

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

ACTS

TO ALL THE WORLD

**“You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and
in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of
the earth.”**

ACTS 1:8

Forty Days from Jerusalem to Rome

ONE PAGE A DAY · TWENTY-EIGHT CHAPTERS · SEVEN CITIES

Before you begin

A 40 Day Devotional Guide

Forty days from the Ascension to a rented house in Rome. Each day gives the passage to read, a short synopsis of what happens, and one question to carry into the day. Seven cities get a page of their own — with a map and, where Scripture gives us one, a chapter-by-chapter breakdown of the letter written to that church.



The world of Acts: the gospel moves from Jerusalem to Antioch, across Asia Minor and Greece, and finally to Rome — “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Dashed lines trace the route the book follows.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The shape of these forty days

DAYS 1–12

Jerusalem

Acts 1–7 — the Spirit comes, the church is born, and the first witness dies.

DAYS 13–20

Judea & Samaria

Acts 8–12 — scattering, conversion, and the door opened to the Gentiles.

DAYS 21–34

To the nations

Acts 13–20 — three journeys, new churches, and the letters they would receive.

DAYS 35–40

Chains to Rome

Acts 21–28 — arrest, defense, shipwreck, and an unhindered gospel.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- Read the passage first, the synopsis second. The synopsis is a map, not a substitute.
- One question per day — write the answer somewhere you'll see it again.
- City pages sit with the day they belong to. Read the letter to that church alongside the week you are in.

WHO'S WHO IN ACTS

Major characters

THE TEN PEOPLE THE BOOK KEEPS RETURNING TO

Peter

Fisherman turned spokesman: he preaches at Pentecost, heals at the temple gate, and stands before the Sanhedrin refusing to stop speaking. His rooftop vision and visit to Cornelius open the door of the church to the Gentiles (Acts 1–12).

Paul (Saul)

A strict Pharisee who persecutes the church until Jesus stops him on the Damascus road; baptized by Ananias, he becomes the apostle to the Gentiles. Three journeys, three defenses and one shipwreck later he is preaching in Rome under guard (Acts 9; 13–28).

Stephen

One of the seven chosen to serve the overlooked widows, full of grace and power, whose enemies cannot beat him in argument. His sweeping speech through Israel's history ends in the church's first martyrdom — while Saul watches the coats (Acts 6–7).

Philip the evangelist

Also one of the seven, he takes the gospel to Samaria and then to a single official on a desert road. He is the book's picture of personal evangelism: a question, a passage of Isaiah, and a baptism at the first water (Acts 6; 8).

Barnabas

Called "son of encouragement," he sells a field for the poor, vouches for the newly converted Saul when no one else will, and goes to find him for the work at Antioch. He later parts from Paul over Mark — and takes Mark with him (Acts 4; 9; 11; 13–15).

WHO'S WHO IN ACTS

Major characters, continued

THE TEN PEOPLE THE BOOK KEEPS RETURNING TO

James, brother of Jesus

Leader of the Jerusalem church, he gives the decisive ruling at the council: do not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. He later advises Paul about the temple rite that leads to his arrest (Acts 15; 21).

Luke

The author, a careful investigator writing to Theophilus, who quietly joins the story when the narrative turns to “we” at Troas. His two volumes trace the gospel from a manger in Judea to a rented house in Rome (Acts 1:1; 16:10).

Silas

A leader sent from Jerusalem with the council’s letter who becomes Paul’s companion after the split with Barnabas. He is beaten and imprisoned in Philippi, singing hymns at midnight when the earthquake comes (Acts 15–18).

Timothy

A young disciple from Lystra with a believing Jewish mother and a Greek father, recruited by Paul at the start of the second journey. He becomes Paul’s most trusted delegate, sent ahead to strengthen churches (Acts 16; 17; 19–20).

Priscilla and Aquila

Tentmakers displaced from Rome who host Paul in Corinth, work beside him, and travel with him to Ephesus. There they take the gifted Apollos aside and explain the way of God to him more adequately (Acts 18).

WHO'S WHO IN ACTS

Minor characters

NAMED ONCE OR TWICE — AND NEVER FORGETTABLE

Matthias

Chosen by lot to replace Judas because he had witnessed everything from John's baptism to the resurrection. He is named once and never mentioned again — faithfulness without a spotlight (Acts 1:23–26).

Ananias and Sapphira

A couple who sell property and present a partial gift as the whole, and are struck down for lying to the Holy Spirit. Their story is the church's sharpest warning about performed generosity (Acts 5:1–11).

Gamaliel

A respected Pharisee and teacher of the law who counsels the Sanhedrin to leave the apostles alone: if it is from God, you cannot stop it. His caution saves their lives (Acts 5:34–39).

Simon the sorcerer

A Samaritan magician who believes and is baptized, then tries to buy the power to give the Spirit. Peter tells him his heart is not right and calls him to repent (Acts 8:9–24).

The Ethiopian official

A court treasurer of the Kandake reading Isaiah aloud in his chariot and unable to understand it. Philip explains Jesus from that very passage, and he is baptized at the first water and goes on rejoicing (Acts 8:26–39).

Ananias of Damascus

A disciple told to go to the man who came to arrest him, and who obeys with the words "Brother Saul." He lays hands on the persecutor and tells him to be baptized and wash his sins away (Acts 9:10–19; 22:12–16).

Tabitha (Dorcas)

A disciple in Joppa known for the clothing she made for widows, mourned by the whole community when she dies. Peter prays, she is raised, and many in the city believe (Acts 9:36–42).

WHO'S WHO IN ACTS

Minor characters, continued

NAMED ONCE OR TWICE — AND NEVER FORGETTABLE

Cornelius

A Roman centurion of the Italian Regiment, devout and generous, told by an angel to send for Peter. His household receives the Spirit and is baptized — the Gentile Pentecost (Acts 10).

Herod Agrippa I

The king who executes James, imprisons Peter, and accepts a crowd's acclaim as a god. He is struck down, while the word of God continues to spread (Acts 12).

John Mark

A young companion who leaves the first journey early, becoming the reason Paul and Barnabas part company. Barnabas takes him again, and later New Testament letters show him restored (Acts 12:25; 13:13; 15:37–39).

Sergius Paulus

The Roman proconsul of Cyprus who sends for Barnabas and Saul, wanting to hear the word of God. He believes after the sorcerer opposing them is struck blind (Acts 13:6–12).

Lydia

A dealer in purple cloth from Thyatira, worshipping God at a riverside prayer meeting when the Lord opens her heart. She and her household are baptized, and her home becomes the first church in Europe (Acts 16:14–15).

The Philippian jailer

A man responsible for prisoners who nearly kills himself when the earthquake opens the doors. He washes his prisoners' wounds, is baptized that same hour with his household, and the whole family rejoices (Acts 16:25–34).

Apollos

A learned Alexandrian, fervent in spirit, teaching accurately about Jesus but knowing only John's baptism. Instructed privately by Priscilla and Aquila, he becomes a powerful help to the believers in Achaia (Acts 18:24–28).

WHO'S WHO IN ACTS

Minor characters, continued

NAMED ONCE OR TWICE — AND NEVER FORGETTABLE

Demetrius the silversmith

A tradesman who calculates the gospel's effect on the shrine business and stirs Ephesus into a riot for Artemis. Luke lets us see religious outrage that is really about money (Acts 19:23–41).

Eutychus

A young man who falls asleep in a third-story window during Paul's midnight preaching and falls to his death. Paul goes down, takes him up alive, and the meeting continues until dawn (Acts 20:7–12).

Agabus

A prophet who predicts the famine that prompts Antioch's relief offering, and later binds his own hands to warn Paul about Jerusalem. Paul thanks him and goes anyway (Acts 11:27–28; 21:10–11).

Felix and Festus

Two Roman governors who each find no crime in Paul and neither release him: Felix hopes for a bribe, Festus for a favor with the Jewish leaders. Paul's appeal to Caesar cuts the delay short (Acts 24–25).

Herod Agrippa II

The king who hears Paul's third telling of his conversion and deflects with a joke about being persuaded. He concludes that Paul has done nothing deserving death (Acts 25:13–26:32).

Julius the centurion

The officer charged with delivering Paul to Rome, who treats him kindly, overrules his advice about sailing, and later spares his life. He is the last of Luke's sympathetic Romans (Acts 27).

THREADS THROUGH THE BOOK

Key themes

WHAT LUKE KEEPS INSISTING ON

The Holy Spirit drives the mission

Every advance in Acts begins with the Spirit — filling, sending, forbidding, redirecting. The book is less the acts of the apostles than the acts of the Spirit through ordinary people.

Witness moves outward

Acts 1:8 is the outline: Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, the ends of the earth. Luke tracks the geography deliberately and ends in Rome without ever declaring the job finished.

The word of God grows

Luke punctuates the story with progress reports: the word spread, increased, grew in power. The hero of these summaries is the message itself, not its messengers.

Repentance, baptism, and the Spirit

From Pentecost to Rome the response to the gospel is consistent: believe, repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins, and receive the Spirit. Every conversion account in the book follows this shape.

God shows no favoritism

Samaritans, an Ethiopian official, a Roman centurion, Greek philosophers, a purple merchant, a jailer — the gospel keeps crossing lines the church did not intend to cross. The council of Acts 15 finally says so out loud.

THREADS THROUGH THE BOOK

Key themes, continued

WHAT LUKE KEEPS INSISTING ON

Prayer before every turning point

The upper room, the choosing of the seven, Antioch's sending, Peter's rooftop, a beach at Miletus: decisions in Acts are made on the knees. Prayer is the book's recurring hinge.

Suffering is normal, not exceptional

Flogging, stoning, prison, shipwreck and riots accompany the mission from chapter four onward — "we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom." Persecution consistently spreads the gospel rather than stopping it.

Community and generosity

The church shares meals, homes and property; nobody is in need; famine relief crosses ethnic lines. Luke treats open hands as evidence of a Spirit-filled church.

Reasoning from the Scriptures

Peter, Stephen, Paul and Apollos all argue from the text: this had to happen, and it is written. The Bereans model the response — eager listening plus daily examination.

God's sovereignty over opposition

Councils, kings, mobs, courts and storms all fail to stop the mission, and several of them accidentally advance it. The last word of the book is the point: unhindered.

**Day 01**

Wait for the promise

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

Read today: Acts 1:1–11

SYNOPSIS

Luke opens his second volume where the first ended: the risen Jesus, alive over forty days, giving orders to the men who will carry his name. He tells them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the Spirit, and answers their question about timetables with a commission instead. Then he is taken up, and two men in white ask why they are still staring at the sky.

ASK

Where am I asking God for a timetable when he has already given me an assignment?

PRAY

Father, I have spent energy asking when instead of asking who. Make me a witness where I already stand, and give me the patience to wait for your Spirit rather than my own momentum.

DO

Write down the name of one person in your Jerusalem — the place you already live and work — and pray for them by name today.

**Day 02**

The room where they prayed

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

Acts 1:14

Read today: Acts 1:12–26

SYNOPSIS

About a hundred and twenty people gather in an upstairs room and do the only thing available to them: pray, constantly, together. Luke names them — the eleven, the women, Mary, the brothers of Jesus — because this is a family before it is a movement. Peter then leads them to replace Judas, reasoning from Scripture and choosing a witness of the resurrection.

ASK

Who is in the room when I decide things — and do we pray before we plan?

PRAY

Lord, I make too many decisions alone and too few on my knees. Put praying people around me, and teach me to bring my choices to you before I bring them to anyone else.

DO

Text one person today and ask them to pray with you about a decision you are facing this week.

**Day 03****Pentecost**

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:4

Read today: Acts 2:1–13

SYNOPSIS

Wind, fire, and languages: the Spirit arrives with signs anyone in the street could see and hear. Jews from every nation under heaven each hear the wonders of God in their own tongue, and the crowd is split between amazement and mockery. What Babel scattered, Pentecost begins to gather — and the first gift of the Spirit here is public, understandable speech.

ASK

Am I asking the Spirit for comfort, or for courage to be understood?

PRAY

Holy Spirit, you did not come to make me comfortable but to make me a witness. Fill me today, and loosen my speech so that someone hears the wonders of God in words they can actually understand.

DO

Say one true sentence about God out loud to someone who does not share your faith.



DAYS 1–12 · ACTS 1–7 · JERUSALEM

Day 04**Peter's first sermon**

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38

Read today: Acts 2:14–41

SYNOPSIS

Peter preaches Joel, David, and Jesus — crucified by your hands, raised by God, now both Lord and Messiah. The word lands like a verdict: they are cut to the heart and ask what they should do. His answer is repentance and baptism for forgiveness, with the promise of the Spirit; three thousand accept the message that day.

ASK

When was the last time truth cut me to the heart — and what did I do next?

PRAY

God, keep my heart soft enough to be cut by your word. Where I have heard something true and done nothing about it, give me the honesty to name it and the courage to obey today.

DO

Reread the last thing you know God asked of you and take the first concrete step on it today.



DAYS 1–12 · ACTS 1–7 · JERUSALEM

Day 05

Life together

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:42

Read today: Acts 2:42–47

SYNOPSIS

Four devotions describe the new church: teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer. They hold property loosely, meet daily in the temple courts and in homes, and eat with glad and sincere hearts. Awe fills the city and the Lord adds to their number daily — this is the church's baseline, not its honeymoon.

ASK

Which of the four devotions is thinnest in my week?

PRAY

Lord, I want a devoted life, not a busy one. Show me the devotion I have let go thin, and give me the joy of your people around a real table this week.

DO

Invite someone to eat a meal with you in your home this week — and actually set the date.

**Day 06**

Silver and gold I do not have

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.”

Acts 3:6

Read today: Acts 3

SYNOPSIS

At the temple gate a man lame from birth asks for money and receives his legs instead. He goes in walking and leaping and praising God, and the crowd that gathers gets a second sermon: you handed over the author of life, but God raised him — so repent, that times of refreshing may come. The miracle is a doorway to the message, and Peter names the power carefully: not us, but Jesus.

ASK

What do I have that God could use, instead of what I wish I had?

PRAY

Father, I keep waiting to be more impressive before I am useful. Take what I actually have today — my time, my words, my hands — and use it in the name of Jesus.

DO

Give away something you do have today: an hour, a skill, a meal, a ride.

**Day 07**

We cannot help speaking

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

Acts 4:20

Read today: Acts 4:1–22

SYNOPSIS

The authorities arrest Peter and John, and the sight of unschooled fishermen preaching Christ crucified astonishes the Sanhedrin — they recognize that these men had been with Jesus. Ordered to stop speaking in that name, the apostles refuse. The healed man standing right there makes the council's position impossible.

ASK

What have I seen and heard that I have gone quiet about?

PRAY

Jesus, I have been quiet where I should have been clear. Remind me today of what you have actually done in my life, and make it impossible for me to keep it to myself.

DO

Tell one person a specific thing God has done in your life in the last year.

**Day 08**

Boldness and open hands

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness.”

Acts 4:29

Read today: Acts 4:23–37

SYNOPSIS

Released from custody, the church prays — and does not ask for safety. They ask for boldness, and the place is shaken. Then Luke shows what filled-with-the-Spirit looks like in practice: one heart and mind, no one in need, and a man named Barnabas selling a field to fund it. Power and generosity arrive together.

ASK

If God answered exactly what I prayed this week, would the church be bolder or just more comfortable?

PRAY

Lord, my prayers have been mostly about safety. Teach me to ask for boldness instead, and make me generous enough that someone's need is met through my hands.

DO

Change one prayer request this week from “keep me safe” to “make me bold,” and pray it daily.

**Day 09**

Ananias and Sapphira

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“You have not lied just to human beings but to God.”

Acts 5:4

Read today: Acts 5:1–16

SYNOPSIS

A couple sells property, keeps part of the money, and presents the gift as though it were everything. Peter names the sin as lying to the Holy Spirit, not stinginess, and both fall dead. Great fear comes on the church — and, strangely, the church keeps growing, with people healed in the streets. Holiness and mercy stand side by side in Acts.

ASK

Where am I curating an image of generosity or devotion that isn't true?

PRAY

God, you see what I actually give and actually pray. Strip the performance out of my devotion, and let what people see in me be genuinely what is there.

DO

Name one place where your public image outruns your private practice — and close the gap today.

**Day 10**

Obey God rather than men

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“We must obey God rather than human beings!”

Acts 5:29

Read today: Acts 5:17–42

SYNOPSIS

An angel opens the jail overnight and the apostles are found back at the temple teaching by morning. Hauled in again, they answer plainly. Gamaliel's cool advice — if it is from God you cannot stop it — buys them their lives, and they are flogged and released, rejoicing that they were counted worthy, and go right back to teaching daily.

ASK

What would I keep doing tomorrow if it cost me something today?

PRAY

Father, my obedience has rarely cost me anything. When it does, hold me steady, and let me count it joy to be counted worthy of the name of Jesus.

DO

Do the one obedient thing you have been avoiding because of what people will think.

**Day 11**

The seven

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly.

Acts 6:7

Read today: Acts 6

SYNOPSIS

Growth creates a complaint: Greek-speaking widows are being overlooked in the daily distribution. The apostles refuse to abandon prayer and the word, and the church chooses seven men full of the Spirit and wisdom to serve — and the word spreads all the more. One of them, Stephen, meets opposition that cannot beat him in argument, so it produces false witnesses instead.

ASK

What practical need in my church am I waiting for someone else to notice?

PRAY

Lord, make me useful in ordinary ways. Show me the overlooked person or unmet need in front of me, and let me serve it without needing credit for it.

DO

Volunteer for one practical, unglamorous need in your church this week.

**Day 12**

Stephen's speech

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Look, I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

Acts 7:56

Read today: Acts 7

SYNOPSIS

Stephen answers the charge with the whole story of Israel and shows a pattern: God keeps sending deliverers, and his people keep resisting them. He ends with the Righteous One they betrayed and murdered, and they stone him for it. Dying, he sees Jesus standing at God's right hand and prays for his killers' forgiveness — and a young man named Saul is watching the coats.

ASK

Is there a place where I am resisting God while defending my own tradition?

PRAY

Jesus, I do not want to defend my habits and call it faithfulness. Show me where I am resisting you, and give me Stephen's kind of heart toward the people who oppose me.

DO

Pray by name for someone who has opposed or hurt you — and ask God to forgive them.



DONE

DAYS 13–20 · ACTS 8–12 · JUDEA & SAMARIA

Day 13

Scattered preachers

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went.

Acts 8:4

Read today: Acts 8:1–25

SYNOPSIS

Persecution scatters the church out of Jerusalem, and everywhere they go they preach — a strategy that was nobody's plan but God's. Philip takes the gospel to Samaria, where even a famous sorcerer believes and is baptized. When Simon tries to buy the Spirit's power, Peter tells him his heart is not right and calls him to repent.

ASK

When my plans get disrupted, do I still preach where I land?

PRAY

Father, my plans came apart and I called it a setback. Teach me to see the place I have landed as an assignment, and give me something to say there.

DO

Tell someone in your current circumstances — job, class, waiting room — one thing about Jesus.

**Day 14**

The Ethiopian on the desert road

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?”

Acts 8:36

Read today: Acts 8:26–40

SYNOPSIS

An angel sends Philip to a desert road where a high official of Ethiopia is reading Isaiah 53 aloud and cannot make sense of it. Philip runs alongside the chariot, asks a question, and beginning with that passage tells him the good news about Jesus. At the first water the man asks what stands in the way of his being baptized, and Philip baptizes him on the spot.

ASK

Who is already reading, asking, or searching within my reach this week?

PRAY

Lord, lead me to the person already asking questions, and give me the courage to start the conversation. Make me quick to obey a nudge I cannot fully explain.

DO

Ask one searching friend a real question about what they believe — then listen.

**Day 15**

Saul on the Damascus road

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

Acts 9:4

Read today: Acts 9:1–19

SYNOPSIS

Breathing out murderous threats, Saul is knocked flat by a light and a voice. Blind and led by the hand into Damascus, he fasts three days until a reluctant disciple named Ananias comes, calls him brother, and tells him to get up and be baptized, washing his sins away. Scales fall from his eyes; the persecutor becomes the chosen instrument.

ASK

Is there someone I have written off whom God may be about to send?

PRAY

God, I have decided in advance who is too far gone. Forgive me, and give me Ananias' willingness to go to the person I would rather avoid.

DO

Reach out to the person you have written off — a message, a call, an invitation.

**Day 16**

Preaching, plotting, and a basket

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.

Acts 9:27

Read today: Acts 9:20–43

SYNOPSIS

Saul immediately preaches that Jesus is the Son of God, and the plots begin; his friends lower him over the city wall in a basket. Barnabas vouches for him in Jerusalem when no one else will. Meanwhile Peter travels through Lydda and Joppa, healing Aeneas and raising Tabitha, and the church enjoys a season of peace and growth.

ASK

Whose reputation could I vouch for the way Barnabas did?

PRAY

Father, make me the kind of person who takes a risk on someone else's behalf. Show me who needs an advocate this week, and let me speak up for them.

DO

Introduce or recommend someone publicly — vouch for a person who needs a door opened.

**Day 17**

Cornelius

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism.”

Acts 10:34

Read today: Acts 10

SYNOPSIS

A Roman centurion who prays and gives is told by an angel to send for Peter, while Peter on a rooftop sees a sheet of unclean animals and hears God say not to call impure what he has made clean. The two men meet, and Peter's first words are the point: God shows no favoritism. While he is still speaking the Spirit falls on the Gentiles, and he orders them baptized.

ASK

What kind of person do I quietly assume is beyond the gospel's reach?

PRAY

Lord, tear down the categories I have built. Show me the favoritism hiding in my assumptions, and send me to someone I would never have chosen.

DO

Start a conversation today with someone outside your usual circle.



DAYS 13–20 · ACTS 8–12 · JUDEA & SAMARIA

Day 18**Who was I to hinder God?**

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“So if God gave them the same gift he gave us... who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?”

Acts 11:17

Read today: Acts 11:1–18

SYNOPSIS

Criticized in Jerusalem for eating with Gentiles, Peter tells the story precisely as it happened, step by step. His defense is not clever theology but testimony: God gave them the same gift, so who was I to stand in his way? The objection collapses into praise — God has granted repentance unto life even to the Gentiles.

ASK

Where might I be standing in God's way while believing I'm defending him?

PRAY

Father, I would rather be corrected than be an obstacle. Where my convictions have become barriers to people you are calling, open my eyes and change my mind.

DO

Tell the story of something God did — plainly, without argument — to someone who doubts it.

**Day 19**

The church at Antioch

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

Acts 11:26

Read today: Acts 11:19–30

SYNOPSIS

Unnamed believers from Cyprus and Cyrene begin telling Greeks about the Lord Jesus in Antioch, and a great number believe. Barnabas is sent, sees the grace of God, encourages them, then goes to find Saul and brings him back for a year of teaching. Here disciples are first called Christians, and here the church funds famine relief for Judea.

ASK

Who am I going to go find and bring into the work, as Barnabas did?

PRAY

Lord, thank you for the people who came looking for me. Make me one of them for someone else — patient enough to find them and generous enough to hand them the work.

DO

Invite one person to serve alongside you in something you are already doing.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAY 19

Antioch on the Orontes



Antioch sat on the Orontes River about 300 miles north of Jerusalem, with its port at Seleucia — the launching point for the first missionary journey (Acts 13:4).

Antioch was the third city of the Roman empire after Rome and Alexandria — perhaps half a million people, Greek-speaking, famously cosmopolitan and famously immoral, with a large Jewish population and a Roman garrison. That mix is exactly why the gospel spread there so fast: a diverse city meant a diverse church.

In Acts it becomes the sending church. Believers here are first called **Christians** (11:26); prophets and teachers here fast, pray, and send Barnabas and Saul out (13:1–3); every journey begins and reports back here (14:26–28; 18:22). It is also where the circumcision controversy erupts (15:1–2) and where Peter is later confronted by Paul (Galatians 2:11–14).

NO LETTER — BUT READ ALONGSIDE

Scripture preserves no epistle to Antioch. Read **Galatians** with these chapters instead: it is written to the churches planted on the journey Antioch sent out, and it settles the very question Antioch raised — whether Gentiles must become Jews to belong to Christ.

**Day 20**

Chains, an angel, and a proud king

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

But the word of God continued to spread and flourish.

Acts 12:24

Read today: Acts 12

SYNOPSIS

Herod kills James with the sword and arrests Peter, who sleeps between two soldiers the night before his trial while the church prays. An angel walks him out through gates that open by themselves, and the praying church can hardly believe the answer standing at the door. Herod, hailed as a god, is struck down — but the word of God keeps spreading.

ASK

Am I praying for something I would be shocked to see answered?

PRAY

God, I have prayed for things I do not expect you to do. Forgive my small expectations, and let me be the one at the door who believes it when you answer.

DO

Write down one bold, specific request and pray it every day for the rest of this guide.



DAYS 21–34 · ACTS 13–20 · TO THE NATIONS

Day 21**Sent out — Cyprus**

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”

Acts 13:2

Read today: Acts 13:1–12

SYNOPSIS

While the Antioch leaders worship and fast, the Spirit says: set apart Barnabas and Saul. They sail for Cyprus and work across the island to Paphos, where the Roman proconsul wants to hear the word and a sorcerer tries to stop him. Paul — Luke changes his name here — confronts the man, and the proconsul believes.

ASK

Do I make room in worship for God to redirect my plans?

PRAY

Father, I come to worship with my calendar already decided. Interrupt me. Speak while I am praying, and give me the courage to go where you send me.

DO

Fast one meal today and use the time to ask God where he is sending you.

**Day 22**

The sermon at Pisidian Antioch

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Through him everyone who believes is set free from every sin, a justification you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses.”

Acts 13:39

Read today: Acts 13:13–52

SYNOPSIS

Invited to speak in the synagogue, Paul retells Israel's story and arrives at Jesus: raised from the dead, offering forgiveness and a justification the law could not provide. The whole city turns out the next Sabbath, jealousy flares, and Paul announces the turn that defines his ministry — we now turn to the Gentiles. The believers are filled with joy even as the missionaries are run out of town.

ASK

Can I keep joy when the response to my witness is rejection?

PRAY

Jesus, I let other people's reactions set my mood. Anchor my joy in what you have done rather than in how my words are received today.

DO

Speak up about your faith once today without measuring the response afterward.

**Day 23**

Iconium, Lystra, Derbe

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.”

Acts 14:22

Read today: Acts 14

SYNOPSIS

In Iconium they preach until the city divides; in Lystra a healing convinces the crowd they are gods, and Paul barely talks them out of sacrifice before the same crowd stones him and leaves him for dead. He gets up and goes back into the cities he was driven from, strengthening the disciples, appointing elders, and sailing home to report everything God had done.

ASK

What hardship have I treated as evidence that I heard God wrong?

PRAY

Lord, I have read every difficulty as a closed door. Teach me the difference between opposition and misdirection, and give me the courage to go back where I was driven out.

DO

Return to a good thing you quit when it got hard — one email, one call, one visit.



DONE

DAYS 21–34 · ACTS 13–20 · TO THE NATIONS

Day 24

The Jerusalem council

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“We should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.”

Acts 15:19

Read today: Acts 15:1–21

SYNOPSIS

Some insist Gentiles must be circumcised to be saved, and the church convenes to decide. Peter recalls Cornelius, Paul and Barnabas report the signs among the Gentiles, and James rules from Amos that God is taking a people from the nations for himself. The verdict is mercy: do not make it difficult for those turning to God.

ASK

Am I adding requirements to the gospel that God has not added?

PRAY

Father, keep the gospel unencumbered in my mouth. Where I have made your grace harder to reach than you made it, correct me from your word.

DO

Identify one preference you have treated as a requirement — and stop imposing it.

**Day 25**

A letter and a hard parting

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

They were glad for its encouraging message.

Acts 15:31

Read today: Acts 15:22–41

SYNOPSIS

The council sends a letter with chosen men, and the church at Antioch is glad for its encouraging message. Then Paul and Barnabas disagree sharply over taking Mark, and they part — Barnabas to Cyprus with Mark, Paul to Syria and Cilicia with Silas. Luke does not resolve who was right; he notes only that two teams went out instead of one.

ASK

Is there a fractured relationship in ministry I have let stay fractured?

PRAY

God, I have let distance settle where there should be reconciliation. Give me the humility to make the first move and the grace to keep working while it heals.

DO

Send one message today toward a relationship you have allowed to go cold.

**Day 26**

Philippi — Lydia's house

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Come over to Macedonia and help us.”

Acts 16:9

Read today: Acts 16:1–15

SYNOPSIS

Paul takes Timothy along, is prevented by the Spirit from going where he intended, and sees a man of Macedonia in a vision. So the gospel crosses into Europe. In Philippi they find no synagogue, only a prayer meeting by the river, where the Lord opens the heart of a merchant named Lydia — and she and her household are baptized and open their home.

ASK

Where is God closing a door so that I will look for the one he has opened?

PRAY

Lord, thank you for the doors you have closed. Give me eyes for the opening I have been too disappointed to notice, and a home as open as Lydia's.

DO

Offer your home or table to someone this week — hospitality as mission.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 26–27

Philippi



Philippi lay on the Via Egnatia in eastern Macedonia, a day's walk inland from its port at Neapolis — the first city of Europe to hear the gospel (Acts 16:12).

Philippi was a Roman colony, settled with veterans and proud of it: Latin-speaking, governed by Roman law, populated by citizens who considered themselves Rome abroad. That explains the jailer, the magistrates, the beating of uncondemned Roman citizens — and why Paul later writes to this church about a citizenship in heaven.

The church begins with three unlikely members: a wealthy businesswoman, an exploited slave girl, and a jailer's household — rich and poor, Greek and Roman, in one room. Years later this is the church that keeps sending Paul money in prison and is the one he thanks most warmly.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 26–27

Philippi — the letter

Philippians — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
1	Partnership in the gospel and joy in chains: whether by life or death, Christ will be exalted — “to live is Christ and to die is gain.”
2	The call to one mind, and the hymn of Christ who emptied himself to a cross and was exalted; Timothy and Epaphroditus as living examples.
3	Everything counted as loss for the sake of knowing Christ; a warning against confidence in the flesh; pressing on toward the goal.
4	Rejoice, don't be anxious, pray — the peace that guards hearts; contentment in every circumstance; thanks for their gift.

Written from prison, roughly a decade after Acts 16. Read it with Days 26–27.

**Day 27**

Songs at midnight

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

Acts 16:25

Read today: Acts 16:16–40

SYNOPSIS

Paul frees a slave girl from a spirit her owners profited from, and the profit motive puts him in the stocks. At midnight he and Silas are singing when an earthquake opens every door — and instead of escaping they stop a suicide and preach to the jailer, who is baptized that same hour with all his household. In the morning Paul quietly insists Rome apologize.

ASK

What would my fellow prisoners hear from me at midnight?

PRAY

Father, my worship is easy in daylight. Put a song in me at midnight, and let the people trapped near me hear something in my voice that makes them ask about you.

DO

Sing or pray aloud in the middle of your hardest hour today.

**Day 28**

Thessalonica and Berea

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

They received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 17:11

Read today: Acts 17:1–15

SYNOPSIS

In Thessalonica Paul reasons from the Scriptures for three Sabbaths that the Messiah had to suffer and rise, and a mob accuses the believers of turning the world upside down. Sent on by night to Berea, they meet people of more noble character who receive the message eagerly and examine the Scriptures daily. Many believe — until agitators arrive from Thessalonica.

ASK

Do I examine what I'm taught daily, or just enjoy what I already agree with?

PRAY

Lord, make me a Berean: eager and rigorous at once. Give me an appetite for your word and the honesty to change my mind when the text says something I did not expect.

DO

Look up every reference in a sermon or teaching you heard recently and read them in context.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAY 28

Thessalonica



Thessalonica was the capital of Macedonia and its best harbor, sitting astride the Via Egnatia — mail, trade and rumor all moved through it (Acts 17:1).

A free city of perhaps 100,000 with its own assembly, Thessalonica was jealous of Rome's favor — which is why “there is another king, Jesus” was a dangerous sentence there, and why the accusation of treason stuck so fast. Its position on the highway also made it a natural amplifier: Paul later says the word rang out from them across Macedonia and Achaia.

Paul had only weeks there, so the two letters do the discipling he could not finish in person: they are the New Testament's clearest instruction on the return of Christ, written to people converted in a hurry and persecuted immediately.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAY 28

Thessalonica — the letters

1 Thessalonians — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
1	Faith, love and hope commended; they turned from idols to serve the living God and wait for his Son.
2	Paul's manner among them — gentle as a nursing mother, urging as a father, never seeking praise or profit.
3	Timothy's report brings relief; prayer that their love would increase and their hearts be blameless.
4	Sexual purity, quiet work, and the dead in Christ: the Lord will come down, and we will be with him forever.
5	The day comes like a thief — stay awake and sober; rapid-fire commands for church life; rejoice, pray, give thanks.

2 Thessalonians — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
1	Growing faith under persecution; God's just judgment when Christ is revealed.
2	The day has not already come: the rebellion and the man of lawlessness must appear first — stand firm in the teaching.
3	Prayer for the word to spread; a warning against idleness — “if anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.”

Both written from Corinth within months of Acts 17. Read them with Day 28.

**Day 29**

Athens and the Areopagus

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“For in him we live and move and have our being.”

Acts 17:28

Read today: Acts 17:16–34

SYNOPSIS

Distressed by a city full of idols, Paul debates in the marketplace and is invited to explain himself before the Areopagus. He starts where they are — your altar to an unknown god, your own poets — and moves to the God who made everything, needs nothing, and is not far from any of us. Then he names repentance, judgment, and a man raised from the dead. Some sneer, some want more, some believe.

ASK

Can I begin an explanation of the gospel with what my listener already believes?

PRAY

God, help me listen before I answer. Give me Paul's respect for the person in front of me and his refusal to leave out the resurrection.

DO

Ask a non-Christian friend what they already believe about God — and start there next time.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAY 29

Athens



Athens, some fifty miles from Corinth, was no longer a political power but still the intellectual capital of the Greek world (Acts 17:16).

By Paul's day Athens lived on its past: the Parthenon and the temples crowded the Acropolis, Stoics and Epicureans argued in the colonnades, and the Areopagus — a council named for the hill of Ares — still adjudicated matters of religion and morals. The city that killed Socrates for introducing strange gods now hears about a resurrected one.

Athens is the one major city where Luke records no church founded — only individuals, including a council member named Dionysius. It stands in the book as the model of how to speak to a sophisticated, religiously plural audience, and as a reminder that a faithful sermon is not always a fruitful one.

NO LETTER — BUT READ ALONGSIDE

There is no epistle to Athens. Read **Romans 1:18–25** and **1 Corinthians 1:18–25** beside this sermon: the same argument about idolatry and the same insistence that the cross will look like foolishness to the wise.

**Day 30**

Eighteen months in Corinth

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you.”

Acts 18:9–10

Read today: Acts 18:1–17

SYNOPSIS

Paul arrives alone, finds Aquila and Priscilla, and works leather beside them while reasoning in the synagogue every Sabbath. When opposition turns abusive he turns to the Gentiles — and the synagogue leader himself believes with his whole household. Then the Lord speaks in a vision: keep on speaking, I have many people in this city. He stays a year and a half.

ASK

What has fear stopped me from saying — and would God say “keep speaking” to me?

PRAY

Jesus, fear has edited my sentences. Say to me what you said to Paul, and give me the stamina to stay somewhere long enough to see fruit.

DO

Say the thing fear has kept you from saying — today, to the person it concerns.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 30–31

Corinth



Corinth controlled the isthmus between two seas, with harbors on both sides — cargo, sailors and money crossed here rather than sailing around the Peloponnese (Acts 18:1).

Refounded by Rome in 44 BC after a century of ruin, Corinth was new money and no aristocracy: freedmen, traders, athletes for the Isthmian games, and a reputation for vice so fixed that “to Corinthianize” meant to live immorally. The temple of Aphrodite loomed over the city on the Acrocorinth.

A church of that city inherited its problems: status competition, lawsuits, sexual sin, and disorder at the table. That is why the Corinthian letters are the New Testament's most practical — they are pastoral triage for a gifted, messy, urban congregation.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 30–31

Corinth — the first letter

1 Corinthians — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
1–4	Divisions over leaders answered by the foolishness of the cross and the nature of true wisdom; ministers are servants, not celebrities.
5–6	Church discipline, lawsuits between believers, and sexual immorality — your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.
7	Marriage, singleness, and staying faithful where you are called.
8–10	Food offered to idols: rights surrendered for love, Paul's own example, and Israel's warnings.
11	Worship order and the Lord's Supper taken without discerning the body.
12–14	Spiritual gifts in one body, the excellence of love, and orderly, intelligible worship.
15	The resurrection: the gospel Paul received, the risen Christ, and the bodies we will be raised in.
16	The collection, travel plans, and closing greetings.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 30–31

Corinth — the second letter

2 Corinthians — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
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1–2	Comfort in affliction; why Paul changed his travel plans; forgiving the disciplined man.
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3–5	Ministers of a new covenant; treasure in clay jars; the ministry of reconciliation and Christ made sin for us.
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6–7	Open hearts, unequal partnerships, and godly grief that leads to repentance.
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8–9	The Macedonians' generosity, the collection for Jerusalem, and the cheerful giver.
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10–13	Paul defends his apostleship against “super-apostles,” boasts only in weakness, and hears: my power is made perfect in weakness.
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1 Corinthians was written from Ephesus (Acts 19), 2 Corinthians from Macedonia soon after. Read them with Days 30–33.

**Day 31**

Apollos and the fuller explanation

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

They invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

Acts 18:26

Read today: Acts 18:18–28

SYNOPSIS

Paul sails for Antioch by way of Ephesus, and Luke turns to a gifted Alexandrian named Apollos who teaches accurately about Jesus but knows only the baptism of John. Priscilla and Aquila take him aside privately and explain the way of God more adequately — and he becomes a powerful help to the believers in Achaia. Correction here is quiet, personal, and generous.

ASK

When I need to correct someone, do I do it privately and for their strengthening?

PRAY

Father, make my corrections private, kind, and useful. And make me easy to correct — grateful for anyone who explains your way to me more adequately.

DO

Have one private, gracious conversation you have been putting off — or invite correction yourself.

**Day 32**

Ephesus — two years in the hall

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

Acts 19:20

Read today: Acts 19:1–22

SYNOPSIS

Paul finds disciples who have not even heard of the Holy Spirit; they are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus and receive him. For three months he reasons in the synagogue, then for two years daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus, until all Asia has heard. Miracles, a humiliating failure by imposters, and a public bonfire of expensive occult books follow.

ASK

What would I have to burn for my repentance to be as public as theirs?

PRAY

Lord, my repentance is often private and cheap. Show me what needs to go, and give me the resolve to get rid of it even if it costs me something.

DO

Delete, throw out, or cancel one thing today that competes with Christ in your life.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 32–33

Ephesus



Ephesus was the gateway to the province of Asia — a harbor city at the end of the caravan roads inland, thirty miles from Miletus (Acts 19:1; 20:17).

With perhaps a quarter of a million people, Ephesus held the temple of Artemis — one of the seven wonders, four times the size of the Parthenon — plus a theater seating 24,000 and a thriving trade in silver shrines and magical texts. Religion here was the economy, which is exactly why the gospel provoked a riot rather than a debate.

Paul stayed longer here than anywhere else — about three years — and the city became a hub: Timothy served here, John is associated with it, and Revelation addresses it first. The letter to the Ephesians has no local problems in view at all, which is why it reads like the fullest statement of what the church is.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAYS 32–33

Ephesus — the letter

Ephesians — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
1	Chosen, redeemed, sealed — a doxology of every spiritual blessing in Christ, and prayer for eyes to see his power.
2	Dead in sin, made alive by grace through faith; Jew and Gentile made one new humanity, the dividing wall destroyed.
3	The mystery revealed and entrusted to Paul; prayer to know the love that surpasses knowledge.
4	One body, gifts given to equip the saints, and the old self put off for truthful, kind, forgiving speech.
5	Walk in love and light, not in the darkness of the surrounding city; be filled with the Spirit; husbands and wives as Christ and the church.
6	Children, parents, slaves and masters; then the armor of God, because the real fight is not against flesh and blood.

Written from prison, likely circulated to the churches of Asia. Read it with Days 32–34.

**Day 33**

Great is Artemis

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has... convinced great numbers of people.”

Acts 19:26

Read today: Acts 19:23–41

SYNOPSIS

A silversmith named Demetrius does the math: this gospel is bad for the shrine business, and dresses his profit motive up as devotion to the goddess. The city fills with confusion, two of Paul's companions are dragged into the theater, and for two hours the crowd shouts one slogan until a city official disperses them. Luke lets us see how often religious outrage is really about money.

ASK

Where does following Jesus threaten my income or my comfort — and what do I do then?

PRAY

God, I do not want my convictions decided by my finances. Give me clear eyes about my own motives and courage where obedience will cost me money.

DO

Name one financial decision you would make differently if Jesus were Lord of it — then make it.

**Day 34**

Farewell at Miletus

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Acts 20:35

Read today: Acts 20

SYNOPSIS

In Troas Paul preaches until midnight, a young man falls from a third-story window, and Luke reports the death and the raising almost in passing. Then Paul calls the Ephesian elders to Miletus for his only recorded address to church leaders: I did not shrink from declaring the whole will of God; keep watch over the flock. They kneel on the beach, pray, and weep.

ASK

If I handed off my work tomorrow, what would I be able to say I did not shrink from?

PRAY

Father, let me leave nothing important unsaid. Give me courage to declare your whole will and tenderness toward the people you have put in my care.

DO

Say the encouraging or hard thing you would want said if you were leaving tomorrow.

**Day 35**

Arrested in the temple

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Acts 21:13

Read today: Acts 21

SYNOPSIS

Everywhere he stops, friends and prophets warn Paul what waits in Jerusalem, and he answers that he is ready even to die for the name. He arrives, reports what God has done among the Gentiles, and takes James' advice to join a purification rite — which is where a rumor about defiling the temple ignites a riot. Roman soldiers pull him from a crowd trying to kill him.

ASK

What am I actually ready to lose for the name of Jesus?

PRAY

Jesus, I say your name is worth everything; test that in me gently and make it true. Where I am holding something back, loosen my grip today.

DO

Write down what you are least willing to lose — and pray it into God's hands.

**Day 36**

His story, three times told

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.”

Acts 22:16

Read today: Acts 22

SYNOPSIS

Paul tells the crowd his own story in their own language: raised a strict Pharisee, a persecutor of this Way, stopped by a light and a voice, then told by Ananias to get up and be baptized, washing his sins away. The crowd listens until he mentions the Gentiles. Stretched out for flogging, he mentions his Roman citizenship and the procedure stops.

ASK

Can I tell my own story in three minutes, in the language of the person listening?

PRAY

Lord, thank you for the day my sins were washed away. Give me words for that story that a stranger could follow, and courage to tell it when it is unwelcome.

DO

Write your testimony in three short paragraphs: before, what changed, since.

**Day 37**

Take courage

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome.”

Acts 23:11

Read today: Acts 23

SYNOPSIS

Before the Sanhedrin Paul divides Pharisee from Sadducee with one sentence about the resurrection, and the meeting collapses into violence. That night the Lord stands near him with a promise of Rome. Then forty men swear to kill him, Paul's nephew overhears the plot, and a Roman commander moves him to Caesarea by night — God's promise and a teenager's errand in the same rescue.

ASK

Where do I need to hear “take courage” before the next step?

PRAY

Father, stand near me tonight. Speak courage into the specific thing I am dreading, and let me trust that your promise does not depend on my circumstances improving.

DO

Take the next step on the thing you are dreading — one phone call, one appointment, today.

**Day 38**

Two years, two governors

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“I appeal to Caesar!”

Acts 25:11

Read today: Acts 24–25

SYNOPSIS

Before Felix, Paul answers the charges plainly and then speaks about righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come — and Felix, afraid, leaves him in custody for two years hoping for a bribe. Festus inherits the case, the leaders press for a change of venue, and Paul cuts the delay short by appealing to Caesar. Festus admits he has nothing to write.

ASK

Am I treating a season of waiting as wasted, or as the way forward?

PRAY

God, this delay does not feel like providence. Give me Paul's steadiness in a holding cell, and use these months for something I cannot see yet.

DO

Choose one thing to do faithfully during your current waiting season — and start it today.

**Day 39**

Before Agrippa

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

“Short time or long, I pray to God that not only you but all who are listening to me today may become what I am, except for these chains.”

Acts 26:29

Read today: Acts 26

SYNOPSIS

Given a hearing before a king, Paul tells his story a third time and frames the gospel as the hope of Israel: the prophets and Moses said the Messiah would suffer and rise, and light would go to the Gentiles. Festus calls him insane; Agrippa deflects with a joke; Paul says he wishes them all as he is, minus the chains. Everyone agrees he has done nothing deserving death.

ASK

Do I speak to the powerful with the same clarity I use with friends?

PRAY

Lord, remove the flattery from my speech. Whether I am with a friend or someone I am afraid of, let me say the same true thing about Jesus.

DO

Say something honest about your faith to someone whose approval you want.

**Day 40**

Shipwreck, and a rented house

SCRIPTURE FOR TODAY

He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ — with all boldness and without hindrance!

Acts 28:31

Read today: Acts 27–28

SYNOPSIS

The voyage west goes badly: Paul's advice is ignored, a northeaster drives the ship for two weeks, and an angel promises all 276 aboard will survive. They run aground at Malta, and finally reach Italy, where brothers walk out to meet him and he thanks God and is encouraged. In Rome, under guard in a rented house, he spends two years welcoming everyone who comes — boldly and without hindrance. Luke never tells us how the trial went, because that was never the point.

ASK

Acts ends unfinished on purpose — what does the next chapter look like where I live?

PRAY

Father, you finished this book without an ending so that we would keep writing it. Make my house, my table, and my ordinary week a place where the kingdom is explained without hindrance.

DO

Decide the one thing you will keep doing after today — and tell someone you are doing it.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAY 40

Rome



Paul came ashore at Puteoli near Naples and walked the Appian Way north — met by believers at the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns (Acts 28:13–15).

Rome held around a million people: a capital of marble monuments and crowded tenements, with a large Jewish community and a church already thriving before Paul ever arrived — he wrote to it years earlier as a stranger. Under Nero, the same city would soon make martyrs of the people who walked out to greet him.

Acts ends here not with a verdict but with a scene: a prisoner in a rented house, receiving all comers, preaching without hindrance. The gospel that began in an upstairs room in Jerusalem is now being explained in the capital of the world — which is precisely the claim Luke set out to make.

CITY FEATURE · WITH DAY 40

Rome — the letter

Romans — chapter by chapter

Chapter	What it does
1	Not ashamed of the gospel: the righteousness of God revealed, and the wrath revealed against suppressed truth.
2	God's impartial judgment; the moral person and the religious person are equally accountable.
3	All have sinned — and are justified freely by grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus.
4	Abraham believed and it was credited to him as righteousness, before circumcision and before the law.
5	Peace with God, suffering that produces character, and the two Adams — one bringing death, one bringing life.
6	Baptized into his death and raised to walk in new life; no longer slaves to sin but to righteousness.
7	Released from the law; the honest war between wanting good and doing evil.
8	No condemnation; life in the Spirit, adoption, groaning creation, and nothing able to separate us from God's love.
9–11	Israel, election and mercy: a remnant, a hardening for a time, and grafted branches — God has not rejected his people.
12	Bodies as living sacrifices, renewed minds, gifts used in love, and blessing instead of revenge.
13	Submission to governing authorities, love as the fulfillment of the law, and putting on Christ.
14–15	The strong and the weak over food and days; accept one another as Christ accepted you; Paul's plans for Spain.
16	Greetings by name — a roll call of the ordinary people who were the Roman church.

Written from Corinth before Paul had ever visited Rome. Read it with Days 35–40.

DAY 40 AND AFTER

Keep writing the book

Luke stops mid-sentence, in a way — a prisoner in a rented house, teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ “with all boldness and without hindrance.” No verdict, no funeral, no epilogue. The account is left open because the next chapter belongs to the people who read it.

ACTS 28:31

“Boldly and without hindrance.”

Three ways to carry it forward

1. **One person.** Name someone and pray for them daily for the next forty days — the way Antioch prayed before it sent anyone anywhere.
2. **One letter.** Pick a city page you loved and read its letter straight through this week, a chapter a day.
3. **One habit.** Choose the single daily action from these forty days that changed the most, and keep doing it.

DAY 40 AND AFTER

Finish the forty

Forty days, checked

Fill in each day as you finish it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40

A CLOSING PRAYER

Father, you filled ordinary people with your Spirit and turned a scattered handful into a church that reached the capital of the world. Do it again — here, in this city, through people like us. Give us boldness where we have been quiet, generosity where we have been careful, and courage to keep telling what we have seen and heard, until the account you began in Acts is finished in glory.