

SHAKING OFF THE VIPERS

ACTS 28:1-6



Acts 28:1-6

1 And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita.

2 And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold.

3 And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand.

Acts 28:1-6

4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.

5 And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm.

6 Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

Introduction

A. Paul on his journey to Rome

1. Paul was going to Rome as a prisoner

Acts 26:32

Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

Introduction

A. Paul on his journey to Rome - continued

2. Many trials awaited him in Rome

2 Timothy 4:16-18

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Introduction

B. Recall the storm and the shipwreck

1. Paul was comforted by an angel in the storm

Acts 27:22-25

22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.

23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,

24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.

25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

Introduction

B. Recall the storm and the shipwreck - continued

**2. Shipwrecked and stranded on an island,
but all alive**

Acts 27:43-44

43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:

44 And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.

Introduction

B. Recall the storm and the shipwreck - continued

3. Met by kind natives, a warm fire, but....

1 Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Introduction

C. A viper coming out of the fire attacks Paul

1. Vipers often appear out of the fires of life

Isaiah 43:2

When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

2. Paul shook off the viper when attacked, and so should we

I. Shake Off The Viper Of Discouragement

(v 3)

A. Paul was attacked while helping

**B. Paul could have allowed this attack to make him
doubt**

**C. Instead, he shook off the viper, remembering God's
promise of safety**

Romans 4:21

**And being fully persuaded that, what he had
promised, he was able also to perform.**

II. Shake Off The Viper Of Criticism (v 4)

A. The reaction of the critics

“No doubt this man is a murderer”

B. Many are quick to judge and falsely accuse

C. Jesus was constantly criticized

1. He was called a blasphemer

Matthew 9:3

And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.

2. He was accused of being in league with Satan

Matthew 9:34

But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

II. Shake Off The Viper Of Criticism (v 4)

D. Remember how Jesus responded to His critics

1 Peter 2:23

Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

II. Shake Off The Viper Of Criticism (v 4)

**E. Shake off the viper of criticism by looking to Jesus
Hebrews 12:2**

**Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our
faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured
the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the
right hand of the throne of God.**

Titus 2:13

**Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious
appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus
Christ;**

III. Shake Off The Viper Of Low Expectations (v 6)

A. The natives expected Paul to swell up and die

B. Some have low expectations of you as a Christian

C. Shake off the faithless conclusions of others

III. Shake Off The Viper Of Low Expectations (v 6)

**D. Prove them wrong by being faithful to your Lord
1 Peter 2:14-16**

14 But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

Do Not Let Vipers Steal Your Abundant Life In Christ

John 10:10

**The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and
to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and
that they might have it more abundantly.**