Faith, Hope, Love Lesson 29 May 5 Acts 28 Malta, Rome

Q1. (Faith) One of the teachings of the Church and the unanimous verdict of the Church Fathers is that the Gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Since we have seen St. Luke as a companion of St. Paul, the omission of St. Luke mentioning the martyrdom of St. Paul is seen by some scholars that the Acts, St. Luke’s second volume was “in the highest degree probable… written at a time when St. Paul’s trial in Rome had not yet come to an end.“ What encouragement in your faith do you find to know that the Gospels and Acts were actually written by the people the Church attributes them to?

Q2. (Hope) The Catechism uses these words of St. Paul and others to identify Jesus as the Hope of Israel. The Didache Commentary, based on the Catechism further identifies the hope of Israel as “The hope of redemption, resurrection, and restoration.” Redemption and resurrection are fairly easy to identify. For the Jew, restoration meant the restoration of the Davidic kingdom in the Promised Land. For the Christian, what would the restoration mean and when would it happen? Consider Revelation 21:1-2. Who is the bride and her husband?

Acts 28:20

20 This is the reason, then, I have requested to see you and to speak with you, for it is on account of the hope of Israel\* that I wear these chains.”

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The title "Christ" means "Anointed One" (Messiah). Jesus is the Christ, for "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power" (Acts 10:38). He was the one "who is to come" (Lk 7:19), the object of "the hope of Israel" (Acts 28:20).

Revelation 21:1-2

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.   
The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

2 I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,   
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Q3. (Love) After all the trials and difficulties St. Paul had endured to arrive safely to Malta, how do you react to two separate acts of love we see at the beginning of this chapter, one mundane, the other miraculous?

Acts 28:3, 8

3 Paul had gathered a bundle of brushwood

8 It so happened that the father of Publius was sick with a fever and dysentery.

Paul visited him and, after praying, laid his hands on him and healed him.

A1. The Gospels and Acts were not just stories concocted by anonymous sources long after the Apostles had all died. They are in fact the work of eye witnesses (Matthew and John and principal participants and companions of Apostles, Mark and Luke.) The deeds that the performed and the faith they professed led directly to their martyrdom. People do not willingly die for something they know to be false. I believe the teaching of the Church and the Church Fathers in the validity, authenticity, and Divine inspiration of the Bible and all its parts as defined by the Catholic Church.

A2. The restoration Christians look forward to is the resurrection of the body to a new and glorious stat akin to Jesus and the recreation of a new heaven and a new earth with a new, heavenly Jerusalem.

The Church is the Bride of Christ and Christ is the Bridegroom of the Church.

A3. I think St. Paul is behaving as a follower of Christ should act, accepting even the most menial task as a sacred duty to one’s neighbor, in this case gathering firewood.

The second is that while his primary duty was preaching the Gospel, St. Paul still served the everyday needs of the people by healing the sick.