



ACCM

Bible Study: Thursday, June 1st 2017.

Topic: Acts 28

INTRODUCTION: Paul and the ship's crew landed on an Island called Malta, where they were shown enormous kindness. As winter was setting in, the place was cold. They therefore decided to gather some wood to make fire to heat up their surrounding. As Paul was picking some pieces of sticks, a venomous snake wrapped itself around his hand and bit him. Paul shook the beast into the fire. The people concluded that nemesis has caught up with him as he is finding it difficult to escape from judgement, even after just been delivered from the wrath on the sea. They were then expecting him to swell up and die as a result of the snake bite, but that did not happen to Paul. When they found that Paul did not die, they changed their minds and said he is a god.

Thereafter one of the Island officials called Publius showed them kindness and Paul layed his hands on his father who was sick with dysentery and he got well. The bible says the people brought out more people to be healed. Thereafter they set sail to Rome.

In Rome, he lived almost like a free citizen as he lived on his own and was allowed to receive visitors as freely as he wanted.

As we round up the Acts of the Apostles, you cannot but feel and rejoice at the authenticity of the Bible. The fact that it never spoke about the death of Saul seem to authenticate the story of the Bible. If this book was to have been forged, I think that the writer will be very interested in ending the Acts of the Apostles with the story of the death of Apostle Paul.

Legends concluded that Paul died at about the age of 62 and that he was asked to be decapitated by Emperor Nero in AD 68. Paul was born in about AD 5. Archeology has it that a sarcophagus was exhumed around St. Paul's Basilica in 2002 with an inscription Paul Apostle Martyr. This was finally confirmed by Pope Benedict in 2009. Don't you feel glad that you are in a generation that confirms the word of God.

Paul on the Island of Malta

28 Once we were safe on shore, we learned that we were on the island of Malta. 2 The people of the island were very kind to us. It was cold and rainy, so they built a fire on the shore to welcome us.

1. Showing kindness: One of the true signs of believer is not the ability to pray, fast or speak in tongues but showing kindness. I John 3:17-18, I John 4:20, Isaiah 58:6-9, James 2: 14-16, Col 3:12, Rom 12:9-10.
2. Who should we should kindness to? Prov 19:17, Heb 13:16, Gal 6:10, Matt 5:46, Luke 6:32-33
3. How do we show love? I Cor 13:4.

3 As Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was laying them on the fire, a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, bit him on the hand. 4 The people of the island saw it hanging from his hand and said to each other, "A murderer, no doubt! Though he escaped the sea, justice will not permit him to live." 5 But Paul shook off the snake into the fire and was unharmed. 6 The people waited for him to swell up or suddenly drop dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw that he wasn't harmed, they changed their minds and decided he was a god.

At this time, Paul has already acquired a 'celebrity' status. If it were modern day leaders, will they still find themselves gathering wood.

4. In view of the actions of Paul, how should leaders relate with their followers: Matthew 20:26, I Peter 5:3, Matthew 23:12.

Paul again, now finding himself in another challenge of snake bite, having gone from imprisonment to shipwreck? How must he be feeling?

5. How do you react when you find yourself going through lots of challenges? James 1:2-4, 12, I Peter 1:6-7, Phil 1:29, Rom 8:35-37. Rom 8:28.

6. What kind of trials do we face in this world as believers. - Discuss

7. It is wrong to suffer as an evil doer. I Peter 4:15, I Tim 5:13, I Pet 2:19-20. Give examples of how people could suffer as evil doers in our generation.

These people were classified as kind according to Luke but did their reaction to Apostle Paul in respect of the snake bite show any act of kindness? If you were Paul or one of the people, what will be your view of these people. Will you still consider them as kind?

8. How do you react or respond when you find people making conflicting comments about you or behaving in conflicting manners towards you? Matthew 21:9, 27:21-22, James 1:19, Prov 10:19.

It is interesting the verdict and judgment the people passed on Paul even without knowing who he was and how he got to where he was. By assumed similarity, they simply assumed that Paul was a criminal and he was getting what he deserved. You might suffer mental paralysis if you know what people have said about you? As you strive to please God in your daily walk with Him, I guaranty you that you will be misjudged several times. Acts 21:38

9. How do you avoid been misjudged? Luke 7:31-34,
10. How do you react when people misjudge you? This is not the first time that Paul is completely misjudged. I Cor 11:31, Luke 9:5, Matt 5:11-12.

Don't be quick to measure what people say about you. They might simply be speaking from impulse or poor knowledge.

When their expectations did not happen, they switched their minds. You might just be able to prove people and some of your enemies wrong by standing with God long enough.

11. How do you prove your critics wrong? Mark 15:37-38, Prov 26:4-5, I Peter 3:15-16.

7 Near the shore where we landed was an estate belonging to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us and treated us kindly for three days. 8 As it happened, Publius's father was ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went in and prayed for him, and laying his hands on

him, he healed him. 9 Then all the other sick people on the island came and were healed. 10 As a result we were showered with honors, and when the time came to sail, people supplied us with everything we would need for the trip.

Do we still experience divine healing by the laying on of hands in our days? Do not be afraid to lay hands on the sick. Paul's laying hands brought glory to God and honor to the disciples. The Bible says they were given everything that they will need for the trip?

What is the result of meeting the needs of the people: John 6:28-29.

Do we have to play tricks so that we will receive gifts from people? Acts 8:18-19

What is the result of playing tricks on the people in terms of healing?

Paul Arrives at Rome

11 It was three months after the shipwreck that we set sail on another ship that had wintered at the island—an Alexandrian ship with the twin gods as its figurehead. 12 Our first stop was Syracuse, where we stayed three days. 13 From there we sailed across to Rhegium. A day later a south wind began blowing, so the following day we sailed up the coast to Puteoli. 14 There we found some believers, who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome.

15 The brothers and sisters in Rome had heard we were coming, and they came to meet us at the Forum on the Appian Way. Others joined us at The Three Taverns. When Paul saw them, he was encouraged and thanked God.

The people already heard that Paul and his entourage were coming to Rome. They then went and waited for them. How should we respond to a man or woman of God who has laboured over us?

Preaching the gospel makes you a known figure: Matt 21:8-11

16 When we arrived in Rome, Paul was permitted to have his own private lodging, though he was guarded by a soldier.

Why will Paul be allowed to live almost like a free man when he was supposed to be a prisoner? II Kings 13:23, Prov 16:7

Paul Preaches at Rome under Guard

17 Three days after Paul's arrival, he called together the local Jewish leaders. He said to them, "Brothers, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Roman government, even though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors. 18 The Romans tried me and wanted to release me, because they found no cause for the death sentence. 19 But when the Jewish leaders protested the decision, I felt it necessary to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no desire to press charges against my own people. 20 I asked you to come here today so we could get acquainted and so I could explain to you that I am bound with this chain because I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come."

21 They replied, "We have had no letters from Judea or reports against you from anyone who has come here. 22 But we want to hear what you believe, for the only thing we know about this movement is that it is denounced everywhere."

The movement is denounced everywhere: Matthew 5:10-12.

The more Christianity gets accepted by the people the more Christians tend to offend God discuss.

You will notice again that after Paul has explained his innocence, he did not refuse to let them know his belief. Do you hide your Christian belief? I Peter 3:15

One of the easiest ways to preach the gospel is to talk about Jesus at every opportunity.

23 So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul's lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening. 24 Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe. 25 And after they had argued back and forth among themselves, they left with this final word from Paul: "The Holy Spirit was right when he said to your ancestors through Isaiah the prophet,

26 'Go and say to this people, when you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend.

27 For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.'

28 So I want you to know that this salvation from God has also been offered to the Gentiles, and they will accept it."

30 For the next two years, Paul lived in Rome at his own expense. He welcomed all who visited him, 31 boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one tried to stop him.

How do you handle your disappointment when people refuse to believe your message to them? I Cor 9:22.

It is interesting that Paul lived at his own expense. No prisoner does that. How could he have been fending for himself? II Cor 9:8-11, Matthew 6:30.

CONCLUSION:

As we round up the Acts of the Apostles, you will realise that a book that started with the ascension of Jesus and the eventual supply of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles ended with a focus on one person who was not even one of the twelve. God is not partial What is your story. How loud is your story in the annals of God? Seek for opportunities to write a story that heaven will remember instead of building up stories that will be forgotten. Matthew 6:19-20. What was your story in the time past and what is your story today. People who seek after ready made never make stories. Not only is Paul's story told on earth, I am confident that Heaven has a lot to say about the Apostle Paul. What will heaven say about you?