

Paul Triumphs Over Adversity

Rome Voyage Ends Persecution

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What We Will Learn

- Paul's voyage to Rome
- Ended persecution that started in Jerusalem
- Trials on the way
 - Shipwreck
 - Unsuccessful viper attack
- Devil's attempt to extend Paul's adversity
- Maybe beyond scope
- Acts 27 and 28

Prisoner Paul Departs Caesarea

- Paul and other prisoners consigned to Rome
- Under guard of centurion Julius
- And several soldiers under his command
- Paul remained prisoner through the voyage
- But was allowed more freedom
- Acts 27:1, 3 and 42–43

Acts 27 (NKJV)

1 And when it was decided that we should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to one named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment.

3 And the next day we landed at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him liberty to go to his friends and receive care.

Acts 27 (NKJV)

- Long into the voyage, their ship ran aground and broke up

42 And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape.

43 But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land,

Arrived Rome a Prisoner

- Initially held as prisoner but allowed to live alone with special guard
- Persecutors did not come and made no arrangement to press case against Paul
- Case must have ended
- End of the case not recorded in the bible
- Paul lived in Rome for two years thereafter
- Preached gospel boldly without hindrance
- Acts 28:16–22 and 30–31

Acts 28 (NKJV)

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.

Acts 28 (NKJV)

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,

Acts 28 (NKJV)

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

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.

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.”

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Acts 28 (NKJV)

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.

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

- Persecutors did not follow to press their case

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Acts 28 (NKJV)

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.

Threat of Extending Adversity

- Paul's adversity threatened to increase as voyage progressed
 - Shipwreck
 - Viper attack
- Both attacks ended without any ill effect on Paul: his adversity did not increase
- Was devil denied permission to extend Paul's adversity?

The Shipwreck

- Paul warned about the shipwreck twice
- First, his advice against sailing was ignored
- Second, he assured them no life will be lost but ship will be destroyed
- The ship did run aground near island of Malta
- All passengers and crew were saved
- Acts 27:9–10, 21–26, and 41–44

Acts 27 (NKJV)

9 Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,

10 saying, “Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives.”

Acts 27 (NKJV)

21 But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss.

22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

Acts 27 (NKJV)

23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve,

24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.'

Acts 27 (NKJV)

25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

26 However, we must run aground on a certain island.”

Acts 27 (NKJV)

41 But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves.

42 And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape.

Acts 27 (NKJV)

43 But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land,

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.

Unsuccessful Viper Attack

- Paul gathered firewood and threw into fire made for the passengers and crew
- A viper driven from the bundle by heat coiled itself on Paul's hand
- Onlooker islanders feared the worst for Paul
- But he shook the snake into the fire
- And suffered no harm
- Acts 28:1–6

Acts 28 (NKJV)

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.

Acts 28 (NKJV)

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.”

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Acts 28 (NKJV)

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.

What We Learned

- Paul's adversity ended with voyage to Rome
- Tried to increase during the trip
 - Shipwreck with no loss of life
 - Unsuccessful viper attack
- Maybe devil attempted increasing his adversity beyond scope
- God protects us from temptation but may permit devil to tempt within limited scope

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