

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY- Acts Chapter 17

Verse 24-27- In these verses Paul attempted to describe God to the Athenians. In the previous verse, he declared to them that they had admitted that they were worshipping a God that they did not know, so he proceeded to list the characteristics of God.

1. _____
(Genesis 1:1, ESV 1) (Jeremiah 32:17, ESV 737)
2. _____
(Isaiah 44:24, ESV 674) (Psalm 47:2, ESV 522)(2 Samuel 7:22, ESV 288)
3. _____
(1 Kings 8:26-27, ESV 318) (Jeremiah 23:23-24, ESV 727)(Psalm 139:7-10, ESV 580)
(Isaiah 57:15, ESV 688)
4. _____
(Psalm 50:9-12, ESV 524) (Numbers 23:19, ESV 146-147)
5. _____
(Psalm 33:6, ESV 512) (Genesis 1:20-25, ESV 1)
6. _____
(Genesis 1:27-28, ESV 1-2) (Genesis 5:1-2, ESV 4)
7. _____
(Psalm 8:4-6, ESV 497) (Genesis 1:28, ESV 2)
8. _____
(Job 14:1-5, ESV 469) (Psalm 139:16, ESV 580) (Ecclesiastes 3:1-2, ESV 617)
9. _____
(Deuteronomy 4:27-29, ESV 166)(Jeremiah 29:13, ESV 732) (Psalm 14:2, ESV 500)
10. _____
(Exodus 33:14, ESV 82) (Psalm 145:18, ESV 583) (Psalm 139:7-8, ESV 580)

Verse 28-29- In these verses Paul summarized all of God's characteristics to define our relationship with Him. Ironically, he again used words that these philosophical thinkers were familiar with, "in him 'we live and move and have our being.'" Paul was quoting a line from an ancient poem, *Cretica* by a Greek philosopher, Epimenides. The poet was speaking to the Greek god, Zeus who some Cretans had declared dead, but the poet did not believe their claims. Paul was using familiar words with them but was assigning new meaning to those words by declaring it was not in Zeus that we live and move and have our being, but in Almighty God. Paul then added one more quote from another familiar poet, Aratus. In the poem, *Phaenomena*, Aratus declared, "always we have need of Zeus. For we are also his offspring." Again, Paul changed the meaning of this familiar passage to say that we always need God and we are His offspring. The Greek word for offspring in this passage

is genos (ghe'-nos) meaning born in His image or created by him. Paul was making the point that since God made us, He does not need us, but we need him. With that in mind, Paul stated that we should never even compare the divine nature of God to any gold, silver or stone image, something that man can design or make. Paul reiterated the main message that he wanted to get across to the Athenians, God is the only divine (supreme) being.

Verse 30-31- These are the final words of Paul's discourse. Here he gave a warning that God would no longer excuse their lack of knowledge about Him. In the past, God made allowance for this ignorance of who He is, but now He has commanded all men to repent or be sorry for this. Paul told them that God has set a day when he will judge us according to the righteousness of the one man that He has appointed as judge. He also told them that this is the one who God raised from the dead as proof that He was the one who God sent. In other words, there is no excuse for lack of knowledge about God because He not only gave us creation, but He gave us His Son, Jesus as proof of His existence and His love.

(Romans 1:18-20, ESV 1040)

Verse 32-34- This brought about mixed responses. Some mocked him, while others wanted to hear more. Then, Paul left. He had given them the message that they needed. He knew that some would believe and some wouldn't. Luke named a couple of those that he knew had become followers, Dionysius and Damaris. Then, he also stated that there were a number of others who believed what Paul said as well. So, the mission at Athens was accomplished.