

ACTS CHAPTER 28

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

PAUL’S MINISTRY ON MALTA– VS. 1-10

Act 28:1 Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta.

Act 28:2 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.

Act 28:3 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.

Act 28:4 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."

Act 28:5 But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

Act 28:6 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.

Act 28:7 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.

Act 28:8 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.

Act 28:9 So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed.

Act 28:10 They also honored us in many ways; and when we departed, they provided such things as were necessary.

v. 1 This is the island which we know today as Malta. The bay where this took place is known today as Saint Paul's Bay. Certainly in the incident of this shipwreck and the landing of Paul on the island of Melita we see the providence of God in the life of the apostle Paul. All of this is recorded for our learning..

v. 2 And the barbarians - So the Romans and Greeks termed all nations but their own. But surely the generosity shown by these uncultivated inhabitants of Malta, was far more valuable than all the varnish which the politest education could give, where it taught not humanity and compassion.

v. 3 Notice that the great apostle Paul gathered sticks. These people on the island had been very gracious to them. They had accepted 276 strangers who landed there. It was cold and rainy, and they had started a big fire to help warm these people who had come in from the sea. When the fire began to go down, Paul went out to gather a bundle of sticks.

v. 4 Seeing also his chains, Doubtless this man is a murderer - They look upon him as a dead man already. They erred in imagining, that calamities must always be interpreted as judgments. Let us guard against this, lest, like them, we condemn not only the innocent, but the excellent of the earth. "*natives*" – Barbaroi – uttering of unintelligible sounds. Non- Greek or non-Latin languages – ancestors of Phoenicia and Carthage – Punic language.

vs. 5-6 Paul suffered no ill effects from the venom. When folk today deliberately pick up snakes and claim that promise as their protection, they are far afield from what God had in mind. When they saw that no harm came to Paul, they decided that he certainly could not be a criminal but was instead a god. Although they were equally as wrong in this judgment, it did give Paul a very important contact on the island of Melita here.

vs. 7-8 Paul was now exercising his gift as an apostle. He entered in and he prayed. Apparently he did not pray for the man; he prayed for himself. That is, he prayed to determine the will of God. Was this man to be healed through Paul? That is what he prayed to know.

v. 9-10 It is very important for us to realize that Paul preached the gospel and that the healing was the result of it. It was the evidence of the truth he was preaching. Paul did exactly the same here as he did everywhere he went. According to tradition almost all the inhabitants were converted. Publis was the first bishop of Malta, later succeeded Doinsysius as bishop of Athens. Jerome says he suffered martyrdom.

V. 9 *So when this was done, the rest of those on the island who had diseases also came and were healed.*

Now Paul began a ministry there. He began to touch many people with the power of God. And as we see this, **suddenly we begin to understand a lot of things.**

We begin to understand the storm that drove the ship. It wasn't haphazard. The Lord was at the wheel.

He was guiding in the storm. We know that **He was present with Paul in the storm.** The Lord was

bringing Paul to the island of Malta because the Lord knew there were people there whose hearts were open to the gospel. And so **though it seemed like a great tragedy, behind the scenes God was guiding and God was opening up a marvelous door of ministry to Paul.** They could not see it at the time. They had given up hope of even surviving the storm. Paul had even become discouraged because the Lord when He came to him and He spoke to him, said be of good cheer! And the Lord assured Paul that he would get to Rome. He had to appear before Caesar. But rather than spending the winter in this port in Crete, the

Lord wanted Paul to spend the winter on the island of Malta. And Paul, you remember, was warning them that if you take off this time of the year, I perceive there is going to be a lot of trouble. There are going to be some real problems. They didn't listen to Paul. Paul was probably upset. They didn't take my advice. But **yet we see the hand of God behind the scenes guiding.**

So many times we do not see the hand of God behind the often adverse circumstances that we are facing.

It look to us like tragedy. It looks to us like the end.

And **many times we are prone to despair over our circumstances because we cannot see what God is doing.** The purposes or the plan of God that He is working out. But if we are children of God. If we have committed our lives to Him, we can be sure that all things are working together for good. Though unknown to us or unseen by us, **God's hand is guiding our lives and the circumstances of our lives.** And He has a plan, a purpose and a ministry for us to fulfill.

ARRIVAL AT ROME – VS. 11-16

Act 28:11 After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers, which had wintered at the island.

Act 28:12 And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days.

Act 28:13 From there we circled round and reached Rhegium. And after one day the south wind blew; and the next day we came to Puteoli,

Act 28:14 where we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days. And so we went toward Rome.

Act 28:15 And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum (40 miles from Rome) and Three Inns (12 miles further). When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

Act 28:16 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.

PAUL’S MINISTRY AT ROME – VS. 17-31

Act 28:17 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,

Act 28:18 who, when they had examined me, wanted to let me go, because there was no cause for putting me to death.

Act 28:19 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.

Act 28:20 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."

Act 28:21 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.

Act 28:22 But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere."

Act 28:23 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.

v. 11 Since Paul stayed in Melita for three months, it is evident that the few verses given to us here are not the complete story of his ministry on that island. Third ship – "*Twin Brothers*" – sons of Zeus or Castor and Pollus – revered by sailors; "gods" of navigation – their constellation, Gemini, was supposed to give good luck in a storm.

vs. 12-13 The storm is over. The Euroclydon, that tempestuous wind from the north, is passed. Now there is a south wind blowing again Syracuse – Sicily – 80 miles; Seventy miles to Rhegium, the toe of Italy. 180 miles to Puteoli "wells" – bay of Naples was 120 miles from Rome.

vs. 14-15 Paul is now on the Appian Way. Again we see how important the encouragement of believers was to the apostle Paul. Some travelled farther than others. Christians travel different distances to learn more. Remember the Wise Men from the East-travelled a year and half or more.

v. 16 Paul apparently had the freedom to live in a house, but he was always guarded by a soldier. In fact, different soldiers took turns on guard duty. Tacitus says that Paul arrived in March 61 A.D. in the 7th year of Nero.

vs. 17-18 We see Paul following his usual pattern of approaching the Jews first. He explains to them why he has been brought to Rome.

v. 19 When the Jews opposed it - He speaks tenderly of them, not mentioning their repeated attempts to murder him. Not that I had any thing to accuse my nation of - Not that I had any design to accuse others or my nation, Israel, but merely to defend myself and clear my name.

v. 20 The hope of Israel - What Israel hopes for, namely, the Messiah and the resurrection.

v. 21 We have neither received letters concerning you - There must have been a peculiar providence in this, nor has any of the brethren - The Jews, related - Professedly, in a set discourse, or spoke - Occasionally, in conversation, any evil of thee - How must the bridle then have been in their mouth!

v. 22 This sect we know is everywhere spoken against - This is no proof at all of a bad cause, but a very probable mark of a good one.

v. 23 To whom he expounded from both the Law and the Prophets, (Possibly, Gen. 22; Ex. 12; Lev. 11; Ps. 22; Is. 53; Micah 5; Zech 11) testifying **the kingdom of God**, and persuading **them concerning Jesus** - These were his two grand topics, That the kingdom of the Messiah was of a spiritual, not temporal nature: That Jesus of Nazareth was the very person foretold, as the Lord of that kingdom.

And **even through tragedy God works**. You see with God **the most important thing is that you are in eternity with Him in His kingdom. That’s fundamental! That’s primary!** And whatever it takes to bring you to that place of complete commitment and surrender, God is willing to allow hardships, the storms, to bring you to the place where He has planned to work through your life and in your life. Now **even this venomous viper fastening onto Paul**. God had a purpose in that. The purpose of God was to cause these people to realize that there was a divine power at work in this man’s life. **It opened the door for Paul to be able to minister now to the people because they looked up to him, realizing the power of God was upon his life.** Had the venomous viper not fastened onto Paul and he shook it off without any harm, he probably wouldn’t have been noticed at all. But because of this what could be looked at as a very unfortunate, horrible, kind of an experience. How could God allow that to happen to Paul? **God used it to open doors for ministry.** We’ve got to be careful of snap judgments of our situation. We need to realize that God is at work and that God has a purpose in all that He does and in all that He allows. And through the storm, God will guide us to those places where He knows there are people who need ministry.

Vs. 30-31 Paul kept "open house" and received anybody who wanted to discuss the things of the kingdom of God. He was chained to a guard who was relieved every six hours, but who was forced to listen as Paul preached and taught and prayed. No wonder some of them were saved! (Phi 1:12-14; Phi 4:22)

During these two years in Rome, Paul wrote Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. He expected to be released (Phi 1:23-27; Phi 2:24; Phm 1:22) and most students agree that he was. During this time, he had Timothy with him (Phi 1:1; Phi 2:19; Col 1:1), as well as John Mark, Luke, Aristarchus, Epaphras, Justus, and Demas (Col 4:10-14; Phm 1:24). He also met Philemon’s runaway slave Onesimus and led him to faith in Christ (Phm 1:10-21). Epaphroditus brought a gift to him from the Philippian church and almost died ministering to Paul (Phi 2:25-30; Phi 4:18). Tychicus was Paul’s "mailman" who delivered Ephesians (Eph 6:21), Colossians, and Philemon (Col 4:7-9).

ACTS CHAPTER 28

OBSERVATION

Act 28:24 And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

Act 28:25 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,

Act 28:26 saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY: "HEARING YOU WILL HEAR, AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE, AND NOT PERCEIVE;

Act 28:27 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." '

Act 28:28 "Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!"

Act 28:29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves.

Act 28:30 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him,

Act 28:31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

INTERPRETATION

v. 24 And some believed the things that were spoken - With the heart, as well as understanding. Some believed; some didn't! And you?

v. 25 The Holy Spirit spoke rightly to your fathers - Which is equally applicable to you.

vs. 26-27 Quoted 6 times – more than any other Old Testament passage: - Matthew 13:14; Mark 4:12; Luke 8:10; John 12:40;

Romans 11:8; Acts 28:26-27 - The words are a prophecy concerning the people of the Jews, which began to be accomplished in the times of Isaiah; and were again fulfilled in the times of some after prophets; and had been in part fulfilled under the more plain and easy ministry of Christ. The judicial blindness here predicted was to go on among Israel, until the land of Judea was utterly destroyed by the Romans, and the cities and houses thereof left without any inhabitants; all which accordingly came to pass: for that this prophecy refers to the times of the Messiah, and to the people of the Jews, is clear from this one observation made by Christ himself, that Isaiah foretold those things when he saw the glory of the Messiah, and spoke of him, Joh_12:40 and because it was to have, and had, its accomplishment over and over again in that people. The sense of the prophecy is, with respect to the times of the Messiah, that the Jews, while hearing the sermons preached by him, whether with, or without parables, should hear his voice, and the sound of it, but not understand his words internally, spiritually, and experimentally; and whilst they saw, with the eyes of their bodies, the miracles he wrought, they should see the facts done, which could not be denied and gainsayed by them, but should not take in the clear evidence, full proof, and certain demonstration given thereby, of his Messiahship.

v. 28 The salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles - Namely, from this time. Before this no apostle had been at Rome. St. Paul was the first.

v. 29 Great discussion or debates. That is, the part which believed that Jesus was the Messiah Act 28:24 discussed the subject warmly with those who did not believe.

v. 30 And Paul continued two whole years - After which this book was written, long before Paul's death, and was undoubtedly published Luke, who continued with him to the last, 2Ti 4:11. And received all that came to him - Whether they were Jews or Gentiles. These two years completed twenty - five years after our Savior's passion. Such progress had the Gospel made by that time, in the parts of the world which lay west of Jerusalem, by the ministry of St. Paul among the Gentiles. **cf - Philippians 1:12-13; 4:22**

v. 31 Such was the victory of the word of God. While Paul was preaching at Rome, the Gospel shone with its highest luster. Here the Acts of the Apostles end; and ends with great advantage. Jerome says that Paul was beheaded in the 14th year of Nero – 68 A.D.

2 Tim. 4:6-22

APPLICATION

Luke ended his book before Paul's case had been heard, so he could not give us the results of the trial. We have every reason to believe that Paul was indeed released and that he resumed his ministry, probably traveling as far as Spain (Rom 15:24, Rom 15:28). **During this period (a.d. 63-66/67), he wrote letters to Timothy and Titus.** He left Titus in Crete (Ti 1:5), Trophimus sick in Miletus (2Ti 4:20), and Timothy in Ephesus (1Ti 1:3). He planned to meet some of his helpers at Nicopolis (Ti 3:12-13) after he had visited some of the churches he had established. Wherever he went, he sought to bring Jews and Gentiles to faith in Jesus Christ.

He was arrested again, probably about the year 67, and this time his situation was changed drastically. He did not live in a house, but was chained in a prison and treated like a criminal (2Ti 1:16; 2Ti 2:9). Winter was coming, and he asked Timothy to bring him his cloak (2Ti 4:13). But the saddest thing about this second imprisonment was his being forsaken by the believers in Rome (2Ti 4:16-17). The great apostle to the Gentiles was abandoned by the very people he came to assist. Even Demas forsook him, and only Luke was with him (2Ti 4:10-11). The family of Onesiphorus ministered to his needs (2Ti 1:16-18), but he longed for Timothy and Mark to come to be at his side (2Ti 1:4; 2Ti 4:9, 2Ti 4:21). Paul knew that the end was coming (2Ti 4:6-8). **Tradition tells us that he was beheaded at Rome in a.d. 67/68.**

Luke did not write his book simply to record ancient history. **He wrote to encourage the church in every age to be faithful to the Lord and carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth.** "What was begun with so much heroism ought to be continued with ardent zeal," said Charles Spurgeon, "since we are assured that the same Lord is mighty still to carry on His heavenly designs." "Lo, I am with you always!"

ACTS CHAPTER 28

OBSERVATION

I Love to Tell the Story – Joslin Grove Choral Society

*I love to tell the story of unseen things above,
of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story, because I know 'tis true;
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.*

Refrain:

*I love to tell the story, 'twill be my theme in glory,
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.*

*I love to tell the story; 'tis pleasant to repeat
what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet.
I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
the message of salvation from God's own holy Word.
(Refrain)*

*4. I love to tell the story, for those who know it best
seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.
And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
'twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.
(Refrain)*

INTERPRETATION

2Ti 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

2Ti 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

2Ti 4:9 Be diligent to come to me quickly;

2Ti 4:10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

2Ti 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.

2Ti 4:12 And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

2Ti 4:13 Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.

2Ti 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works.

2Ti 4:15 You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words.

2Ti 4:16 At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them.

2Ti 4:17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

2Ti 4:18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

2Ti 4:19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

2Ti 4:20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick.

2Ti 4:21 Do your utmost to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.

2Ti 4:22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

If you suffer for cause of Christ without succeeding, someone will succeed after you!!!

Conversely if you are succeeding without suffering, someone who was suffering has gone before you, ultimately Christ Jesus!

APPLICATION

Questions:

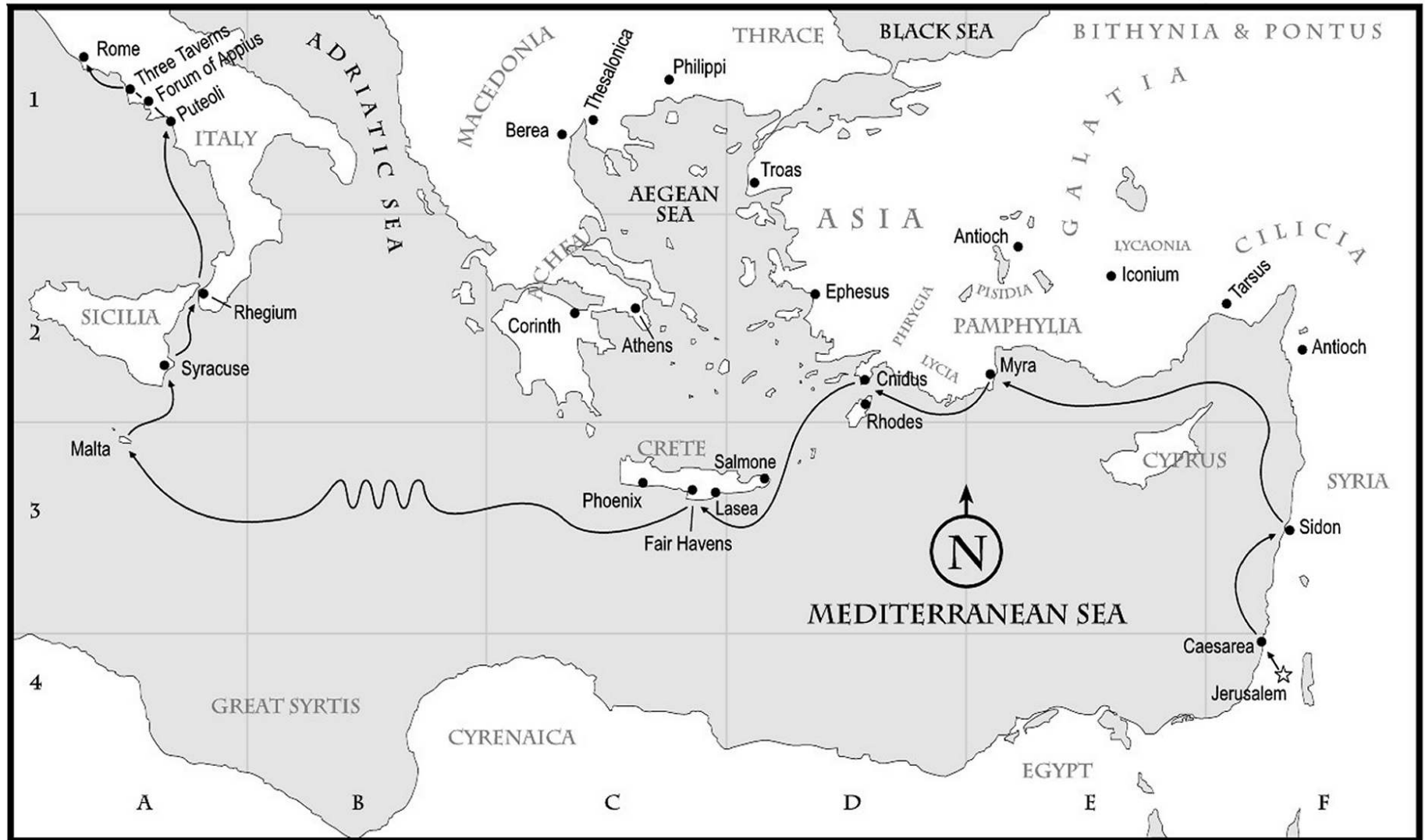
1. Can you clearly see how God worked through tragedy to accomplish His purposes in the Book of Acts? Were the tragedies in chapters 27-28 from Satan or from God?
2. Can you give an example in your life?
3. How was the poisonous viper incident used to further the gospel? Are you aware of how important it is the way you “shake off” sneaky snakes?
4. When Paul met the brethren in v. 15, what did he do? What does that tell us?
5. What principle did Paul continue to follow even in Rome? (v. 17)
6. What two things did Paul concentrate on during his discussions with the Jews. (vs.22-23)
7. What is the most often quoted Old Testament passage in the Bible?
8. Why didn't all of the listeners respond to Paul's teaching and receive Christ? To what can unbelief in the face of preaching be attributed? (v. 26 – Deliberately hard hearts, deaf ears and closed eyes). Those who don't want to see, won't see. Those who don't want to hear, won't hear. Do you think that unless that was done the power of the gospel and of the Scriptures would cause you to believe against your will. God won't allow that!
9. What was one of the results of their unbelief mentioned in v. 28?
10. What three main advantages were there in Paul being a prisoner? (witness expanded; books written; his ministry authenticated by suffering)

ACTS CHAPTER 28

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION



PAUL'S SHIPWRECKED ROUTE FROM CAESAREA (JERUSALEM) TO ROME

Act 9:15-16 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. [16] For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."