



ACTS - Living in the Promises of Jesus

Acts 28

Lesson 23

In Acts 28 we find Paul and 275 others surviving a tempestuous storm and swimming or floating their way to the island of Malta. They stayed there three months before sailing to Rome. Jesus promised Paul that he would go to Rome and testify of Him there. Little did Paul know that his testifying would consist primarily of sharing the gospel chained to a guard in a rented house. Nevertheless, Paul testified. May we learn from Paul to keep our eyes on our purpose and not the situation.

OBSERVATION: Read Acts 28

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God*, *Jesus*, the *Holy Spirit*, the *brethren*, the *leaders of the Jews*, and *Paul* and his companions.

Key Words: *God*, *Jesus*, *Holy Spirit*, *brethren*, *leaders of the Jews*, *Paul* and Paul's companions
3. The contrasting words *but* and *however* are used many times in Acts 28. Mark each time these words are used. Choose one of those times and record what is being contrasted.
4. The term of conclusion, *therefore*, was used two times in Acts 28. Mark each time the word is used. Choose one of those times; record the conclusion and what it was based upon.

5. As you read chapter 28, use the map below to retrace Paul's journey from Malta to Rome.



PAUL'S MINISTRY ON MALTA: Read Acts 28:1-10

1. Acts 28 begins with the words, *Now when they had escaped*. The NASB version translates the words as *When they had been brought safely through*. Luke was among those who had been *brought safely through*. What do you admire about his attitude as expressed in these words?
 - a. Notice that they had been brought *through* the storm, not "out of" the storm. What can we learn from this?
 - b. Look carefully at Isaiah 43:2. Consider the use of the word *when* rather than *if*. What is the amazing promise in this verse?
2. Psalm 34 is a song of deliverance. Record the awesome truths of these two passages:

Psalm 34:4-7

Psalm 34:17-19

 - a. What do these scriptures mean to you personally?
3. The natives of Malta greeted the men with *unusual kindness*. Yet, they were especially watching Paul, trying to determine who he was. When the snake *fastened on his hand*, what did they think he was? verses 3,4

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- a. When *no harm came to him*, what did they think he was? verse 6
 - 1.) Neither conclusion was correct. What was wrong with their thinking?
4. How do Luke 10:19 and Mark 16:18 give us a sense of why Paul was able to simply shake the snake off and suffer no harm?
 - a. What did Jesus say in Matthew 4:7 that reminds us we should not deliberately place ourselves in dangerous situations?
5. The father of the *leading citizen of the island* (Publius) *lay sick of a fever and dysentery*. Paul laid hands on him and healed him (Acts 28:7,8). How did the people of the island respond to this? (verses 9,10)
 - a. What do the following verses teach us about our responsibility to those who minister to us?
Galatians 6:6

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
 - 1.) In what ways do you personally apply these verses?

PAUL'S ARRIVAL AT ROME: Read Acts 28:11-16

1. *After three months* they left the island of Malta. Who did they find in *Puteoli*? Verses 13,14
 - a. What did the *brethren* do in *Puteoli* and *Appii Forum* and *Three Inns*?
 - 1.) Think about the fellowship they had with one another. What do you think it was like?
2. What did Paul do when he *saw the brethren*?
 - a. For what reasons are you thankful for the *brethren*?
 - b. In what ways have you found *courage* after fellowshiping with other believers?

3. Record the first six words of Acts 28:16.

a. What do you think those words meant to Paul?

b. While in Corinth, Paul wrote to those in Rome of his desire to visit them. Read through the following verses and record your impression of Paul's longing to go to Rome.

Romans 1:10,11,13

Romans 15:22-24

c. Paul wrote of "hindrances". Yet, at the time, he was unaware of how many "hindrances" there would be. What can we learn from this?

4. The centurion had great confidence and trust in Paul. What was Paul *permitted* to do?

a. What do you think it was like for the *soldier(s) who guarded him*?

PAUL'S MINISTRY AT ROME – THE JEWS DESIRE TO HEAR: Acts 28:17-24

1. *After three days... Paul called the leaders of the Jews together.* He explained to them why he was *bound with this chain*. What was that reason? verse 20

a. Record the words of Jeremiah 17:13.

b. Now record the claim of Jesus from John 4:14.

c. What is our *hope of glory*? Colossians 1:27

1.) Combining the truths of these verses – what or who is the hope of Israel?

2. Using Philippians 1:12-14, describe Paul's attitude about his *chains*.

3. The Jews seemed to connect the *hope of Israel* with Christianity (Acts 28:22) and *desired to hear from Paul* what he thought. *So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging* (verse 23). What did Paul *explain* to them?

a. What did he use to relate to them about *Jesus'* relationship to the *kingdom of God*?

1.) Share one verse from the Old Testament that points to Jesus as the Messiah.

4. According to verse 24, what was the result of Paul's *persuading* through the Scriptures?

PAUL'S MINISTRY AT ROME - HEARING BUT NOT UNDERSTANDING: Acts 28:25-31

1. *Some were persuaded...and some disbelieved* (verse 24). Paul quoted Isaiah in response to those who *disbelieved*. What did the LORD tell Isaiah? Acts 28:26,27

- a. What is the difference between:
hearing and understanding

seeing and perceiving

- b. Why could those who *disbelieved* not *understand* or *perceive*?

- c. What is the result of being *hard of hearing* and having *closed eyes*?

1.) Although this verse refers to salvation, how do *ears that are hard of hearing* and *closed eyes* keep even a believer from *understanding* and *perceiving* God's truths?

2. What was Paul's conclusion as stated in Acts 28:28?

Challenge: List the other times in Acts when Paul made this statement to the Jews.

3. The book of Acts closes telling us that Paul spent *two whole years in his own rented house*. What was he able to do while he was there?

- a. What was the fruit of Paul's ministry as recorded in Philippians 4:22?

4. During his time in Rome, Paul wrote the books of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and possibly Hebrews. Take a few moments and scan through some of Paul's words as written in these books. List a few (3 or 4) verses that you are thankful that he wrote.

- a. Although these years were probably not the ministry Paul had imagined, God used him mightily. What attitude is necessary if we are to be used in places contrary to our plans?

PAUL'S FINAL WRITTEN WORDS: Portions from 2 Timothy

1. 2 Timothy is believed to have been written just prior to Paul's death. Nero, the ruler of Rome at that time, had Paul beheaded. Read the words written in the following verses and describe Paul's frame of mind at the end of his life.

2 Timothy 1:3

2 Timothy 2:12

2 Timothy 4:6-8

2 Timothy 4:17-18

2. Share your impressions as you consider the above verses and the life of Paul as exhibited in the book of Acts.

REVIEW: Read Acts 28

1. Share something that provoked you to want to be like Paul through your study of Acts 28.
2. In what way is fellowship with other believers valuable to you?
3. What did you learn from this lesson about the "detours" of life?
4. Share one thing that impacted you during your study of the books of Acts.

*His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant;
you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things.
Enter into the joy of your lord.'
- Matthew 25:21*

Observation Worksheet

Acts 28:1-31

Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta. ² And the natives showed us unusual kindness; for they kindled a fire and made us all welcome, because of the rain that was falling and because of the cold. ³ But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat, and fastened on his hand. ⁴ So when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he has escaped the sea, yet justice does not allow to live." ⁵ But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm. ⁶ However, they were expecting that he would swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But after they had looked for a long time and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god. ⁷ In that region there was an estate of the leading citizen of the island, whose name was Publius, who received us and entertained us courteously for three days. ⁸ And it happened that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and dysentery. Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him. ⁹ So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed. ¹⁰ They also honored us in many ways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were necessary. ¹¹ After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island. ¹² And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days. ¹³ From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli, ¹⁴ where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward Rome. ¹⁵ And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns. When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage. ¹⁶ Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him. ¹⁷ And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: "Men and brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, ¹⁸ who, when they had examined me, wanted to let me go, because there was no cause for putting me to death. ¹⁹ But when the Jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that I had anything of which to accuse my nation. ²⁰ For this reason therefore I have called for you, to see you and speak with you, because for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." ²¹ Then they said to him, "We neither received letters from Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you. ²² But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere." ²³ So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at his lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. ²⁴ And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

²⁵ So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, ²⁶ saying, 'Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you will see, and not perceive; ²⁷ for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them." '

²⁸ "Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!" ²⁹ And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves. ³⁰ Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, ³¹ preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.