

Within the Word

Acts 28 NIV study guide

1 Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. **2** The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. **3** Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. **4** When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." **5** But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. **6** The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god. **7** There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and for three days entertained us hospitably. **8** His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. **9** When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured. **10** They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

11 After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island. It was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. **12** We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. **13** From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on the following day we reached Puteoli. **14** There we found some brothers who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. **15** The brothers there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At the sight of these men Paul thanked God and was encouraged. **16** When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

17 Three days later he called together the leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: "My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. **18** They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. **19** But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar--not that I had any charge to bring against my own people. **20** For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain." **21** They replied, "We have not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of the brothers who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. **22** But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect."

23 They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. **24** Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. **25** They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: "The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet: **26** "Go to this people and say, "You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving." **27** For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them."

28 "Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!"

30 For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. **31** Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ. Read this chapter at least twice before going on to answer the questions. This is another rich chapter with much happening. Pray and ask the Lord to bless your time in his word. This is our last chapter in our study of Acts, let's finish strong.

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1. Go back and highlight any references to time in one color and places in another color. This is not busy work. We do this so we focus our attention to the details and so that we can reference back to them quickly.

2. In verse 1 what promise of God is fulfilled? Look back at Acts 27:22,24

3. Luke identifies this island as Malta, did you locate it on the map?

4. List some of the things you learned about the island and its people from verses 1-10.

- vs.1
- vs.1
- vs.4-6
- vs. 7-8
- vss.9-10

5. What thoughts went through your heart and mind as you read about these islanders?

6. What is your response when you see a need in another person's life?

- It might be an overworked mom, or a person broken down on the side of the road, or an elderly person carrying a load of groceries, or a struggling family.
- These are all just everyday opportunities for us to be the hands of God in the lives of others we see.
- These islanders were not even Christians but they knew the value of hospitality.

7. The islanders did not simply show them kindness but Luke says it was unusual kindness. Why did he say it was unusual?

Back to business vs.11 Notice the figurehead of the ship was the Twin brothers, Castor and Pollux, in Greek mythology these were the sons of Zeus believed to protect sailors.

8. What was the original purpose of those who started this voyage?

Where were they headed?

What were the different reasons those travelers were all together on the ship in the first place?

9. They met some believers on the way, how did they treat the apostle Paul and Luke and those who were with them?

10. The word had spread that Paul was coming to Rome; what is the response of the believers there?

11. What is your response when great men of God are in your area?

12. Let's be transparent for a moment, who would you love to see in concert?

What would you pay to attend?

Now what was your response the last time your church invited someone to come and speak, did you look forward to hearing what God would share through him or was it a bit of a "we'll see if we are free that day" attitude?

13. What did the friendliness of these believers do for Paul?

14. We are so blessed living in America at this time. We can hear someone at our own convenience. Often all we need to do is turn on the TV, radio or our computer and we can listen to them. What are the benefits and the drawbacks to this?

15. Have you ever thought about what your coming does for the man of God?
Believe me your being there does matter.
16. What thoughts do you think Paul might be thinking as the ship approached Rome?
17. Paul is in Rome and after 3 days he meets with the local leaders of the Jews to speak to them. Why do you suppose Paul met with these religious leaders?

Who had been trying to set traps for him back in Jerusalem and Caesarea?
18. What does Paul call them in verse 17?
19. What amazing news comes to Paul at this time? Vs.21 20.
What did they say to Paul in verse 22 that had to make him happy?
Paul has longed to go to Rome and share the gospel there, to the Jew first and also to the Gentiles.
21. On the appointed day briefly state what happened.
22. What was the response of those there that day? Vs. 24 23.

What is the response when your pastor shares the Good News of Jesus Christ, his sacrifice for our sins and his death on the cross?
24. What happened when Paul quoted the prophet Isaiah?
• Jesus also quoted these verses in Matthew 13:14-15 to explain the failure of the Jews as a body to accept him.
25. Notice the word “therefore”, remember anytime you see this word it is referring back to what was just being said. Because of your rejection of the good news of Jesus Christ our risen Savior we will go to the Gentiles because _____ vs. 28
26. a) What do we see the apostle Paul doing for the next two years?
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Paul’s time in prison was not wasted, for it was during his Roman imprisonment that he wrote the letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. The time after Paul’s release from his first imprisonment would be when he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. He probably wrote his last letter, 2 Timothy, during his second imprisonment, as he awaited execution. (2 Timothy 4:6-8)
- b) What do you do with your time when you are not at liberty to go and do as you please? What do you do while waiting?

What might have been written about you if this had been you in Paul’s place? I know you can’t say for sure, but what is your normal response to difficult situations that are not of your choosing?

Let’s ask God to help us stay eternally minded, to stay focused on the ministry he has called us to, sharing the gospel wherever we are, with whomever he brings into our