ACTS 28

Unhindered

a viper on Malta, brothers on the Appian Way, a chained apostle in Rome, and the last word of Acts

> *"preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered."*
> ACTS 28:31

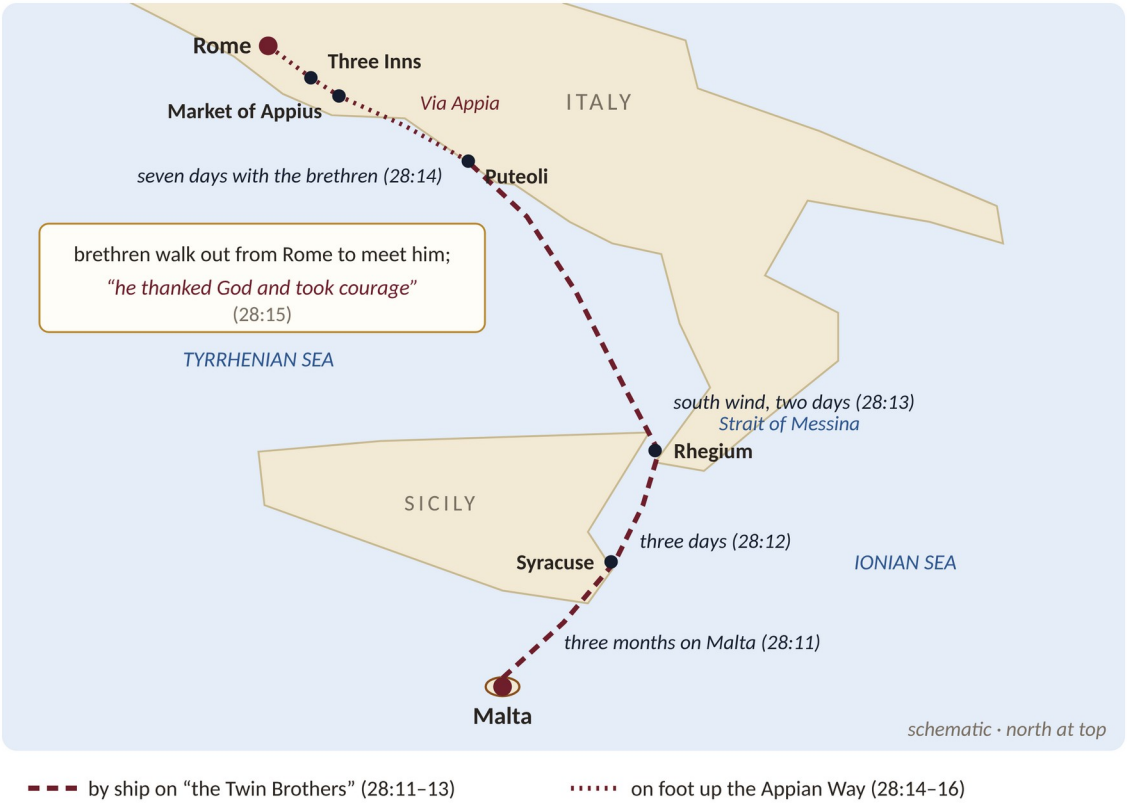
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where Luke has brought us

1. Chapter 27 ended on a beach: “they all were brought safely to land” (27:44).

2. The book has been heading here since its first chapter.

3. The route north (see the map) ran by sea to Puteoli on the Bay of Naples, the great port for Alexandrian grain ships, and then on foot up the Via Appia to Rome.



Kindness, a Viper, and Healing on Malta

Strangers light a fire, a snake strikes, and an island is healed

ACTS 28:4

When the natives saw the creature hanging from his hand, they began saying to one another, "Undoubtedly this man is a murderer, and though he has been saved from the sea, justice has not allowed him to live."

DAVID GUZIK

Paul in extremes to the natives; God did the work, Paul made himself available.

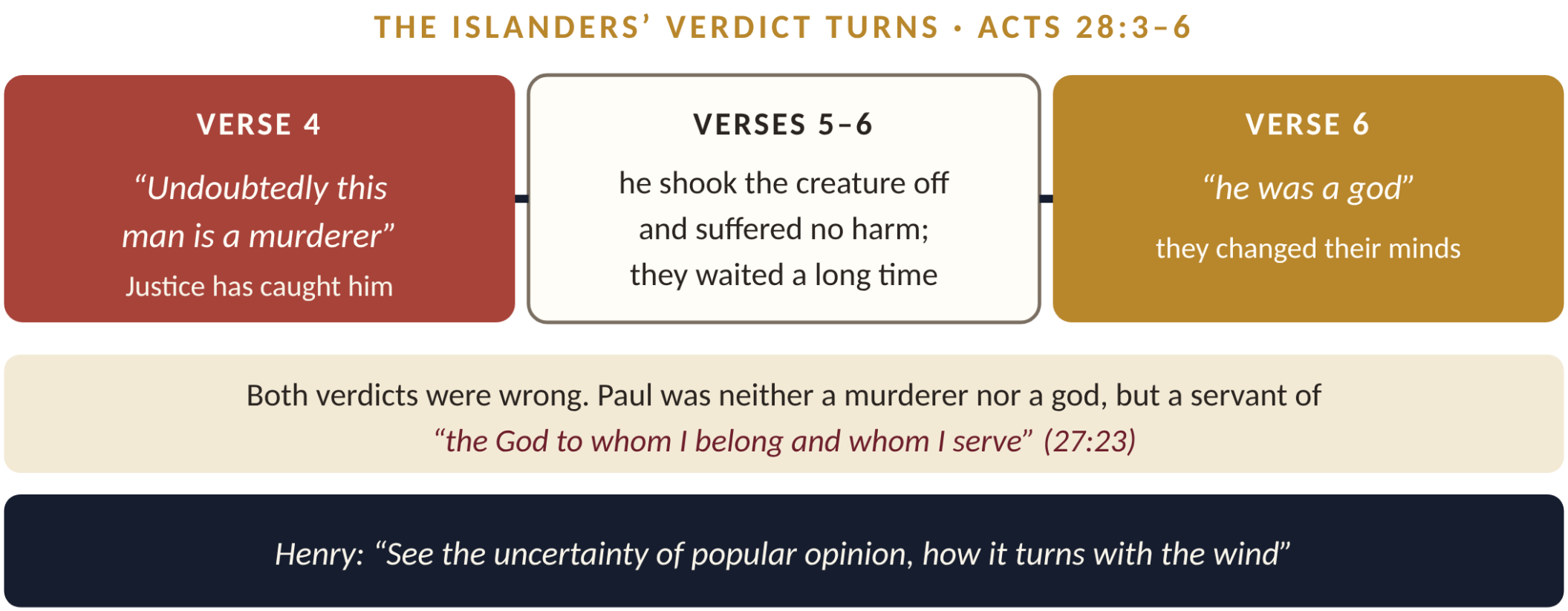
MATTHEW HENRY

Popular opinion turns with the wind; an apostle healing by miracle, not medicine.

βάρβαρος
BARBAROS · "NATIVES"

To a Greek, anyone whose speech sounded like "bar-bar" — a non-Greek speaker; the Maltese spoke a Punic dialect.

The verdict turns



Read left to right: the same crowd that called Paul a murderer called him a god a few hours later; the truth is in the band beneath.

And Thus We Came to Rome

The Twin Brothers, seven days at Puteoli, and brothers on the Appian Way

ACTS 28:14

There we found some brethren, and were invited to stay with them for seven days; and thus we came to Rome.

DAVID GUZIK

Welcomed like an emperor; no wonder he took courage; the promise fulfilled.

R.C. SPROUL

Not health and prosperity — success measured by God's faithfulness to His call.

MATTHEW HENRY

Brought in state; it put new life into him and banished his melancholy.

Διόσκουροι

DIOSKOUROI · "TWIN BROTHERS"

The interlinear glosses it "the Dioscuri" — "the twin gods [Castor and Pollux]," sons of Zeus in Greek myth and the patrons sailors prayed to in storms; the KJV keeps the names.

For the Sake of the Hope of Israel

A chained man, the Jewish leaders of Rome, a day of Scripture, and Isaiah's hard word

ACTS 28:23

When they had set a day for Paul, they came to him at his lodging in large numbers; and he was explaining to them by solemnly testifying about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets, from morning until evening.

DAVID GUZIK

Case hopeless in Judea; a chain for Israel's Messiah; God finds those who hear.

MATTHEW HENRY

Intercession for them, never against them; some wrought upon, others hardened.

ἐλπίς
ELPIS · "HOPE"

"The hope of Israel" (v. 20) is the phrase Paul has used at every trial: "the hope and resurrection of the dead" (23:6), "the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers" (26:6).

With All Openness, Unhindered

Two years in a rented room, a door open to all, and the last word of Acts

ACTS 28:31

preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

DAVID GUZIK

The word of God unhindered; two years not wasted; a never-ending story.

R.C. SPROUL

Paul's aim in Rome: "the gospel of the Kingdom."

MATTHEW HENRY

His own hired house; all welcome; no man forbidding him.

ἀκωλύτως

AKŌLYTŌS · "UNHINDERED"

The last word of Acts in Greek, and the only time it appears in the New Testament: a-, not, with kōlyō, to hinder or forbid.

The road to Rome



Read the top row, then the bottom: promise, purpose, appeal, arrival — and a book that ends with the word still going out.

Eight verses trace the promise from Jesus' commission to the last word of Acts; Rome was never an accident.

What to carry from this chapter

1

Kindness from unexpected people.

The “natives” — barbaroi — showed “extraordinary kindness” (v2).

2

Crowds swing between extremes.

Murderer to god in an afternoon (vv4–6).

3

Shake it off into the fire.

Paul did not panic or perform; he “shook the creature off into the fire and suffered no harm” (v5) and went back to the work (Luke 10:19).

4

God does the work through a willing man.

Guzik: “God did the work, but Paul made himself ready and available for the work.”

More to carry

5

A pagan figurehead, a sovereign God.

Paul sails under “the Twin Brothers” (v11), the sailors’ gods.

6

Even apostles need brothers.

“When Paul saw them, he thanked God and took courage” (v15).

7

The chain is for the hope of Israel.

Paul is bound “for the sake of the hope of Israel” (v20) — not against his people but for their Messiah.

8

A hardening that is partial.

Isaiah’s hard word (vv26–27) is real, but Paul himself wrote that “a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all”…

Talk it through

1. The islanders called Paul a murderer, then a god (vv4–6). Whose opinion of me swings like that — and whose opinion am I actually living for?

2. Paul gathered sticks for the fire like any castaway (v3) and prayed for a sick man in a stranger's house (v8). What ordinary service is God asking me to do where I am right now?

3. Paul took courage when he saw the brethren (v15). Whose face do I need to see this week — and whose face does someone else need to see?

4. Some were persuaded and others would not believe (v24). How do I keep loving and praying for people who have heard and refused?

5. Paul was chained to a soldier, yet the word went out "unhindered" (vv16, 31). What chain in my life — a record, a limit, a sentence — have I treated as a reason God can't use me?

CLOSING

Acts ends with a prisoner in a rented room, a soldier at his side, and an open door. Paul never got the trip to Rome he planned; he got the one God promised, and the word went out unhindered. Take courage, thank God for your brothers, and keep preaching the kingdom — the story isn't finished.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the Acts study page.