

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

([Acts 27:28](#)), an island in the Mediterranean, the modern Malta. Here the ship in which Paul was being conveyed a prisoner to Rome was wrecked. The bay in which it was wrecked now bears the name of "St. Paul's Bay", "a certain creek with a shore." It is about 2 miles deep and 1 broad, and the whole physical condition of the scene answers the description of the shipwreck given in [Acts 28](#). It was originally colonized by Phoenicians ("barbarians," ([Acts 28:2](#))). It came into the possession of the Greeks (B.C. 736), from whom it was taken by the Carthaginians (B.C. 528). In B.C. 242 it was conquered by the Romans, and was governed by a Roman *propraetor* at the time of the shipwreck ([Acts 28:7](#)). Since 1800, when the French garrison surrendered to the English force, it has been a British dependency. The island is about 17 miles long and 9 wide, and about 60 in circumference. After a stay of three months on this island, during which the "barbarians" showed them no little kindness, Julius procured for himself and his company a passage in another Alexandrian corn-ship which had wintered in the island, in which they proceeded on their voyage to Rome ([Acts 28:13, 14](#)). **Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.**

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.

Natives = K.J.V./Barbarous The term barbarous did not carry the negative connotations that it presently does. It simply meant that the people spoke a language that was foreign to the men from the ship; they spoke a Punic dialect derived from the Phoenicians (Polhill 531). Lenski cites two reasons communication could have occurred despite this language barrier: (1) The islanders probably had some knowledge of Greek even though it was not their native language. (2) Punic was related to Hebrew closely enough that Paul's knowledge of Hebrew would have enabled him to communicate with them (1099). The islanders were extraordinarily kind to the seafarers. The term *no little (auten tuchausan)* means not merely a little or ordinary degree of kindness. Because of the cold and rain, the islanders labored to build a fire by which the 276 drenched, chilled, and weary men could be warmed. They thus received *tproslambano*, (welcomed) all of the voyagers with gracious hospitality. From Truth Commentaries --- **Acts** by Johnny Stringer pg. 565

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."

And when the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand - Luke uses the regular word *itherion*, ("creature") used in medical writers for venomous snakes. Compound words made from it are used for bitten by a viper *itheriodektoit* and for an antidote made from the flesh of vipers *itheriake*). Some of the older translations at this place have "*venomous creature*," though there is no word in the Greek corresponding to "venomous"; still the idea is correct as can be seen both from the names Luke gives this snake, plus the expectations of the onlookers as to what would result from the bite (verse 6). A number of the natives saw the snake hanging by its fangs from Paul's hand, and they have an explanation ready for what has happened. **New Testament History Acts** by Gareth L. Reese pg. 923

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.

Publius --- from the Latin praenomen Publius, derived from populus, "popular"; according to Ramsay it is the Greek form of the Latin nomen Popilius; the **Greek title meaning "first,"** applied to Publius in [Acts 28:7](#), was an official one, and has been found on an inscription from the island of Gaulus near Malta (compare Bockh, Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum, number 5, 754): **Publius held office under the governor of Sicily.** As the leading official in Malta, he was responsible for any Roman soldiers and their prisoners who might land there

The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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.

Acts 28:11 (ESV) After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead.

Acts 28:11 (NIV) After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island. It was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux.

Acts 28:11 (KJV) And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose **sign was Castor and Pollux.**

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Castor and Pollux - - - The "Dioscuri", two heroes of Greek and Roman mythology. Their figures were probably painted or sculptured on the prow of the ship which Luke refers to ([Acts 28:11](#)). They were regarded as the tutelary divinities of sailors. They appeared in the heavens as the constellation Gemini.

Easton's Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.

¹² And landing at Syracuse, we stayed three days.

Syr'acuse, the celebrated city on the eastern coast of Sicily. "The city in its splendor was the largest and richest that the Greeks possessed in any part of the world, being 22 miles in circumference." St. Paul arrived thither in an Alexandrian ship from Melita, on his voyage to Rome. [Acts 28:12](#) The site of Syracuse rendered it a convenient place for the African corn-ships to touch at, for the harbor was an excellent one, and the fountain Arethusa in the island furnished an unfailing supply of excellent water. **Smith's Bible Dictionary:** Comprising Antiquities, Biography, Geography, Natural History, Archaeology and Literature.

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,

Rhegium --- The ship in which Paul sailed from Melita to Puteoli encountered unfavorable winds after leaving Syracuse, and reached Rhegium by means of tacking. It waited at Rhegium a day for a south wind which bore it to Puteoli ([Acts 28:13](#)), about 180 miles distant, where it probably arrived in about 26 hours. **The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia**.

Puteoli --- A city on the coast of Campania, on the north shore of a bay running north from the Bay of Naples, at which Paul landed on his way to Rome, from which it was distant 170 miles. Here he tarried for seven days ([Acts 28:13, 14](#)). This was the great emporium for the Alexandrian corn ships. Here Paul and his companions began their journey, by the "Appian Way," to Rome.

Easton's Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.

Rome was approximately 150 miles by the Appian highway from Puteoli. The journey would take them from Puteoli to Capua, a distance of 33 miles. Here they would come upon the Appian Way, which ran from Rome to Brundisium.--- **New Testament History Acts** by Gareth L. Reese pg. 931-932

The Appian Way was begun in 312 BC by the censor Appius Claudius Caecus. At first it ran only 132 miles (212 km) from Rome south-southeastward to ancient Capua, in Campania, but by about 244 BC it had been extended another 230 miles (370 km) southeastward to reach the port of Brundisium (Brindisi) --- The road averaged 20 feet (6m) in width and was slightly convex in surface in order to facilitate good drainage. The road's foundation was of heavy stone blocks cemented together with lime mortar; over these were laid polygonal blocks of lava that were smoothly and expertly fitted together--- The first few miles of the Appian Way outside Rome are flanked by a striking series of monuments, and there are also milestones and other inscriptions along the remaining road

Britannica Online Encyclopedia (Appian Way – ancient road, Italy)

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.

When the brethren at Rome heard about their arrival in Italy, two groups of Christians travelled from Rome to meet Paul and to give encouragement. Some went as far as the Market of Appius, 45 miles from Rome. Another group went to the Three Inns, 33 miles from Rome. When Paul saw them he thanked God, and took courage.

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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.

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.

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."

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."

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.

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,

Isaiah 6:9-10

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."* ' "

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.

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.

For two years Paul remained in custody, but in "rented quarters." **During this time it is believed that he wrote the letters of Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Hebrews.** From these letters we learn that Paul had many companions who comforted and encouraged him. Although he does not speak of any trial itself, he does write how that the Christ had been preached "in the palace" (cf. PhiL 1:12-14). "No man forbidding him" is a triumphant end to this book. He had been hindered in many places, but not in Rome - not even as a prisoner!
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Questions Acts 28

1. Describe the two different reactions that the people had of Paul after a viper fastened upon his hand.
2. Who was healed at Malta?
3. When did Paul leave Malta and how was such accomplished?
4. Where did Paul stay for three days?
5. Where did Paul stay for seven days?
6. When the brethren from Rome heard that Paul was coming to Rome where did some of them meet him and what type of effect did this have on Paul?
7. What was Paul permitted to do when he arrived at Rome?
8. Who did Paul speak to at Rome after three days and how did they initially respond to Paul?
9. How did Paul go about teaching the Jews concerning the kingdom of God and Jesus?
10. Why did Paul make reference to Isaiah 6:9-10?
11. How long did Paul dwell in his own rented house and what did he do with his time while he was there?
12. What will you choose to remember from this chapter? Why?