



DEEPER

MONTHLY BIBLE READING

to THE LINK
CHURCH
LINKING PEOPLE TO CHRIST. LINKING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

FEBRUARY 2025

DAY 48

Numbers 3-4 • Acts 25

Scripture Reading

Festus: Puzzled by Paul

Acts 25:1-22

TODAY'S FOCUS

“They had some points of dispute with [Paul] about their own religion and about a dead man named Jesus who Paul claimed was alive. I was at a loss how to investigate”
Acts 25:19-20

Two years have passed since Paul came to the palace prison in Caesarea. Festus is now the governor instead of Felix. Felix thought he would be doing Paul's accusers a favor by leaving Paul in prison, but they want more. Two years is a long time to wait for a decision from the court. Two years is also a long time to hold on to anger, but Paul's accusers still want Paul to be killed. Festus is puzzled about how to proceed with investigating the charges and the claim that Jesus is alive. He realizes he has been asked to decide a religious question about Jewish customs and practices, so he asks Paul if he wants to stand trial at Jerusalem. Rather than return to Jerusalem, Paul, as a Roman citizen, makes an appeal for his case to be heard by the emperor, Caesar. Paul's demand for an audience with Caesar was not motivated by a desire for personal justice. Later, those who held him captive said that if he had not appealed to Caesar, he could have been set free (Acts 26:32). But Paul appealed to Caesar because the gospel had business in Rome. Paul would speak the claims of Christ before the greatest power structures of his day!

Few of us may have the opportunity to speak the gospel in the world's great halls of power. But it's good for us to remember that the gospel speaks to the culture of every country and the government of every nation. Christians do not need be embarrassed to speak of Christ and His claim on society. After all, everyone in government receives authority ultimately from Christ Himself.

Leading up to this, Paul says, “If I am guilty of anything deserving death, I do not refuse to die.” He is willing to die, but He has to be heard. He continues to follow the plan of God in order to be heard in Rome. The twists and turns of Paul's life are clarified by this truth: He is headed to Rome to testify about Jesus before the highest court in the world. Festus may be puzzled, but Paul is certain. Jesus is alive, and others need to know this good news.

Prayer

Master, Creator, make me a servant of your peace. Help me continue to pray and seek for your will to be done on earth, in me, as it is in heaven. In your name, O Lord, Amen.

NOTES

DAY 55

Numbers 17-18 • Psalms 29 • Mark 4

Scripture Reading

Who Is This?

Mark 4:35-41

TODAY'S FOCUS

“Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!” — Mark 4:41

While the chaos of a storm threatened the disciples, Jesus slept soundly on a cushion. The disciples were just starting to get to know Jesus, and they wanted him to help. They may have thought he could help with a bucket, but they did not expect him to quiet the overwhelming wind and waves. With a strong command Jesus overcame the death-threatening storm, rendering the tempest “completely calm.” This certainly relieved the disciples, but it also stunned them into trying to figure out who Jesus was.

Their vital question, “Who is this?” is also ours. We may have expectations for what we’d like Jesus to do and to be, but isn’t it better that we listen to what Jesus says and watch what he does in order to learn about him?

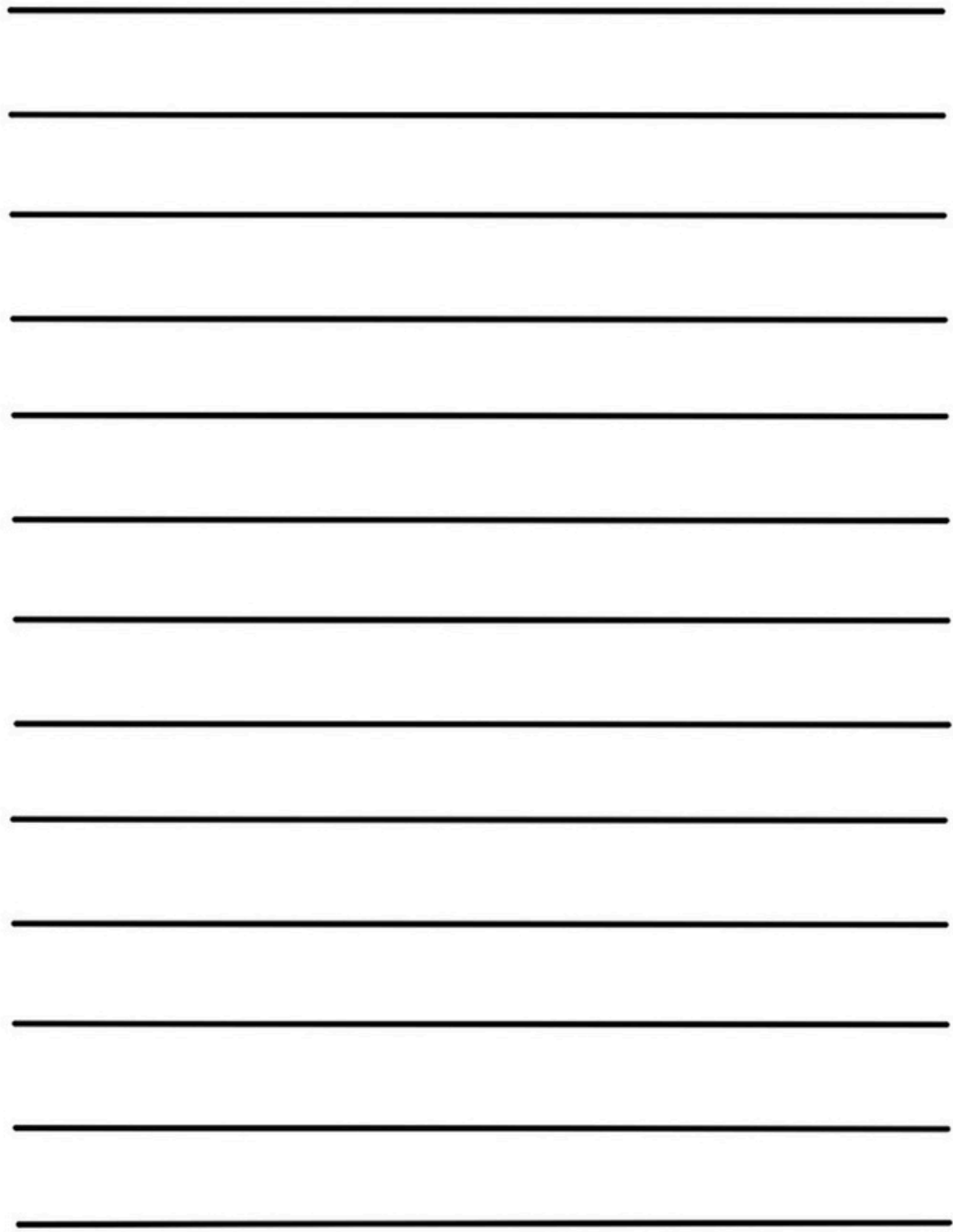
The sea and the wind are uncontrollable forces for us, but not for Jesus. And like Noah and his family (Genesis 6-9), the disciples survive the deadly water by the hand of God.

Do we realize how many aspects of life are beyond our control? Wouldn’t we like Jesus to help us deal with them? He is actually in complete control over them, and that could either scare us or comfort us. The more we get to know Jesus, the more his authority over all things should bring us comfort, because we also know that He loves us.

Prayer

*Dear God, I am learning just how amazing Jesus’ authority in this world is. May I learn more and more about Jesus’ authority over all things, and how He can and does save me.
Amen.*

NOTES



A sheet of white paper with 15 horizontal black lines, evenly spaced, serving as a template for writing.



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