

>>>>>> Acts - Lesson 37 <<<<<<<

- 1) Well, we are at the island of Malta, everyone is safe on shore after the storm and shipwreck.
- 2) So, we continue...

Acts 28:1–6 (NIV)

- 1) Malta is about 470 miles from Fair Havens – 60 miles south of Sicily – 320 miles from Rome.
- 2) The islanders there were of Phoenician ancestry and had given the island its name (taken from the Canaanite word for “refuge”).
- 3) Malta had excellent harbors and was ideally located for trade.
- 4) Bruce Barton makes an interesting introductory comment here:

Detailed plots on his life, angry mobs, storms at sea, shipwrecks—all the forces of hell seemed to have been intensifying their efforts to keep Paul from reaching Rome. Now, on the island of Malta, the attack continued – Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake.²⁹

- 5) When the islanders see Paul bitten by the snake, they make some pretty serious assumptions.
 - a) First, he is a murder and will die.
 - b) Then when he doesn’t die, he must be a god.
 - c) Of course, we must assume that Paul deflected the comments about him as he had back in Lystra (chapter 14) when they attempted to say that Barnabas was Zeus and he was Hermes.
- 6) If you are using the NIV, the word Justice is capitalized making it a proper name and indicating it is the name of a goddess.
 - a) The word goddess used in the NIV is not part of the Greek text so the NASB does not capitalize the word.
 - b) However, the consensus is that the NIV is correct here the word Dike (meaning justice) is considered a personification of a deity in this case.
- 7) Continuing ...

Acts 28:7–11 (NIV)

- 1) One assumes here that the “us” that Publius welcomed into his home was Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus and, possibly the ship’s captain and Julius.
 - a) I think even the chief official of the island would not be able to welcome 276 people to his home.

²⁹ Bruce Barton et al., [*Life Application New Testament Commentary*](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 567.

- b) The rest of the crew and passengers on the ship must have been housed by others on the island.
- c) There are also some unanswered questions:
 - i) After the 3 days, where did these folks all stay? Remember, there were 276 in all who were saved from the wreck.
 - ii) Where were the other prisoners housed?
- 2) Paul basically never stops.
- 3) He begins by healing the official's father then, everyone else on the island who was sick came to Paul and was cured as well.
- 4) We are not told much about the ship that these folks were put on to finish their journey.
 - a) Most likely, the same size as the one that was lost in order to accommodate all the people.
- 5) It would be safe to assume that it was not a luxury liner so, the provisions that the islanders provided for them as they departed probably made it possible to travel this way.
- 6) Still, after wintering there for 3 months, it was off to complete the rest of the journey.

Acts 28:12–16 (NIV)

- 1) At this time of the year, we have a completely different picture when it comes to the conditions for sailing.
 - a) They make Syracuse then after three days sailed again for Rhegium.
 - b) Now things really get good – a good south wind pushes them swiftly to Puteoli.
- 2) At this point, the sea voyage part of the journey is over.
- 3) They spend a week there and then overland the rest of the way to Rome.
- 4) It is interesting to consider here that Paul was under guard as a prisoner this whole time and yet he was allowed to spend a week with the brothers at Puteoli.
- 5) Luke doesn't tell us anything in particular about the rest of the trip. He simply concludes vs. 14 with the comment "And so we came to Rome."
- 6) However, Luke does tell us of meetings they had with believers as they proceeded from Puteoli.
 - a) Here we have a true case of one's reputation preceding them.
 - b) People come from all over to meet Paul as he travels through Forum of Appius and Three Taverns.
 - c) The route that Paul takes from Puteoli to Rome is the Appian Way.
 - i) The Appian Forum and Three Taverns were rest stops – inns if you will – along the way.
- 7) The entire trip to Rome was on this road was about 100 miles.
- 8) Once Paul arrives in Rome, he is allowed to live by himself with a fulltime guard.

- 9) One source indicates that this was actually a round-the-clock guarding in 4-hour shifts.
 - a) As we are told in Philippians, these guards were perhaps members of the Praetorian—or palace – guard.
 - b) Paul had much more freedom than a typical prisoner.
- 10) We will see in verse 30 that Paul’s private lodging was a rented house. Now, who paid for that is a mystery.
 - a) I doubt that it was the Roman government but perhaps it was the local brothers and sisters in the Roman congregations.

Acts 28:17–31 (NIV)

- 1) It has been 11 years since Claudius had expelled the Jews from Rome so the leadership was back by now.
- 2) After getting some rest, Paul’s first order of business is to call these Jewish leaders together.
- 3) Obviously, he cannot go to the synagogues as he has in the past so he calls them together for two purposes:
 - a) First, to declare his innocence of the charges that have brought him to Rome and this house arrest.
 - b) Second, as always, he wants to present the Gospel of Jesus to his brothers first.
- 4) On the first count, Paul surprisingly (to me anyway) takes a very broad-brush approach to telling of the problems and woes which brought him to this point.
 - a) Perhaps, it was simply the fact that he wanted to concentrate more on the explanation of his final point – **“It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.”**
- 5) And interestingly enough, that approach will work great in this situation because, according to the leaders, they have not been informed of these charges or the reasons he is here.
 - a) However, they have heard of what Paul is promoting and what he is a part of :

“But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect.”

- 6) So, it begins, Paul’s normal sharing of the Gospel of Christ.
- 7) And, as usual, he has mixed reactions from his brothers.

He witnessed to them from morning till evening, explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus. ²⁴ Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe.

- 8) We need to comment on vs. 29.
 - a) You likely do not have vs. 29 in your translation. Many later manuscripts have the verse and it says:

When he had spoken these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.

9) This is another one of Textual Criticism issues where some manuscripts have it and others (in this case earlier) do not have it.

10) There is nothing I can say that better concludes this study than what Luke himself concludes with:

³⁰ For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. ³¹ He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

11) As to what happens after this to Paul, one source gives a very concise summary.

There is no direct information in the Bible about what happens to Paul after the end of Acts. From 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and church traditions, many scholars have surmised that Paul was released from prison after two years, then actively evangelized for another five years before being martyred by Nero.

12) We can rest assured that for the rest of his life, Paul continued to do the exact same thing no matter where he went – preach Christ the savior and Lord of all.