

## Acts 28:16-31 (#41) 3.21.21 (21023)

### Paul at Rome

#### I. Acts is about the spread of the gospel. God is speaking to humanity. Heb.1:1-3; Acts 1:1-8.

- A. Jesus taught them about the kingdom of God.
- B. Jesus told them to proclaim Him (who he is and what he has done) until they had reached beyond Judaism, to the Gentile world.
  - 1. The Lord Himself would be the message. Luke 24:44-48
  - 2. The Holy Spirit would supply the ability (dunamis). Acts 2
- C. *And from the day of Pentecost (30-33AD) that is exactly what happened.*
  - 1. Peter and the others take the Gospel to the Jews primarily. 2-12
    - a) Judea, Samaria, and the first Gentile converts.
  - 2. Paul takes the gospel to the Jews and Gentiles in chapters 13-28.
    - a) Eventually the Capital, Rome.
  - 3. Acts 28:16-31 finds Paul in Rome, doing what he had always done.
    - a) Announcing the gospel to the Jews first and also to the Gentiles...(Rom.1:16-17)

#### II. Unlikely Ministry in Rome. Acts 28:17-31.

- A. First meeting with Jewish leaders. 17-22.
  - 1. To explain why he was there and under Roman guard.
  - 2. To explain that he was not against Israel, but actually proclaiming the Event that Israel had been hoping in for generations—Messiah's arrival, plus his resurrection and ascension.
  - 3. They claim not to know much about Paul, but they do know that the "Christian" sect within Judaism is very controversial.
  - 4. *Note: there had been Christian gatherings among the Jews in Rome for at least 10 years (the late 40s) and the book of Romans had been circulating among the Jews and Christians for the last 3 years.*
- B. Second meeting with Jewish leaders. 23-28.
  - 1. Larger group. (Paul was controversial). 23
    - a) Good thing Paul was chained to a Roman soldier...
  - 2. Longer discussion: all day. 23
    - a) Paul is presenting Jesus as the reigning, risen and saving King, Lord, Messiah for Israel and the world.
  - 3. More fruit. 24
    - a) Some convinced, persuaded, believing.
  - 4. Increased controversy. 25-28
    - a) The Holy Spirit said. Isa 6:9-10
  - 5. Expanded mission. 28.
    - a) This salvation from God has been sent to the Gentiles.
    - b) Not that ministry to Jews stops, but Paul's point is that he wants to talk to people who want to hear.
- C. Resulting in clarity on God's outreach to Gentiles. 30-31 (1:8)
  - 1. This salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles (whole world).
  - 2. Unhindered resource. People came to him...
  - 3. Increased impact. By writing.
    - a) Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon from this house arrest.
  - 4. Probably released for a few years, then recaptured and executed by Nero in the mid-late 60s. (68?)

### III. Pressing Questions that help us live for Christ in our world.

**A. Why did Paul gather the Jewish leaders, knowing that most would not believe?** (he had been doing this outreach for over 20 years. He knew what their responses would be and why.) **Four reasons:**

1. Because Jesus Christ is the “hope of Israel.” 20
  - a) Jesus is the fulfillment of the entire OT. Lk.24:25-27, 44-48.
    - (1) He said so. Matt.5:17-18
    - b) He came to his own, and was rejected. Jn.1:1-14
2. Because the gospel is true whether people think they need it or not. Mk.1:15; Heb.1:1-3.
  - a) Paul had been one of these guys, thinking he didn’t need or want this message.
  - b) His conversion violently pulled him out of religion and into the kingdom of God.
  - c) The question is not “do I feel the need?” but “Is it true...?” Is Jesus who he says he is and did he really come back from the dead?
3. Because he cared about them. Rom.1:16-17, 9:1-5.
  - a) Judgment is real and love motivates mission. 2 Cor.5:14
4. Because the gospel is worth being criticized for.
  - a) The real gospel is controversial because it challenges all other religions and philosophies. But it is true!
  - b) Let us be criticized for trusting and thinking like Jesus.

**B. Why did the Gentiles listen when the Jews did not?** (Rom.9:30-10:4)

1. *Because they had nothing to lose...*
2. The Jews had a lot to lose in terms of self-glorification.
  - a) The legalism and self-righteousness of human religion/moralism stand in the way of the gospel.
  - b) Religions are innately legalistic because they rely on human effort. One way or another.
  - c) Atheist moralism is identical in its orientation, self-glorification, utopian self-salvation, but *without God, grace, or future destiny*. Just be good because...?

**C. Why did Luke not include what happened to Paul after this house arrest?**

1. *Because Acts is not about Peter or Paul really—It is about God’s King and His Kingdom.* 28:31
  - a) The kingdom is already happening.
    - (1) It is real and invisible. 2 Cor.4:16-5:10
      - (a) It is “already and not yet”. Col.1:13-14
      - (b) Focus on the invisible, live faithfully in the now.
    - (2) It is entered by personal faith in Messiah rather than by being religious (Jewish). Jn.3:1-16; Rom.9:30-10:4; Eph. 3:4-7; Col.1:13-14
      - (a) Forgiveness, resurrection/Spirit life, promise of future physical resurrection along with the rest of God’s new creation. Titus 3:4-7; Phil.3:20; 1 Cor.15; Rev.21-22
      - (3) It will appear materially when Jesus Christ (The King) returns. Acts 1:11; Matt.24:29-31; 1 Thess.4:13-5:11; 2 Thess.1:5-12.
  - b) Because the King is already resurrected and ascended. Acts 1:1-11; Matt.26:64
    - (1) He is at large by the Spirit and the Word (the gospel, Rom.1:16-17.
2. *Because God’s larger story is still going on—and we are part of it.*
  - a) Acts was just the beginning. It ends with an ellipsis.
  - b) *We are on mission, focused on God’s kingdom, bringing this salvation of God to everybody who will listen.*