

From Malta to Rome

Acts 28:1-16

by Don Falkos

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Paul and those with him had survived being shipwrecked but were now suffering from cold and rainy conditions. The locals of Malta were extraordinarily kind, building a fire on shore to warm them.

Paul gathered an armful of sticks and was placing them on the fire when a poisonous snake, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. The locals said, "He must be a murderer! He escaped the sea, but the fates will not allow him to live." Paul shook the snake off into the fire, and the people waited for him to swell up and die. But he didn't. After a while they changed their minds and decided he must be a god.

The governor of Malta lived nearby. He welcomed Paul and his companions and provided for them for three days. The governor's father was quite ill. Paul prayed for the man, laid hands on him, and healed him. Then all the other sick people on the island came to Paul and were healed. As a result, Paul and his companions were treated with great respect. And three months later, when they were preparing to leave, the people of Malta supplied them with everything they would need for their trip.

They set sail on a ship that had wintered at the island. It was an Alexandrian ship with the twin gods, Castor and Pollux, as its figurehead. Some believers in Rome heard they were coming and set out to meet them on their way. When Paul saw them, he was very encouraged and gave thanks to God.

When Paul arrived in Rome, he was allowed to have his own private lodging, although he was constantly under guard.