death of God’s only Son was accomplished to give us a means to forgiveness for those who have faith. What a sacrifice!

We are not to give up when we fall short of God’s glory, and we will fall short, we must strive to do better, rely on our faith and ask forgiveness.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 3:29.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O lord, to keep my faith in you strong and to remember your grace in good and bad times.

August 16

Romans

Being Accepted

In Romans 4 we have the example of Abraham and how he was found righteous before God.

God made covenant with Abraham and sealed that covenant with circumcision but Abraham was accepted before God even before that, Abraham was found righteous before God because he believed – Read: Romans 4:3.

Abraham was not perfect, he sinned, but he never lost his faith, he believed that he would be the father of many nations, but without a natural heir, he probably wondered how – Read: Romans 4:20-21.

We too can be found acceptable before God, by faith, belief in God and his Son’s resurrection. Read: Romans 4:4-8 (Psalm 32:1, 2) This will be the case for us too, if we believe in God, he’ll forgive our sins and forget we ever sinned.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Romans 4:25

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, I know that I can never repay all that you have done for me with good works. Help me to strengthen my faith, so I can be accepted by you as righteous.