

LESSON 13

PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME (PART 2); THE REST OF THE STORY

ADVENTURES ON AN ISLAND (MALTA) (28:1–10)

Chapter 28 begins with Paul and the other voyagers shipwrecked on the island of Malta. When Paul found himself on there, he was not where he wanted to be. He wanted to be in Rome (19:21). God had promised him that he would stand before Caesar (27:24). Paul had every right to expect to be in Rome. Instead, he found himself stuck on a tiny island, miles from the capital, with winter coming on and no possibility of getting off the island until spring.

1. What was the island of Malta like, and where is it located?
2. What does the word “natives” in verse 2, which the KJV translates “barbarians,” mean?
3. What facts let us know that Luke’s account of Paul’s viper bite is true?
4. Why is the wording of verse 9 significant in the Greek?

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES; THE ARRIVAL AT ROME (28:11–16)

In this section, we will see the apostle Paul reach the city of Rome at last. After Paul’s arrest in Jerusalem, Jesus had assured him, “As you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also” (23:11). On the tempestuous voyage to Rome, an angel had told him: “Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar” (27:24). These words of expectation and promise were finally coming to their fulfillment.

5. Why might God have wanted Paul on the island of Malta for three months?
6. What did it mean for a ship to have “the Twin Brothers for its figurehead” (28:11)?

AWAITING TRIAL (28:17–31)

Earlier we had two examples of how to tell a story to make *self* look as good as possible: 23:26–30 and 25:14–21. Paul’s speech in this section is an example of how a story can be related to make *others* look good and to gain goodwill.

7. Why did Paul summon the leaders of the Jews when he arrived in Rome?
8. What three points did Paul emphasize in 28:17–20?
9. Of what significance was Paul’s statement in 28:28?
10. Why might God have brought Paul all the way to Rome only to leave him confined?
11. What is significant about the word “unhindered” in 28:31?
12. According to the Prison Epistles, who was with Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome?
13. Why did Luke end the Book of Acts the way he did?

THE CONTINUING ACTS OF PAUL

Although Luke ended Acts with Paul left in prison, three books in the New Testament provide glimpses of Paul’s subsequent activities. These books, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, were written to two young evangelists who had worked and trained under Paul.

14. What facts lead us to believe that Paul was imprisoned twice in Rome and that he made another journey between those imprisonments?
15. What seems to have been the sequence of events in Paul’s life after the close of Luke’s account?
16. What effect did the fire of Rome have on all Christians, including Paul?

THE CONTINUING ACTS OF OTHER FIRST-CENTURY CHRISTIANS

During the last half of the Book of Acts, Luke primarily recorded the work of Paul. This emphasis does not mean that Christians elsewhere were idle. According to uninspired tradition, the apostles traveled to much of the civilized world with the gospel. Others, not apostles, were also spreading the good news (11:19).

17. What do Scripture and early Christian writings tell us about Peter's and John's later missionary work?
18. What was the nature of persecution in the early church?

THE CONTINUING ACTS OF CHRISTIANS THROUGH THE YEARS

During the second and third centuries, the blood of Christian martyrs was sown liberally throughout the Roman Empire.

19. What effect did persecution have on the life and good works of the church?
20. How did organized persecution of Christians come to an end?