

Acts of Jesus, Lesson 57: Snake Handling

👤 **Acts 28:1-5** - Ever heard of the term "snake bit"? Figurative term which means simply that you can't win for losing.

- ✓ Seems like Paul is just that, both figuratively and literally, Snake bit!
 - ✓ Imprisoned by his own people, held without charge for two years, carried in chains to Rome, on the way goes through a terrible storm, now shipwrecked, arrives on land only to be bitten by a snake.
 - ✓ Ever felt that way, like nothing will work out?
 - ✓ There's a scriptural reason for it: **Romans 8:19-20**; the whole creation is snake-bit!!
 - ✓ To a certain degree things aren't supposed to work out, the whole world is snake-bit!!
 - ✓ Solomon the wisest man to ever live writes this about our existence: **Ecclesiastes 1:14**
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👤 This all began a long time ago with a Snake in a Garden way back in Genesis.

- ✓ God cursed the man and the woman for their rebellion, and He cursed the ground and all of creation.
 - ✓ He also cursed the snake, who becomes a symbol of the curse in general.
 - ✓ Next time we see a snake is in **Numbers 21**.
 - ✓ God tells Moses to do an unusual thing: Make a bronze serpent, impale it on a pole, and hold it up for all to see. Anyone who looks at it will be healed.
 - ✓ Odd on two counts:
 - 1) God just forbid them to make any graven image,
 - 2) Of all things to look to for healing—a Snake! I thought it was a symbol of the curse...it is, but this one is impaled.
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- ✓ Jesus fleshes out this idea in **John 3:14-15**: Why would Jesus' affiliate Himself with the Snake? Because of this: **Galatians 3:13**
 - ✓ Now this doesn't mean that the snake doesn't have a bite anymore it just means that that bite is now harmless. **I Corinthians 15:54-55**
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👤 **Which brings us back to our story: both literally and symbolically Paul appears snake bit...but both literally and symbolically it has no effect on him or his mission.**

👤 **Acts 28:5-6** - You'll notice what Paul does with this snake, shakes it off, of course this is a literal snake, but it doesn't stop him, doesn't hinder his mission in the least, in fact, it helps it.

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☛ Remember, of all the things that we think we need when we go through life's storms the only thing that matters is the presence of God:

- 1) We can be assured by the people He sends us
 - 2) We can be assured by the how He helps us clear the deck.
 - 3) We can be assured by what the storm does for us in that God uses it to introduce us to our world.
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- ✓ Paul is being introduced to the people of this island.
 - ✓ As a result, he is able to influence the governor of this island...which is exactly in accord with what God predicted when Paul was saved that he'd be brought before governors and kings.
 - ✓ Very instructive here is his audience, watching to see what would happen to him.
 - ✓ You've got an audience waiting to see what will happen when a snake bites you!
 - ✓ Notice something else, the crisis here comes when Paul is engaged in a good thing—helping build the fire for everyone.
 - ✓ Likewise, you should expect the old snake to bite when you're up to good stuff.
 - ✓ The purpose and will of God for your life cannot be thwarted as long as you're seeking it, as long as you agree that God's will for your life is what you want nothing else can submarine it.!!!
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