THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER1 ST, 2026 // THE BOOK OF ACTS

NOT HINDERED (ACTS 28:1–10)

"LEARNED THAT THE ISLAND WAS CALLED MALTA"

The storm let up, but it was still raining and cold when they arrived in Malta (which means "refuge"), so the natives showed hospitality.

- The Greeks considered anyone who was not Greek or Jewish to be a barbarian. Though viewed as barbarians by Greeks, the natives of Malta brought the crew safely to shore and lit a fire for them.

"A VIPER CAME OUT BECAUSE OF THE HEAT"

Paul was gathering wood for the fire when a viper struck his hand and latched onto him.

- We see the contrast of Paul's confidence in the promises of God. Before the angelic reminder (27:23–24), Paul had lost all hope of survival (27:20), but afterwards, Paul had a viper bite him and seems to have calmly shaken it off of his hand into the fire.

"JUSTICE HAS NOT ALLOWED HIM TO LIVE"

They assumed Paul, a prisoner, was guilty and deserving of punishment, and since he had survived drowning at sea, the Greek goddess of justice was ensuring Paul would not go unpunished. Yet, when Paul was not harmed by the viper, they assumed he was a god.

- The natives of Malta did as we all are prone to do: they went from one extreme to another.

"AFTER THREE MONTHS" (V. 11)

Paul and his traveling companions went from the raging seas of the Mediterranean to the hospitality of the people in Malta.

- God was giving them a much-needed season of relief and replenishment; however, even in this season, God continued to work through Paul. **We are to do all things to the glory of God in all seasons of life** (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 10:31).

"PRAYING AND LAYING HIS HANDS ON HIM"

During their time on the island of Malta, they stayed for three days with the leader, Publius, whose father was sick with a fever and dysentery.

- Paul laid hands on the father, and he was miraculously healed. Once news spread, all who were the sick on the island came to Paul and Luke and were healed ("to receive medical attention").

ROME (ACTS 28:11–22)

ONCE WINTER WAS OVER...

After three months on Malta, they loaded an Alexandrian ship with the Twin Gods, Castor and Pollux, on the front. The Twin Gods were viewed as the protectors of men at sea.

- Roman ships bore their image as a plea for safety. Do we place our faith, our security, and our pleas for safety in places that cannot offer us those things?

"FOUND BROTHERS AND SISTERS"

The first stop was Syracuse (on the southeastern side of Sicily), before the 70-mile trip along the eastern coast landed them in Rhegium in Italy (toe of the boot). Then they finally arrived at Puteoli, where they started the journey by land to Rome.

- Paul didn't bring the gospel to Rome; it had already reached the area before him, so he was able to stay for a week with Believers there.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

Luke records the warm reception from the brothers and sisters as they made their way down from Rome to greet Paul at two different rest stops along the road.

- Paul **"thanked God and took courage"** from their reception of him, but not as a martyr. Paul still had work to do, and we see no indication that Paul believed his life would end.

A PROMISE FULFILLED

Paul would be permitted to live outside of typical Roman imprisonment under house arrest. He would preach the gospel for two years while awaiting his appeal to Caesar.

- **Paul's desire** was to go to Rome (Acts 19:21; Romans 1:15), and **the promise Jesus made** to Paul in Jerusalem—that he would make it to Rome (Acts 23:11)—**had now been fulfilled.**

"AFTER THREE DAYS..."

Paul called the Jewish leaders to him to clear the air. He wanted them to know that **he had not forsaken Israel** and still considered them brothers, that **he was innocent** and the Romans were willing to release him, that **he didn't hold anything against his accusers,** and that **he was a prisoner because of his belief in the Messiah**, "the hope of Israel."

PROCLAIMING LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES

The Jewish leaders in and around Rome had not received any information from Jerusalem about Paul and the accusations, but **they were curious** to hear about "this sect" of Judaism.

- **Paul, though a prisoner, held a captive audience**—even writing, while in Roman custody, about how the message of Jesus had reached the palace guards (Philippians 1:13).

TRUTH (ACTS 28:23–31)

"EXPOUNDED AND TESTIFIED"

Paul held a dialogue with the Jews through the night until morning, **explaining how the Old Testament spoke of Jesus.**

- Paul **testified of the Kingdom of God**, most likely explaining Jesus' teaching that God wanted to **establish a spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men** and not a political, earthly kingdom like so many incorrectly expected.

MIXED RESULTS

Paul spent a day presenting truth, unpacking OT scriptures, and showing how the Law of Moses and the prophets all pointed to Jesus. "**Some were persuaded…but others did not believe."**

- If Paul's preaching yielded mixed results, then **we should come to expect the same as well.**

"THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS RIGHT"

Those who accepted it began arguing with those who rejected it, so Paul used the words of the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 6:9–10) to explain their rejection of the gospel.

- What Isaiah essentially said is that **all will have the opportunity to come face to face with truth, but some will reject it, refusing to turn to God and be healed.**

STILL TRUE TODAY

The words of the prophet Isaiah were fulfilled by the Jewish people but may also be repeating with some of us today.

- Are we **listening to truth without applying it**? Are we **always looking** for something to satisfy what we want to hear? Have we **grown callous** to the Word because we've heard it all before?

SEEING THE NEED

- Do we still work to the glory of God, even in seasons of relief and replenishment?
- Are we looking to Christ to strengthen, encourage, and guide us?
- We are all prone to weakness, discouragement, and straying away.
- It is only in Christ that will we not grow weary (Galatians 6:9).

HEARING THE INVITATION

- Jesus said, "Come to me…" (Matthew 11:28).
- The invitation is to come as you are.
- The promise is to receive rest and peace.
- The result—when we yoke ourselves to Him, where we learn by following Him—is that our burdens are light compared to the heavy burdens we carry alone. It's also where we experience transformation.