



THE LIFE OF
PAUL

FAMILY DEVOS

Shipwrecked

Scripture: Acts 27:39-28:10

Memory Verse: Proverbs 16:9

“A man’s heart plans his ways,
But the LORD directs his steps.”

For My Family:

After two weeks of being lost at sea and tossed around by a violent storm, the ship Paul was traveling on was finally in sight of land, but as they made for the shore, their ship got stuck on a sandbar. The waves were so big and powerful they began to beat the ship to pieces like a battering ram and everyone had to abandon ship. Those who couldn’t swim used broken boards to keep themselves afloat as they made their way to shore. As always, God’s promise proved to be true (they always will). All 276 passengers had survived. God had also promised Paul that he would go to Rome, but that didn’t keep the enemy from trying to stop him. Paul went from one danger to another. The journey was far from easy-going. But even though dangers come, God’s will is always the safest place for us to be.

Paul had escaped the storm at sea, but as he was gathering sticks to add to the fire a poisonous snake jumped out and bit his hand! The natives on the island immediately came to the conclusion that Paul must be a criminal and was getting what he deserved, but when he didn’t die, they changed their minds and decided that he must surely be a god. This reminds us of the crowd at Lystra back in Acts 14 who also declared Paul and Barnabas to be gods. We can imagine how Paul reacted. He didn’t accept those claims. Instead, he pointed them to the true and living God.

God’s purposes for the storm soon became clear. While Paul was staying at Publius’ house, he prayed for and healed his father, who had been very sick. Word quickly spread across the island and everyone who was sick came and was healed! If they thought Paul was a god after shaking off the snake, they must have really believed he was after he began to heal the sick, but we have read enough about Paul to know how he would react to this.

No doubt as people were healed, Paul told them about Jesus, the Son of the only true God who had also healed many people during His earthly ministry. It was this God who was responsible for healing them now! Surely Paul told them that it was God who had brought him to Malta so they could learn that God wanted to heal more than their physical bodies. He wanted them to know their sins could be washed away through Jesus’ death and resurrection! I’m sure we will meet many of those natives in heaven one day. They can fill in the missing details for us when we see them, but for now, be sure to keep your eyes open when things don’t go as planned. Don’t complain. Pray! God wants to use the things we would call inconveniences for His glory and purposes.

Questions for Young Children:

What happened when Paul was putting the sticks in the fire?

What did the natives think about Paul when he didn't die?

Why did God bring Paul to the island of Malta?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

We know that God has His plans and purposes in every situation, even shipwrecks! How should that affect us when we don't like our circumstances?

We are in a spiritual war. There is an enemy. How should this affect how we live each day?

Why don't you think we see as many miracles today as we see in the Bible?