

K.E.Y. Bible Study

Description: K.E.Y. Bible Study introduces the essential biblical narratives, concepts, and themes, and teaches the student how to apply the message of the Bible to daily living. Each teaching session is self-contained, which allows participants to join in the study at any time during the five years.

Purpose: To teach the most significant events, passages, and doctrines of the Bible in a manner and using methods which encourages and empowers the student to:
Keep the faith that we have received
Be Equipped to serve the Body of Christ
Become Yoked, or connect, with others for the purpose of ministry

An Unusual Miracle May 11, 2016 Acts Reference: Acts 28:1-10

General Background

We pick up the story where we left off last week. After many very trying weeks at sea, often adrift without bearing or hope, the ship Paul was on ran aground off the coast of Malta. As Paul had promised due to the revelation from God he had received, everyone made it ashore to safety. The events in these verses today show God's continued protective hand on Paul and the spread of the gospel message due to his faithful and consistent witness. This passage also presents a pattern that is used today in sharing the gospel in areas where the name of Jesus is not known. Go Love Tell.

What Happened

SAFE– Acts 28:1-2 *Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold.*

Malta – a tiny isolated island below Sicily off the “toe” of Italy.

Islanders – the word is literally *barbarians*, and simply means that they were a people group who did not speak Greek or follow Greek customs.

Unusual kindness – literally – *being philanthropic*. A shipload of 276 passengers was thrust on this little island in the midst of the hardship of a storm. They would remain for three months.

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SNAKEBIT – Acts 28:3 *Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand.*

Paul gathered – the greatness/servanthood of this man continues to be displayed.

REALLY!!!!

- A terrifying and persistent storm
- Struggling for life in the blackness of the storm
- Little food
- Mutinous sailors
- Roman soldiers threatening his life
- Abandoning ship and swimming to shore
- And NOW... a viper!!!

Viper - Malta: today vs. then

SUPERSTITION – Acts 28:4-6 *When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.*

The snake hanging on – not just merely coiled around but fully locked on with the fangs

Justice – a natural sense of justice. Justice IS served.

Shook the snake off – nonchalantly cast it aside with no ill effects. They were watching.

Changed their minds and said he was a god – although wrong in their assessment, they were now open to hearing the gospel from this man.

RECEPTIVE – Acts 28:7 *There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and for three days entertained us hospitably.*

Publius - A man of peace – The use of the name, Publius, shows the intimate connection that Paul had with this Roman official.

Entertained us hospitably – All 276?

OPPORTUNITY – Acts 28:8-9 *His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on*

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him and healed him. When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured.

Sick...suffering – seriously and deathly ill. Paul heard about him and asked to go see him

After prayer- follows the pattern of Peter in Acts 9:40. Prayed first and sought God's direction in this matter. Not presumptive nor in his own power.

Rest of the sick... came and were cured – shows a continual action. They kept coming. Without doubt, Paul shared the source of this healing to be in the name of Jesus.

FAVOR – Acts 28:10 *They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.*

Honored us –Shipwrecked destitute prisoners treated with honor.

Furnished us with the supplies we needed – they had lost everything in the shipwreck and the Islanders generously provided for their needs.

What Does It Mean and How Can I Apply It?

1. God IS good at all times and in all circumstances. We can trust His promises.
2. Trying situations will arise without warning; faithful responses to them come from the realization of God's continual hand upon us.
3. People, unbelievers and weak believers, are watching you to see how you respond.
4. Use opportunities of God's working in your life to find "persons of peace" who are open to hearing the gospel message.
5. See ways that God can use you to bring glory to His name and spread the gospel message.
6. Thank God for his continual provision of your needs.