

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 10) 04 Feb Acts 20-21 Delivered
- 11) 11 Feb Acts 22-25 The Testimony
- 12) 18 Feb Acts 26-27 Answering Critics
- 13) 25 Feb Acts 28 Always on Mission

INTRODUCTION

- **Historical Note.** Roman Emperor Claudius (aka, Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus) reigned from 41-54 AD. Claudius expelled Jews from Rome in 49 AD for creating disturbances because of Christ (see [Acts 18:2](#)). After Claudius' death, Jews began to return to Rome under the new Caesar, Nero, who was Claudius' grand-nephew and adopted son. Nero reigned from 54-68 AD. Paul is heading for Rome ~60 AD, and would spend 2 years there.
- In this last chapter of Acts, we see Paul healing everyone on the island of Malta of any & every ailment before arriving in Rome. Wow! Is this a one-of-a-kind event or a repeatable event?
 Yes | No | Maybe | Don' Know | Don't Care
- **Responses to the Gospel:** From the time of Paul's 1st missionary journey recorded in Acts 13 to his appearing in Rome, we see the following responses to the Gospel presentation:
 - ♦ Opposition ([Acts 13:8,50](#); [14:19](#); [16:22-24](#))
 - ♦ Rioting ([17:5](#); [19:23-41](#); [21:27-36](#); [22:22-29](#))
 - ♦ Division ([14:4](#); [19:9](#); [28:24](#))
 - ♦ Insult ([13:45](#))
 - ♦ Argument ([17:18](#))
 - ♦ Curiosity ([17:20](#))
 - ♦ Belief ([13:12](#); [14:1](#); [16:31-34](#); [17:4,34](#); [19:17-20](#); [28:24](#))
 - ♦ Ridicule ([17:32](#))
 - ♦ Interest ([17:32](#))
 - ♦ Joy ([13:48](#))
- What kind of responses have you witnessed in recent memory?

Passage	Comments
Acts 28:1-10	<p>Providence or Accident or Coincidence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1. Was the shipwreck on the island of Malta a providential work of God or a freak accident? • v3. Was the snake an accident or godly providence? • v6. Why would the islanders say Paul was a god? Would this information be critical in how Paul reached out to them with the Gospel or trivial? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ How have you altered your witnessing style based on what you know about your audience? • v8. Notice the illness of Publius' dad – “fever and dysentery.” Was this on par with Timothy's ailments, or Trophimus' or Epaphroditus' illnesses, which Paul could not heal? 1Tim 5:23; 2Tim 4:20; Phil 2:25 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe <input type="checkbox"/> Don' Know <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Care • v9. Now notice the other ailments and how many Paul healed on Malta – “The rest of the people who had diseases were coming to him and getting cured” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Was this on par with how Jesus healed every one of everything, ever time, & everywhere He went? (Mat 4:23-24; 8:16-17; 9:26, 35; 10:1-9; 12:15-16; 14:14-21; 14:35-36; 15:30-38; 19:2; 21:14) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Maybe <input type="checkbox"/> Don' Know <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Care • How many people got healed? <input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> All • How many got saved on the island of Malta? <input type="checkbox"/> Some <input type="checkbox"/> All <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Don' Know <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Care • If eternal salvation is more important than temporal healings, why didn't Luke record anyone on Malta getting saved? Consider this. Is the book of Acts more descriptive or prescriptive of the church age? Answer: Acts is more descriptive. IOW, it describes what happened in the Early Church, & not prescribes what should happen in churches today. Apostles & supernatural miracles were for then, but not for now.

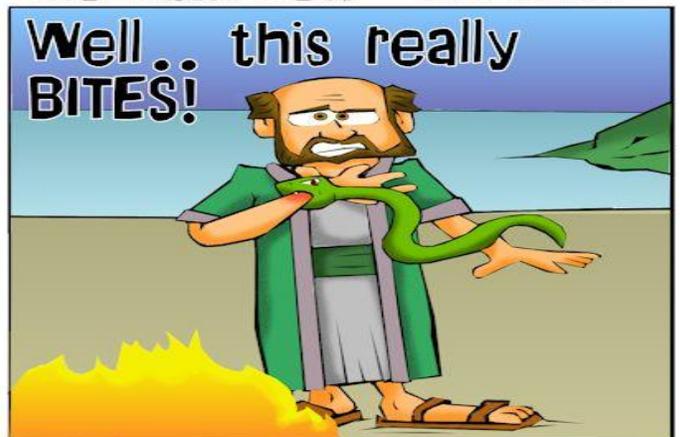
Passage	Comments
28:11-16	<p>Paul Arrives in Rome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv14-15. Paul took courage when fellow believers sought him out. Why is friendship so critical? Consider this. God wants to call each of us “friends” which means we need to show ourselves friendly, loyal, accessible, trustworthy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Have we spent time with God this week? ♦ Have we been friendly toward our loved ones, family, friends, and strangers? ♦ Have we sacrificed anything to help a friend? ♦ Have we sought out and shown friendliness to those in ministry? How can we do so?
28:17-31	<p>Fake News and Strong Biases Doomed Some</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v22. Fake News – This sect (cult) is spoken against everywhere – But WHY, if its beliefs saves lives? • v23. From morning until evening Paul took the time to expound, explain, persuade, & solemnly testify about God's Kingdom. What can one talk about for 16+ hours? Heaven? Creation? Resurrections? Jesus being 100% God and 100% Man? The Holy Spirit? Probably all that and many more good topics! • v24. And some believed. How can we be prepared to logically expound the Gospel to those who ask for the reason of hope that is in us? 1Peter 3:15 • vv33-31. Paul was in Rome 2 years preaching the Kingdom of God with unhindered freedom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ God showed favor toward Paul. He literally “prepared a banquet table in the presence of [Paul's] enemies” (Ps 23:5). Can He do the same for us? No reason why not if it brings Him glory!

THE REST OF THE STORY

- Paul was eventually released after 2 years in Rome. Tradition says Paul made it to Spain, but eventually ended up back in Rome.
- The New Testament does not say when or how Paul died, but some early church fathers state he was beheaded by Nero. The date of Paul's death is believed to have occurred after the Great Fire of Rome in July 64 AD but before the last year of Nero's reign in 68 AD

NEXT WEEK: 1Cor 1-3. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth, and he writes them a letter some time later to try to fix some divisions, false teachings, immoral issues, and misuse of spiritual gifts. Even the best of teachers can have some wayward students.

The Back Pew – Jeff Larson



Paul is bit by a SNAKE, but shakes it off and is unharmed ([Acts 28:1-6](#)) ...& this was the inspiration for the First Snake Handler Church on the Island of Malta