THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 1ST, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

LOCALS (ACTS 28:1–10)

AN ISLAND CALLED MALTA

After 14 days of terror on the sea and a short swim to shore, everyone made it to land safely. God's promise was fulfilled.

- Malta is 18 miles long, eight miles wide, and about 60 miles south of Sicily.
- At the time of the shipwreck, Malta had been under Roman control for almost 300 years.
- Luke called the locals barbarians, but the name Malta meant "a place of refuge."

DIFFERENT, BUT KIND

Luke may not have understood their language, but he recognized their kindness.

- They lit a fire and accepted all of the survivors: Romans, sailors, and prisoners.
- There is no indication that these locals were Believers. The opposite seems to be true.
- Yet they were still accepting of those in need.
- **Are we setting conditions for caring for others?**

SHAKING OFF THE SNAKE

As the fire grew, Paul added some branches, and a warm snake came out, bit Paul on the hand, and stayed connected.

- The locals saw this as a message from their god(s) that Paul must be a guilty man and justice was being done.
- When he shook off the snake and didn't die, they changed their minds and believed Paul must be a god.

THE LEADING MAN OF THE ISLAND

Publius had a large estate on the island, possibly large enough to host everyone from the ship.

- As Publius showed great hospitality, Paul had the opportunity to demonstrate the grace of God towards this family of unbelievers.
- The locals didn't withhold kindness, and Paul didn't withhold God's grace.

THE REST OF THE SICK WERE HEALED

Paul specifically prayed for healing, and Publius' father was healed.

- It seems that **every person on the island who had a disease was also healed.**
- We may not have confirmation of their salvation, but we can be sure that Paul prayed to God for each person and shared the gospel with everyone who could hear. Their response was a blessing to everyone from the shipwreck.

WELCOME TO ROME (ACTS 28:11–22)

ANOTHER GRAIN SHIP

After three months on Malta, they set sail toward Rome on another Alexandrian ship.

- It was still winter and not the best time for ship travel, but Paul was on a mission and the new sailors had faith in their gods.
- Through God's benevolence, the ship made good time and brought them to a port where other Believers were found.

A WEEK WITH CHRISTIANS

Paul and his companions had been through an extreme storm, then had an amazing opportunity to witness to an entire island.

- Now, he was with other Believers, where he found comfort as he prepared for the final 130 miles of his journey to Rome.
- **All faithful Believers will need times of rest and recovery as we prepare for the next part of our journey.**

MORE BELIEVERS

Paul was even more encouraged when he was met by Believers from different areas who came to escort him into Rome.

- About three years before this moment, he had written to Roman Believers, telling them of his longing to visit them and his desire to gain their support for another stage of his journey.
- **They were preparing him to face his final ordeal in Rome with courage.**

MORE OPPORTUNITIES

It's worth noting that Paul was allowed to live by himself and especially that a soldier guarded him.

- The job of guarding Paul would have been rotational among the whole Praetorian Guard.
- As we know Paul, he would take the opportunity to witness to each one who was chained to his wrist (Philippians 1:13).
- **Are we seeing our opportunities or just our struggles?**

THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

Paul called for a meeting with the leaders of the Jews in Rome.

- In a few sentences, he reviewed his last four years, but his goal was to declare that it all happened so he could share the hope of Israel: Jesus.
- **It is an amazing step of spiritual growth when we realize that God uses every part of our lives—even the pain—to fulfill His plan** (Romans 8:28).

"WE WANT TO HEAR"

The leaders hadn't heard anything bad about Paul, but they had heard about Christians, and people everywhere were speaking against them.

- The leaders had questions about what Paul was sharing and gave him unrestricted access to a large number of Jews who didn't know Christ.
- **Once again, God would send people to Paul.**
- **He is still sending people to His messengers.**

RESPONSES (ACTS 28:23–31)

AN ARRANGED DAY

Paul couldn't go to the synagogue or address an assembly, so they came to him.

- After a full day of pleading the truth of the gospel with them, some were persuaded and others did not believe.
- **Although he desired for all Jews to become Believers, Paul knew his mission was to share and God's mission is to save.**

"GO TO THESE PEOPLE AND SAY"

Because they would not truly listen to the truth, they would never really understand, perceive, see, or become what God was offering.

- It was a heart problem that God was willing to heal, but they refused.
- **They didn't just walk away from Paul; they walked away from the Truth.**

WHEN THE TRUTH HURTS

When faced with God's prophecy about about their response to His offer of salvation, some just walked away.

- Paul was no longer using his knowledge or wisdom to persuade.
- The Holy Spirit is the stated author of what was written next.

THE TRUTH WAS STILL SHARED

Paul shared with whoever was left that the message of salvation had been sent to the Gentiles and they were listening.

- The best news is that for the next two years, Paul proclaimed the Kingdom of God to whoever visited him.
- **Everyone who walked away may have had a chance to return and accept the truth.**

CARE

- We all care about something.
- **We should care about others.**
- **We tend to limit how much we care to what we know about others. How fortunate are we that someone (Christ) cared about us when they knew all the bad stuff about us?**

BOUNDARIES AND FILTERS

- It's good to set boundaries.
- **We should have filters in our lives.**
- **Boundaries and filters are meant to protect. It seems that many people have hijacked those terms to push people out of their lives. Safety was never meant to be seclusion. How can we have an impact on this culture if we won't engage**?

FEAR

- What are we afraid of?
- **Some people won't listen, but some will.**
- "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment" (2 Timothy 1:7).
- **STOP HOLDING BACK!**
- **PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL!**