

ACTS 28:1-16 MINISTRIES AT MALTA: THEN ON TO ROME

Acts is the record of what the Lord Jesus Christ (as Head and Director of His church) continued to do for the 30 years successive to His resurrection and ascension. In the closing chapters, He had promised the Apostle Paul safety in hostile Jerusalem and assurance that he would witness in the imperial capital, Rome (23:11). In 28:1, we are about 2½ years removed from that promise, but close to its fulfillment. Luke fully purposes to show us that the Lord is in command despite circumstantial appearances.

28:1-10 Ministries at Malta

- v. 1 MIRACLE #1: THE STORM BLEW THEM RIGHT TO _____/_____!
MALTA:
- An island, 17 miles long and 9 miles at widest point
 - 200 miles from the African coast
 - 60 miles from the southern most tip of Sicily
 - _____ miles due west of Clauda! LIKE HITTING A DARTBOARD AT 100 YARDS!
Coincidence or God’s providence?!? Is God caring for Paul?
 - They will stay _____ months here, v. 11.
- v. 2 **“the barbarous people”** = anyone who did not speak Greek. The Maltese were not uncivilized; they were of Phoenician extraction (like the Carthaginians) and spoke a Phoenician dialect (modern Maltese is an Arabian dialect).
“showed us no little kindness” = “showed us _____ kindness”
- v. 3 MIRACLE #2: NON-EFFECT OF A VIPER BITE
- NOTE THE CHARACTER OF PAUL: “he gathers wood”
“the viper” = an εχιδνα/echidna, a reptile in distinction from other snakes – very poisonous
- v. 4-6 THE RELIGIOUS REACTION OF THE MALTESE (to the snake bite)
- v. 4 THEIR JUDGMENT (Based on a snake bite)
“No doubt this man is a _____.” They knew he was a prisoner by his Roman guard, now they dogmatically judge him to be a murderer!
THEIR RELIGIOUS CONCLUSION
“Though he escaped the sea, _____ (“vengeance” KJV) will cause him to die.” Whose justice? What are the theological presuppositions?
- v. 5, 6 THEIR THEOLOGICAL SHIFT
- v. 5 Paul shakes off the serpent and suffers _____ harm.
- v. 6 **“PAUL, you are a GOD!”**
- NOTE: They are wrong, 100% wrong, in both of their judgments. Oh the perilous, shifting seas of subjective, experience-driven theology!
- POINT: Every member of the human race has a theology. Religious people rely ultimately upon experience for their theology: if things are going well, their “god” is blessing them; if not, he is angry and will punish them. **THIS FAULTY AND PERVASIVE RATIONALE IS ONE OF THE REASONS GOD MUST REVEAL HIMSELF TO MANKIND. THE SCRIPTURES AND THE PERSON OF CHRIST ARE THAT FINAL REVELATION. Trust His Word, not your feelings.**
- v. 7, 8 MIRACLE #3: PAUL HEALS PUBLIUS’ FATHER
- v. 7 The _____ man of the island provides _____ for Paul and his team for _____ days.
- v. 8a Dr. Luke (Col. 4:14) describes the sickness
- **“who lay sick”** = a present active participle; i.e., he “kept lying sick” or “kept being gripped” **(OVER)**

- due to a _____
- and _____ (δυσεντεριον/dusenterion), KJV, “a bloody flux”

v. 8b Dr. Luke describes the healing Paul, entering and praying, put his hands on him and healed* him (*aorist tense, indicative verb): meaning INSTANTANEOUSLY! COMPLETELY! MIRACULOUSLY!

v. 9 More MIRACLES OF HEALING

v. 10 The Maltese people supply Paul and his associates with necessities for the rest of their trip.

28:11-16 Voyage to Italy: Then by Land to Rome

v. 11 “After _____ months, we departed” = ca. Nov. 15- Feb. 15 (AD 60)

“a ship... whose sign was (lit.) Dioscuri:” i.e., the two mythical sons of Zeus, Castor and Pollux, patron “deities” of seamen! Their constellation was Gemini, the sign of good fortune in a storm. Their figures were carved or painted on the prow. A boat named for pagan deities carries the messenger of the one, true God to Italy!

v. 12 To _____, capital of _____
 –Syracuse is _____ miles north of Malta
 –Mt. Etna (11,000 ft.) to the north dominates the city
 –a _____ day stopover in hopes of better winds

v. 13a To _____, on the toe of Italy
 – modern Reggio via the treacherous Straits of Messina
 – “**fetch**ed a compass” = “tacking,” i.e., navigating with difficulty

v. 13b,14 To _____, 100 miles north of Phigium

- modern Pozzuoli on the northwestern end of the Bay of Naples
- 8 miles due east is Naples and beyond it looms Mt. Vesuvius
- Principle port of southern Italy for Alexandrian grain ships
- Luke, Paul, Aristarchus _____ and _____ believers!
- _____ lets them stay _____ days! Why?

Parenthetically: Mt. Vesuvius’s most famous eruption occurs August 24, 79 AD burying Pompeii and killing thousands among whom was Drusilla, the Jewish wife of Felix (Acts 25:24ff).

- Puteoli is 12 miles from the Appian Way: ca. 140 miles from Rome.

v. 15 Brethren from _____ meet Paul at _____ FORUM, about 43 miles south of Rome. They had been informed of his coming.

- then again, more Brethren meet him at The Three Taverns, about 33 miles south of Rome
- PAUL, THE GREAT APOSTLE: ENCOURAGED BY THE WARM WELCOME OF BELIEVERS!

v. 16 ROME (at last)

- Capital of the Roman Empire
- Population: between 1-2 million people at this time
- Paul enters through the Capenian Gate, not far from the modern Porta San Sebastiano.

_____, the centurion, turns Paul over to the prefect, who in turn permits Paul to dwell in his own lodging. Paul eventually rents a place & dwells there under house arrest for _____ years (v. 30)

SEE Philippians 1:13: Paul is loosely chained to a Praetorian guard. With the changing of the guard at each watch, it was possible that over two years, half of the 4,500 troops in this elite Praetorian unit heard the Gospel! He had a captive audience, literally.