

## GOD'S WORK IN MALTA AND BIBLE STUDY IN ROME

Acts 28:1-31

Key Verse: 28:30,31

### 1. Read 28:1-6. What kind of reception did they receive in Malta?

The people of Malta welcomed the shipwrecked people and showed them unusual kindness and built them shelters to keep them out of the rain.

### When the people saw the snake hanging from Paul's hand, what did they conclude?

Based on their Greek religion - they thought of this as a kind of cosmic justice—notice capital Justice - like an impersonal force or Karma. That because of the snake bite must have been justice. This seemed logical and natural to them.

### How did Paul react?

By God's grace the snake did not have any venom—so they were expecting Paul to swell up and die but nothing happened.

### How did God further protect him and use this event to establish Paul's spiritual authority?

God protected Paul and used this supernatural event to open up an opportunity to share the gospel. Here God opened a door for those who did not know the grace of Christ through Paul.

### 2. Read verses 7-10. Who was Publius?

Publius was the senior official on the island of Malta.

### How did he care for Paul and his company?

After the protection of Paul, Publius invited him and his companions to stay with him for three days. Because of God's protection, Paul was able to come to the senior officials house instead of staying on the beach.

### **What was the problem in his home?**

Publius' father was sick with dysentery and fever. This was a very serious condition. Paul prayed for Publius' father and laid his hands on him and he was healed.

### **How did God bless the family that showed hospitality to God's servants?**

When Publius provided for Paul, God's grace was to heal not only Publius' father, but also all the sick on the island were healed as well. The island of Malta was blessed because of their kindness to the man of God.

### **3. Read verses 11-15. How long did they stay in Malta?**

They stayed for three months to last the winter in Malta.

### **How were they able to leave?**

Because of the islanders generosity they found a ship heading for Rome and were outfitted with the necessary supplies.

### **Where is Puteoli?**

Puteoli was a suburb of Rome. Here when the ship stopped and Paul went ashore he found other Christians that he did not even know were there. This gave him great encouragement to see the gospel spreading already all the way to Rome ahead of him.

### **Who met them at the Three Taverns?**

The brothers at Puteoli then went back to Rome to inform the church there that Paul was on his way and many came all the way down to the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet Paul.

### **What was Paul's attitude as the journey to Rome came to a close?**

Notice in verse 14, Luke writes, and so we came to Rome. This little sentence has a great meaning. Luke was now confirming God's sovereignty in fulfilling his promise that Paul would reach Rome. Luke is also showing God's sovereignty in that he used the Roman Empire and a Hurricane to move Paul to Rome in a way no one expected.

Paul was greatly encouraged by this and set about preaching the gospel to his people and the Gentiles and not worrying about his trial before Caesar.

### **4. Read verses 17-24. Who were the first people Paul contacted in Rome?**

Paul himself sent word to the Jewish leaders and gathered them to explain his imprisonment and to preach the gospel to them. Paul's presence confused the Jews because they had not received any news or reports about him from Jerusalem.

### **How did he describe his arrest and his presence in Rome?**

Paul told them about the trial and how he was innocent of any crime against Rome or against the Temple—yet when Rome wanted to release him, the Jews of Jerusalem protested. So Paul appealed to Caesar.

### **What is the hope of Israel? (20, 26:6)**

*"And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our ancestors that I am on trial today."*

*"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."*

Paul's hope was in the Messiah Jesus. This had always been his hope and the central point of his ministry. Jesus was the Jewish Messiah and the culmination of God's words. Our hope as Christians is in Jesus alone—who fulfills all the promises of God.

### **What was the initial response of the Jews?**

Initially they wanted to hear more from Paul(22, 23) about Jesus as they had met Christians and had encountered this sect but were not sure of who Jesus was.

### **What was the source of his teaching?**

Paul was very clear about his source. Verse 24 says, "explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus." As Christians we too should have the Law of Moses and the Prophets as our only source about the Kingdom of God and Jesus.

### **5. Read verses 25-29. What was the response of the Jews of Rome?**

Initially some believed but others then became obstinate. They disagreed amongst themselves. Some could not make up their mind because God had hardened their hearts (25-27)

### **What final statement did Paul make to explain Jewish rejection? (28)**

*"Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!" [29] [b]"*

God's purpose for calling Paul back in Acts chapter 9 was to take the gospel to the Gentiles. This is what Paul rebuked his own people with in verse 28.

### **What did Paul do to participate in what God was doing in Rome? (30-31)**

*"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!"*

Notice two words, boldly and without hindrance. Before he had been greatly hindered but now he had his own house and was under Roman protection and could preach the gospel to any and all who came to visit him.

### **How is God fulfilling his world salvation work through Paul in Rome?**

### **What can you learn from your study of the book of Acts?**