

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.

**native people** are designated “barbarians” (*barbaroi*), this was what they called people who did not speak Greek. Malta means place of refuge - people not the harbor - Luke points out their Christlike qualities

3 But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire,

Paul’s servant heart was always evident. Evangelist heart as well, to work alongside the natives

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.”

It rains on the just and the unjust. We all get snake bites. Serving the Lord doesn’t protect you from the viper, makes you vulnerable to the viper - it didn’t just nibble - **fastened on his hand**.

**Justice** is actually a reference to the Greek goddess of justice, *Dike, Dice - scales -* .

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

Paul doesn’t overreact - reaction seems calm and unconcerned: **He shook off the creature into the fire**.

Euroaclydons - Vipers - Paul was protected by a promise of God. *You must also bear witness at Rome, [Acts 23:11](#)*), and Paul wasn’t to Rome yet.

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.

Humans are naturally extremist - murderer to god - no chips - bag of chips - lack contentment - insatiable

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.

Publius (Roman Representative), his **father** most likely has an infection caused by goat’s milk called “Malta fever.”

Paul went in to him and prayed, and he laid his hands on him and healed him.

God healed this man; God did the work, but Paul made himself ready and available for the work.

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

This word for **healed** is not the customary word for a miraculous healing - literally means, “*to receive medical attention*.” Luke may have served as a medical missionary on Malta. - Familiar to Jesus healing Peter’s MIL

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.

**Revival - recuperation - provision** - March (c. a.d. 60), when, after the winter, it became safe to sail. Back on an Alexandrian grain ship - Castor and Pollux, the **twin** sons of Zeus and Leda, - **gods** who protected seamen.

12 And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days.

Archimedes, the famous mathematician, had lived at **Syracuse**. When the Romans conquered the island, a soldier put a dagger to his throat as he worked on a math problem, drawing in the dirt. 500 miles from Rome

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.

Paul's party was met by Roman Christians at two points along the way to Rome—the **Forum** (or “marketplace”) **of Appius**, 40 miles from Rome, and 12 miles farther on at **Three Taverns** - Imagine the witness to Julias and the other prisoners - **friends and family in Christ - thankful and strengthened**

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.

New shift every four hours - In [Philippians 1:13](#), Paul told of how his message reached the palace guards of Rome. Chained together - Prisoner Paul had a captive audience.

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

Paul followed his consistent practice of going to the Jews first in every city he came to as an evangelist. It took him only **three days** to have a meeting with the **leaders of the Jews** in Rome.

He declared his innocence of transgressing any Jewish law, even the Romans wanted to let me go

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.

Even though I had no plans on making charges against them, since they wanted to put me to death - I appealed to Caesar and ended up a prisoner of Rome.

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.”

Those are my circumstances - Here is God's reason I am her - Jesus is **The hope of Israel** is the coming of the Messiah as attested by his resurrection

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.

There was no case against Paul - there best shot was Tertullus the orator

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

They watched too much TV, and had never heard the other side of the story - Hope of Israel.

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.

Paul's message was the **kingdom of God** and **Jesus**. The kingdom represents the fulfillment of God's saving promises to his people. Paul's version of the Road to Emmaus teaching of Jesus. Law & Prophets all things J

24 And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved. 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, 26 saying, ‘Go to this people and say: “Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; 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.” ’

[Isaiah 6:9–10](#) is also quoted by Jesus to explain the failure of the Jews as a body to accept him (Matt 13)

Essentially says “If you reject Jesus, you can hear, but never understand; you can see but never perceive. Your heart is, and will be, hard, your ears closed, and your eyes shut – because you really don't want to turn to God and be healed of your sin.”

28 “Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!” 29 And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves.

*To the one we are the aroma of death to death, and to the other the aroma of life to life. ([2 Corinthians 2:16](#))*

Matt 22:1-4 The Parable of the Wedding Feast Luke 14:15-24 The Parable of the Great Supper

30 Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.

All means all Jew & Gentile - One example of a guest of Paul was a runaway slave named Onesimus ([Philemon 10](#)), who Paul told to go back to his master Philemon. **two whole years** (a.d. 60–62),

Book ends very abruptly - never gets to the trial before Caesar

Clement 5.7 (written a.d. 95) speaks of Paul preaching in “the limits of the west,” which probably indicates his fulfilling his desire to preach in Spain (see [Rom. 15:24](#)). Indicates he was released after two years - no show

Eusebius, writing in a.d. 325, cites the tradition that Paul was freed from confinement and carried on a further ministry until he was arrested and placed in a second Roman imprisonment, at which time he was martyred

Paul's time in prison was not wasted, for it was during his Roman imprisonment that he wrote the letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. In between jail time (mid-60s) would be when he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. 2 Timothy was written during his second imprisonment, as he awaited execution

2 Tim 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 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.

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

Paul finished well - finished strong!

Why did Paul finish well - five perspectives Paul kept - resulted in finishing well. We live a long short life.

### 1. Life is a struggle

Fought the good fight - finished the race - fight and race - struggle or agony (literal meaning of fight) - Christian life is a struggle - 1 Cor 9 - to be a Christian is to be like a wrestler a runner, an athlete. It is to engage in a struggle.

A deliberate struggle - that others are not engaged in - purposeful struggle for success - athletes are always saying no to things (pleasurable) and yes to other things (not pleasant) - fighting impulses and natural tendencies - self-control or ego control

Luther - due to original sin, our nature is so deeply curved in on itself, that it seeks all things, including God for itself. Your life for mine, or my life for yours. (the struggle)

### 2. Death is an adventure

Paul speaks of his death as a departure - untie a boat - leaving on a new adventure - journey - new chapter - when people die - we don't grieve without hope - Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus - wept - and got angry at death

Once you believe the gospel - once you see that Jesus is the first born from the dead - Death used to be an executioner, but the Gospel make him a gardener. All death can do now that you are in Jesus is make you better. Tulip bulb - Tulip Flower - D. Bonhoeffer - "Death is the supreme festival on the road to freedom" Paul taunted death - where is they sting - where is your power - try to destroy me, you will only enhance me.

### 3. History is a masterpiece

A main theme of the last chapters of the book of Acts - Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve *me* for His heavenly kingdom.

God will always rescue me - sometimes from suffering, sometimes through suffering. The only disease that can really kill you is sin, the only debt that can really sink you is sin - when god rescues you - He embraces you as His own and sometimes He rescues you from death - he can also rescue you through death. Find yourself safe in His heavenly kingdom.

**Romans 8:28** - All things work together for good, to those who love God. (Looking back on History - all things - even evil things will work together for good - (Job's suffering has ministered millions, meant for evil by Satan)

#### 4. The Gospel can't be stopped

The book of Acts has made it clear that nothing can stop the Gospel - through it all the last line - Paul is preaching the Kingdom of God unhindered - death, prison, persecution, storms - the Gospel will find a way -

Acorn - marble slab - gravestone - split - that is the Gospel - can't stop it - this is one of the main themes of Acts

#### 5. You only need one thing - a friend in Jesus

16 At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. 17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me

Proverbs 18:24 A man who has friends must himself be friendly, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Two biblical attributes of a friend in the OT - always let you in, never let you down.

Always let you in - vulnerable - let you into their life. Gave me strength - nursed me - bound up my wounds

Jesus was there at his side.

Friendship of Jesus is essential - have you felt him there as a friend - do you have an experience of this kind of relationship

Jesus said in the Gospel of John - I don't just call you servants, I call you friends - as he was getting ready to die for them, to show them His love for them.

Jesus was totally abandoned on the cross, so that He would never have to abandon us. When Jesus was at His greatest point of suffering - he could have given up on us and saved Himself - He didn't let us down, He hung in there for us.