

November 27, 2022

“Post Traumatic Rest”

Acts 28:1-16

Prel Rmks

LOGW

Transition

(1) 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.

INTRODUCTION

Traumatic experience – 14 days ~ given up all hope ~ Paul

They all recognized that something very unlikely had happened

Luke and the other Christians on board recognized it was God's hand that saved their lives that day

Acts 27:44 and the rest, some on boards and some on *parts* of the ship. And so it was that **they** all **escaped** safely to land. **Diasozo** – to be brought safely through NASB & ESV

Same in – **Acts 28:1** Now when **they** had **escaped**

Thankful! – Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus and perhaps others

Psalms 107 – forms a backdrop for our text vv. **21-32**

The storms of life – Wiersbe

Storms often come because of disobedience to the will of God

our own disobedience or the disobedience of others

the disobedience of others can cause consequences for us and collateral damage in our lives and vice-versa

Storms have a way of revealing character

contrast between Paul & the sailors (& Julius)

Even the worst storms cannot hide the face of God or hinder His purposes – no sun or stars (darkness) but God was there

Storms can give us opportunities to serve others and bear witness to Jesus Christ.

So quite a traumatic time they went through, but they were brought safely through by the hand of God ...

In our text today, we see that God had brought them through to a time of rest after their time of great trauma

We see this first of all in –

I. Their Warm Welcome on Malta 1-10

3 scenes – Their first arrival / Paul snake-bitten / Publius

Their First Arrival – it was literally a warm welcome

(1) Now when they had escaped, they then found out that the island was called Malta.

Melita = GK = honey sweet or sweetness. Produced honey.
Original name predated the Greek = refuge – a place of shelter, protection, safety, and rest or relief (to this day)

(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.

17x9 St. Thomas Bay
 (D.I. = 12x1 at east end)
 “Accepted” them
 Storm was still raging – storms sometimes bring out the best in people

Second scene – Paul being bitten by a poisonous viper 1-6

(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.

poisonous snake
 stiff from cold – hibernating

(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."

Vengeance – one of their gods
 People have an innate understanding that there are certain absolute principles ...
 right & wrong

(5) But he shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

Once again, God was with Paul

(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.

Acts 14 – Paul and Barnabas in Lystra ~ healed a crippled man who had never walked ~ “the Gods have come down to us”
Barnabas = Zeus
Paul = Hermes
Intending to sacrifice

Almost all of the commentators on this section point out how this shows how quickly people jump to conclusions that are wrong:

{Business man was at a convention ... rumor:

Texas	Pennsylvania
Oil	Coal
Made/Million	\$100,000 / Lost
Me	Brother}

They had it all wrong about Paul ... not a murderer/ not a god

Third scene: The encounter with Publius 7-10

(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.

Chief – the Roman governor

(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.

Very common disease in those days – often fatal

Apostolic miracle – 2 Cor. 12:12

Purpose – authenticate the ministry of the messenger

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

After this Paul had the attention of everyone on the island

Conspicuously not mentioned that he preached the Gospel and shared the Gospel ...
“Goes without saying” ...

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

Showed respect ~ showed that they valued us ~ went to expense

They didn't have anything
They had lost everything

They couldn't have asked for a better place to shipwreck

God saw to it that Paul and his fellow Christians were cared for – and the others with them, as well

This is another example of how the remnant of believers in the world have a preserving influence – {Sodom} {U.S.}

Believers are a blessing to a nation even if not recognized

Their Warm Welcome on Malta

God gave them rest

After such a traumatic time at sea

God brought them to a place of refuge

To a place of rest – 3 months

That brings us to the second section of our text

Not only Their Warm Welcome on Malta, but –

II. Their Encouraging Entry to Rome 11-16

The rest of the journey to Rome saw encouragement at every turn ...

instead of difficulty – smooth sailing
instead of danger – safe passage

It was all very encouraging

(11) After three months we sailed in an Alexandrian ship

I wonder what they were thinking ???

whose figurehead was the Twin Brothers,

Castor and Pollux – Gk mythology – sons of Zeus
Who were believed to be protectors of sailors

which had wintered at the island.

(12) And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days.

Map – SE portion of Sicily

(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,

Tip of the boot of Italy

Mainland of Italy – major port

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

hospitality

(15) And from there, when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and Three Inns.

From those in Puteoli
43 miles south of Rome
30 miles south of Rome

When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage.

The literal meaning of encouragement

(16) Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard;

Julius

but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself

Not even considered one of the prisoners – special status

with the soldier who guarded him.

How encouraging it must have been to Paul – ability to have some privacy so he could write

What a blessing in the lives of the soldiers who would guard him!

So Paul finally arrives in Rome

19:21 from Ephesus

Written to the Romans 3 years earlier in Corinth

Paul had thought about it ~ dreamed about it ~ God had confirmed it to him that it would come to pass

And at long last it did!

Conclusion

Storms don't last forever

God brings the storms to an end

Ps. 107 – He calms the storm, so that its waves are still

God gives His children rest

Ps. 107 – They they are glad because they are quiet

He arranges for their encouragement

Ps. 107 – So He guides them to their desired haven

“God Leads His Dear Children Along”

In shady green pastures so rich and so sweet
 God leads His dear children along
 Where the water’s cool flow, bathe the weary one’s feet
 God leads His dear children along

Sometimes on the mount where the sun shines so bright
 God leads His dear children along
 Sometimes in the valley in darkest of night
 God leads His dear children along

Though sorrows befall us and Satan oppose
 God leads His dear children along
 Through grace we can conquer defeat all our foes.
 God leads His dear children along

(chorus)

Some through the waters
 Some through the flood
 Some through the fire
 But all through the blood
 Some through great sorrow
 But God gives a song
 In the night season and all the day long

Psalm 107 – Oh that men would give thanks to the Lord for His
 lovingkindness And for His wonderful works to the children of men.

Are you one of God’s dear children?