

Acts 28:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

Analysis

The father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux (πυρετοῖς καὶ δυσεντερίῳ)—medical terminology describing gastric fever and dysentery, common Mediterranean ailments. Luke the physician's precise description suggests chronic, life-threatening illness. Paul's response: **entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him** (προσευξάμενος ἐπιθεὶς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῷ ἰάσατο). Note the sequence: prayer first (acknowledging God's power), then laying on hands (apostolic sign gift), then healing (God's action). Paul doesn't heal by inherent power but as Christ's instrument. This healing reciprocates Publius' hospitality, demonstrating kingdom gratitude and opening doors for broader ministry (v. 9).

Historical Context

Dysentery was endemic in Mediterranean regions due to poor sanitation and contaminated water. Malta's geography made medical care limited. The combination of fever and bloody flux often proved fatal in the first century. Paul's healing would have been seen as miraculous deliverance from near-certain death.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you combine prayer with action in ministry opportunities?
2. What hospitality you've received has opened unexpected doors for serving others?

Interlinear Text

ἐγένετο	δὲ	τὸν	πατέρα	τοῦ	Ποπλίου	πυρετοῖς	καὶ
it came to pass	And	that the father	of Publius	a fever	and		
G1096	G1161	G3588	G3962	G3588	G4196	G4446	G2532
δυσεντερίᾳ	συνεχόμενον	κατακεῖσθαι	πρὸς	ὃν	ὁ		
of a bloody flux	sick of	lay	to	whom			
G1420	G4912	G2621	G4314	G3739	G3588		
Παῦλος	εἰσελθὼν	καὶ	προσευξάμενος	ἐπιθεὶς	τὰς	χεῖρας	
Paul	entered in	and	prayed	and laid	his hands		
G3972	G1525	G2532	G4336	G2007	G3588	G5495	
αὐτόν	ἰάσατο	αὐτόν					
him	and healed	him					
G846	G2390	G846					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 9:40 (Prayer): But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

Mark 6:5 (Parallel theme): And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.

Mark 16:18 (Parallel theme): They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Matthew 9:18 (Parallel theme): While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

1 Corinthians 12:9 (Parallel theme): To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

1 Corinthians 12:28 (Parallel theme): And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Matthew 10:1 (Parallel theme): And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Matthew 10:8 (Parallel theme): Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.