

1. Open the Word of Truth to Acts 28:4. We are studying Paul's journey to Rome. Before we continue our Bible study, you may want to take advantage of God's protocol for fellowship by silently naming your sins to God as we pray.
2. Last week I exegeted Acts 28:3. When time expired we had just begun an analysis of Acts 28:4.
3. Before we resume our analysis, I want us to take a look at a map of the journey to Rome and then review an expanded translation of Acts 28:1-3.

Expanded Translation

Acts 28:1 And after we had been washed safely to shore we discovered the name of the Island was Malta.

Acts 28:2 And the islanders were most welcoming, bestowing upon us significant kindnesses; they first built a warm fire around which we warmed ourselves; they also provided food, warm blankets and shelter from the rain and cold.

Acts 28:3 Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a poisonous snake driven out by the heat fastened its fangs into Paul's hand.

4. Now let's return to our exegesis of Acts 28:4.
5. The entire verse has been translated:

KJV-New Sentence

Acts 28:4 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.

NIV

Acts 28:4 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."

Introduction

1. A large fire for such a large company needed constant replenishing with fuel, and Paul set about gathering wood for the flames.
2. In one bundle was a poisonous snake, stiff from the cold; and as the apostle stood by the fire warming his hands, the viper, revived by the heat, crawled away from the flames and sank its fangs into Paul's hand.
3. The natives interpreted this event as an omen from the goddess **Dike**. They concluded that Paul actually was a murderer; although he had escaped death in the sea,

the goddess of justice, had now divined a proper fate upon him.

4. When Paul shook the snake off into the fire without injury, the natives decided that they had been completely wrong. Instead of a victim of the goddess, he was himself a divine being who could not be hurt by ordinary human misfortunes.

5. And now for our first phrase "and when the barbarians saw."

AND WHEN THE BARBARIANS SAW ΔΕ ΩΣ Ο ΒΑΡΒΑΡΟΣ ΟΡΑΩ

1. **De Hos Ho Barbaros Horao** is better translated "And when the islanders saw ..."

2. **De** is a conjunction followed by the relative pronoun **Hos** followed by the noun **Barbaros** declined as a nominative plural. Next follows the verb **Horao**, parsed as a 3rd person plural, aorist active indicative.

3. **Barbaros** is perhaps (as we have earlier studied) merely a term for those who did not speak Greek. Certainly better translated in this case "the islanders" or "the Maltesians."

4. The Grolier Encyclopedia provides an interesting look at the island and its people.

"Malta is a country composed of a group of islands lying 58 miles south of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea between Italy and North Africa. The islands are Malta (the largest), Gozo, Comino, and the uninhabited rocks of Comminotto and Filfla. Historically, Malta's location has been of great strategic importance in the Mediterranean. Valletta, the chief city and capital located on the island of Malta, possesses one of the finest harbors in southern Europe. Because of these factors, Malta has been subject to numerous invasions and foreign domination, which has left a legacy of foreign influences. Most recently, Malta was a British colony until 1964, when it became independent.

The islands are mostly composed of low-lying limestone hills. Because there are no rivers, the vegetation, which includes species indigenous to both Italy and North Africa, is sparse in some areas. Malta has a Mediterranean climate. Summers are warm, with an average temperature of 77 degrees F; winters are mild, with an average temperature of 56 degrees F. Rainfall averages about 20 inches annually, with about three-quarters falling during the winter.

The islands are often exposed to violent winds. Malta's population has been increasing rapidly, giving it one of the highest population densities in the world. The population is ethnically mixed, absorbing Arabs, Italians, and British.

Almost the entire population is Roman Catholic, the official religion. Education is compulsory between the ages of 6 and 16. The University of Malta established in A.D. 1540 is located at Msida.

Malta's economy was long dependent upon income from British military installations on the island. By 1979, however, all British forces had withdrawn and Malta faced severe unemployment and the need to diversify its economic base. Light manufacturing, including traditional craft industries, is now the largest source of income. Tourism has become a major industry. Shipping and shipbuilding are expanding, and a new harbor has been constructed at Marsaxlokk Bay. About half of Malta's land is devoted to agriculture, but because farms are very small and the soil is poor, output is low, and 70% of Malta's food must be imported. Because of the overpopulation and unemployment problems, Malta has instituted a program of sponsored emigration. Malta is an associate member of the European Community.

Malta is notable for its prehistoric monuments, which show that a high level of civilization had been reached there by the Copper Age (5000-4000 B.C.). The islands were subsequently occupied by the Phoenicians and Carthaginians. With the defeat of Carthage in 218 B.C. Malta became part of the Roman Empire. According to the New Testament and tradition, in c. A.D. 60, Saint Paul was shipwrecked on Malta, which he Christianized. After A.D. 395, Malta belonged to the Byzantine Empire. In A.D. 870 the Arabs took the islands and introduced Arabic. In A.D. 1090 Malta was conquered by the Normans, who already occupied Sicily. Malta then followed the fortunes of Sicily until A.D. 1530, when the Spanish king granted Malta to the powerful and wealthy Knights of St. John. The knights transformed the islands by building extensively, and in A.D. 1565 an Ottoman attack was successfully resisted. The knights continued to rule Malta until A.D. 1798, when it was taken by Napoleon I.

In 1814 Malta elected to become part of the British Empire. During World War II, Malta was subjected to bombing by German and Italian forces, and in 1942 King George VI awarded it the George Cross for valor under attack. Malta became self-governing in 1947. This self-government was revoked in 1959 but was restored in 1962. Full independence was achieved in 1964, and Malta became a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. As specified by the 1974 constitution, Malta is a parliamentary republic with a president, a prime minister, and a unicameral legislature. The presidency is a largely ceremonial office; the government is headed by the prime minister, who is the head of the majority party of the house. From 1971 to 1987 the Labor party was in power under Dom Mintoff and Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici; a Nationalist government headed by Eddie Fenech Adami took office in 1987 and was reelected in 1992.

Fenech Adami has encouraged foreign investment and applied for membership in the European Union.

5. **Horao** is one of two basic words in the Greek for seeing. The second is **Blepo**; clearly there are others, but the use of **Horao** and **Blepo** dominate the New Testament.

6. Perhaps oversimplified but generally true, **Horao** refers to a panoramic view and **Blepo** refers to a close-up view. **Horao** can be found fifty-six times in the New Testament where it is translated "see, saw, take heed, beholding" or "perceive." Let me give you four other uses found elsewhere in the New Testament.

Mat 8:2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Mat 8:3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Mat 8:4 And Jesus saith unto him, "**See**" thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

Mar 8:14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

Mar 8:15 And he charged them, saying, "**Take heed**," beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

Mar 8:16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have no bread.

Mar 8:17 And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

Luk 23:49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, "**beholding**" these things.

Acts 8:18 And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

Acts 8:19 Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 8:20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.

Acts 8:21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.

Acts 8:22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.

Acts 8:23 For I "**perceive**" that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

7. Let's see how our verse looks so far by way of an expanded translation.

Expanded Translation

Acts 28:4 And when the islanders saw ...

8. Now for the phrase "the venomous beast."

THE VENOMOUS BEAST ο θηριον

1. **Ho Therion** is better translated "the poisonous snake ..."

2. **Therion** is a noun declined as a "nominative neuter singular."

3. **Therion** is a generic noun used to describe "a beast, a wild animal, a snake, a brute"

and "brutish men." Several uses elsewhere in the New Testament are as follows:

Mar 1:13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the "**wild beasts**"; and the angels ministered unto him.

Acts 10:12 Wherein were all manner of four footed beasts of the earth, and "**wild beasts**," and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

Acts 10:13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

Tit 1:12 Even one of their own prophets has said, "Cretans are always liars, "**evil brutes**," *lazy gluttons*."

Tit 1:13 This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith

Tit 1:14 and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth.

4. Now for the phrase "hang on his hand."

HANG ON HIS HAND ΚΡΕΜΑΜΑΙ ΕΚ Ο ΧΕΙΡ ΑΥΤΟΣ

1. **Kremamai Ek Ho Cheir Autos** is better translated "hanging on his hand ..." or "hanging from Paul's hand ..."

2. **Kremamai** is a verb parsed as a present middle participle followed by the preposition **Ek** and the monadic noun **Cheir**, declined as a genitive singular. Next follows the intensive pronoun **Autos**, declined as a genitive singular.

3. **Kremamai** means "to hang, to be hung, to suspend" or "to be suspended." Let me give you several other uses found elsewhere in the New Testament.

Mat 18:6 But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone "**hung**" around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Mat 18:7 "Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come!

Mat 22:36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Mat 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Mat 22:38 This is the first and great commandment.

Mat 22:39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Mat 22:40 On these two commandments "**hang**" all the law and the prophets.

Luk 23:39 And one of the malefactors which were "**hanged**" railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

Luk 23:40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing

thou art in the same condemnation?

Luk 23:41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

Luk 23:42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Luk 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and "**hanged**" on a tree.

Acts 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

Acts 5:33 When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.

Acts 10:39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and "**hanged**" on a tree:

Acts 10:40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

Acts 10:41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Acts 10:43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Acts 10:44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word.

Acts 10:45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

Acts 10:47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

4. **Cheir** is the common Greek word for hand. It is often used literally as in our verse. It is also used metaphorically in Scripture. From **Cheir** we get several English words, for example Chiropodist--a doctor who treats both the hands and the feet, Chiropody--the practice of treating hands and feet and Chironomy--that relating to how the arms and hands are to be used in directing an orchestra.

End Lesson Taught 11-1-09