**Light Breaks Through Darkness**
**Acts 27-28:10**

For the Jews, the sea was a monster. It was seen as a dark force.
*The Exodus* -> Yahweh parted the sea.
*Daniel* -> wicked world empires and monsters coming up out of the sea (Daniel 7:3).

**vs. 1-8**, All the details in a travel log, describing departures, arrivals, and weather conditions.
Julius treated Paul kindly (at Sidon), vs. 3

The sea was used in all forms to represent danger and the unknown, judgement and chaos.

**vs. 9-10**, Paul speaks words of caution to the centurion.

**vs. 13-20**, Unrelenting weather conditions and maritime survival tactics.

**vs. 21-26**, I tried to warn you.
Paul the anti-Jonah.
Paul is being faithful to what God has asked him to do.

**vs. 27-32**, The conditions of the sea were not improving.

A Gentile reader would have made some observations / conclusions from Acts 27-28.
• God was on Paul's side
• Paul was innocent of any crimes.
• The belief / worldview was that the gods punished the wicked, and trouble at sea was no accident.
• In addition the innocent sometime got hurt, by being around the guilty for instance on a sea voyage (Jonah).

**vs. 33-38**, Paul took time to encourage the crew.
How did Paul pastorally care for those aboard?
        He broke bread. He thanked God. They were all encouraged.

**vs. 39-41**, Safety appeared at daylight.

The story is bursting with imagery.
• The good news of Jesus taking on the cosmic force of evil (Paul an apostle in the depths and chaos of the sea (evil).
• Remember the flesh, the world, and the enemy do whatever they can to distract Jesus followers.
• There is a real struggle ahead for those who in obedience faithfully pursue Jesus.

**vs. 42-44**, Panic -> what now? Wise leadership.
Self preservation is a powerful force.

The centurion has observed and is starting to understand that Paul was no "ordinary prisoner".
All 276 safely reached the shore!

"Through the waters to safety: that's the Noah story, the **Exodus** story, the **John-the-Baptist** story, the Jesus story. The Paul story. Our story." ~ NT Wright

**Chapter 28**
**vs. 1-2**, They learned that they had arrived on the island of Malta.

*Background info*: The snake was certainly a classic symbol of evil.
The snake in the Garden of Eden.
Moses lifts up the serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21:9)

**vs. 3-6**, Local beliefs in action.
• Snake, poison, and justice.
• Paul is serving the group.
• As he is gathering wood, he is bitten by a snake.
• Everyone was convinced he would die and the universe was judging him (he survived this dramatic ship wreck and now he will die at the bite of a snake).
• But…Paul didn't die. In fact, nothing happened. And now the locals are having their worldview challenged.

**vs. 7-10**, A man of peace.
Publius -> a leading man of the island.
Welcomed everyone and entertained with great hospitality for three days.

Paul is used to bring healing to Publius's father as well as many others who were sick.

"Malta fever, which in the nineteenth century was discovered to be transmitted by drinking goat's milk." ~ Ben Witherington III

_Notice_: Luke doesn't mention anyone becoming a follower of Jesus.

• Both the sea and the snake have tried to get rid of Paul.
• Both do not succeed.
• The message of Jesus as the risen Messiah will continue. The restoration of all things is in process, and the powers of evil cannot stop it.
• Paul will arrive in Rome (perhaps suffering from a bit more than jet lag).
• The gospel is continuing to spread.

Luke does create intentional overlay to his narrative of Jesus' journey toward the cross (Luke 23) and his narrative of Paul's journey to Rome.

What exactly does it mean for a follower of Jesus to take up his cross?

Paul would interact with the people of Malta with sincerity, kindness, and presence.

His objective in Malta was not missionary preaching, but he used his time aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life.

**Question**: In everyday life do you interact with others with sincerity, kindness, and presence (without distraction)?

How can you show the peace of the Holy Spirit through normal, on-going relationships?