

Part 11 – June 21, 2009

"And the Hand of Lord was with Them"

Acts 11:19-12:24

Who is "the Lord"?

1. The Hand of the Lord with Selfless Servants

- Men of Cyprus & Cyrene—disciples with a Christ-centered testimony and an audience that needs it
- Barnabas, the Son of Encouragement

"The faithful must be glad, as Barnabas was, when they see the Gospel spread, whomever God uses to make His name known" –**John Calvin**, *Commentary on Acts*, 194.

- Gentile believers serving their Jewish brothers

2. The Hand of the Lord on Suffering Saints

- Triple Whammy—persecution, famine, & more persecution
- Laying "violent hands"

When Herod lays his hands on the church, has Christ taken his hands off?

Romans 8:35

- Suffering in the Name of the Master

"If anyone suffers as a _____" (1 Peter 4:16)

Acts 9:4, 16; Philippians 1:29

...Christ's solidarity with his afflicted people.

"How much can it do to soften all the bitterness of the cross, that the more we are afflicted with adversities, the more surely our fellowship with Christ is confirmed!"

—John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 3.8.1

3. The Hand of the Lord to Surprised Supplicants

- The Prayer Catalyst

"...effective, fervent prayer..." (James 5:16)

"If ever prayer is of benefit, it is most necessary when we face hard battles" –**John Calvin**, *Commentary on Acts*, 201

"Prayer is to be seen as a catalyst for the escape"
–**Darrel Bock**, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on Acts*, 426.

- Rescued by the Savior

- Humor-filled rebuke

...assurance in the rebuke: **Hebrews 7:25**

4. The Hand of the Lord against Silent Supplanters

- Herod's "god-for-a-day" policy

Isaiah 40:21-24

- God's worms & Word

"Christ's Word walks in triumph over those who trample his servants. Nothing will hinder the Word of Christ, least of all puny human rulers who enjoy playing God"

—Dale Ralph Davis

Matthew 28:18-20

*"Jesus, friend of sinners
Love me ere I knew Him
Drew me with His cords of Love
Tightly bound me to Him
Round my heart still closely twined
The ties that none can sever
For I am His and He is mine
Forever and forever"*