

## Forrest's Feather

Acts 28

### Introduction

- v.1 Malta means “refuge” as it had often sheltered sailors.
- v.2 The natives spoke Phoenician not Greek thus making them “barbarians” and yet they showed great civility to those of the ship.
- v.3 Paul is a useful servant on land as on the sea and gathers wood...and is bitten by a viper.
- v.4-6 Perhaps in the cold the viper resembled a twig but the fire awakens it.  
First thought- “justice”  
Second thought- “deity”                      Barbarians indeed!  
Paul will soon correct them as a door opens.
- v.7-10 The “first man” of the island is “Publius” who showed great respect toward Julius. But Paul noticed his father had “Malta Fever.” Paul prayed for him and God healed him.  
An apostolic “sign”  
All the island came to Paul and were healed in a great outpouring of divine grace...a unique outpouring.
- v.11 For 3 months Paul no doubt gave a defense of the faith and a fledgling church was begun.  
Whether in prison, or a ship, or an island- wherever Paul finds himself he looks for a place of ministry. It may not be planned but God guides the steps and uses a willing servant.  
But it's now time to sail. They board a different ship whose prow is the “Heavenly Twins,” Castor and Pollux- the patron gods of sailors.
- v.12 They head to Syracuse on the coast of Sicily for 3 days.

- v.13 From there to Italy's toe, Rhegium for 2 days, and then to Puteoli, the principal port of southern Italy.
- v.14 For 7 days they unload and enjoy the hospitality of the Christians of Puteoli.
- v.15 Now by land they take a well-known road, The Appian Way, to Rome. The Christians of Rome travel 33 miles to meet and escort Paul into the city as a dignitary.  
Paul wanted to see Rome and see Rome he will, but not in the circumstances he imagined
- He converted a centurion
  - A prison ship
  - A Roman political magistrate, Publius
  - Much of Malta
  - He proclaimed God to Felix, Drusilla, Festus, Agrippa, Bernice and their court
  - Jerusalem at feast day
  - The Roman guard
  - The Sanhedrin
  - And one lawyer
- Make plans but God may use us in His own purpose and designs.
- v.16 In Rome he is given private quarters, chained to a Praetorian guardsman that changed every 4 hours. (Phil. 1:12-13) An event that merited its own paragraph. Again, “meaningless” incidents are meaningful in God's design.
- v.17 Paul must address the Jews first, as is his custom. He cannot go to the synagogue, so he brings the synagogue to him.
- v.18-19 “I am innocent in all things... and of all men.”

- v.20 “I am here because of my faithfulness to the Old Testament”
1. Its prophecies of Christ
  2. Its purposes to reveal sin
  3. Its pattern of the temple service
  4. Its problem of judgment
  5. Its propitiation of God
  6. Its promises to Israel
  7. Its people who prefigure Christ
- v.21 “We have heard nothing of you...”
- v.22 “...but everywhere this faith is vilified.”  
“We are willing to hear you out.”
- v.23 They have an open house in jail
- Paul opens the Old Testament
  - All day long
  - Preaching the Kingdom of God
    - Its prediction
    - Its offer in Christ
    - Its rejection
    - The church- its being embraced by the Gentile
    - Its return at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming
- v.24 As usual, the crowd divided,
- v.25 And took stances, and the Jews departed. But Paul gives a final word.
- v.26-27 Isaiah, Jesus, and now Paul agree  
There are none so deaf as those who will not hear  
so blind as those who will not see  
Sometimes the purpose of preaching is to be rejected and bring more guilt.

- v.28 And once again the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles.
- v.30-31 For 2 years Paul stays in private quarters under house arrest.
- Receiving all visitors
  - Teaching unhindered
  - Writing 4 “prison epistles”
  - Reaching royal servants for Christ (Phil. 4:22)

**Conclusion:**

- His accusers never show.
- He will be released to do a 4<sup>th</sup> journey into Upper Macedonia to assign churches to Timothy, Titus, Archippus, and Epaphroditus.
- When Nero arises he will be arrested and taken to Rome to die along with Peter, and to write 2 Timothy.