

**"The Road to Rome"**

**Part 16**

**Acts 22-28**

**Introduction:** Tonight, in our study we have come to the last lesson in the book of Acts. Last week when we stopped Paul was greeted by believers who were in Rome when he arrived and through meeting them Paul was encouraged. This is a good reminder that even the strongest of believers need to be in the presence of believers in order to be encouraged at times. No doubt Paul was tired and exhausted from the travels and therefore God used the believers he met to minister to his needs.

➤ **The Prison becomes a Pulpit**

**Notice Acts 28:16**

When they arrived at Rome Paul was separated from all others and stayed by himself with the exception of a guard that was with him around the clock. Let us understand that Paul was not chained to a guard, but the guard was chained to Paul. Every 6 hours the guards would change, and this would go on for 2 years. These were not just ordinary guards, but they were part of the Praetorian Guard from the palace.

**Philippians 1:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> *But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;*

<sup>13</sup> *So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;*

**Notice Acts 28:17**

Paul now sends his friends to the synagogues, and he invites the leaders of the Jewish synagogues to come and hear his defense. He is keeping with his pattern which is "TO THE JEW FIRST". He wasted no time after he arrived at Rome. He had desired to go to Rome and now that he had arrived, he would be about the Lord's work. He never complained about his conditions he only saw them as an opportunity to reach the lost. Let us be reminded that Paul was chained but the Gospel was never chained, and Paul would preach to whomever came to visit him.

**Notice Acts 28:17-20**

Paul reviewed what had happened to him when he arrived at Jerusalem after his third missionary journey and then he made a very important statement. He said, "For the HOPE of Isarel he was bound with a chain."

The Hope of Israel was the Messiah. The Old Testament prophets had foretold of the coming of the Messiah who would restore all that was lost in the Garden and who would establish His Kingdom in which the covenants of God would find their ultimate fulfillment for the nation of Israel. But there was more to this HOPE, and we see this as Paul had spoken of the HOPE previously.

**Acts 23:6**

*<sup>6</sup> But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.*

**Acts 24:14-15**

*<sup>14</sup> But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:*

*<sup>15</sup> And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.*

**Acts 26:6-8**

*<sup>6</sup> And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God, unto our fathers:*

*<sup>7</sup> Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.*

*<sup>8</sup> Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?*

The HOPE of Israel was not just the promise of Jesus Christ but it was also the resurrection. The Old Testament spoke of the resurrection and Paul was holding to this HOPE.

**Job 19:25-27**

<sup>25</sup> For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

<sup>26</sup> And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:

<sup>27</sup> Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

**Isaiah 26:19**

<sup>19</sup> Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

**Daniel 12:1-2**

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

<sup>2</sup> And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Paul's HOPE was in Jesus Christ and His resurrection.

**1 Corinthians 15:12-16**

<sup>12</sup> Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

<sup>13</sup> But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen:

<sup>14</sup> And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.

<sup>15</sup> Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

<sup>16</sup> For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised:

This HOPE, which Paul had, was his anchor that sustained him in the midst of all the storms which he faced.

**Notice Acts 28:20-22**

They had received no negative reports against Paul, but they did hear that Christianity was spoken against. They were open minded however for they desired to hear what Paul had to say concerning Christianity.

**Notice Acts 28:23**

Many came to him on this appointed day, and he taught them from morning until evening. This would have been a wonderful Bible study. There were also other times when Paul was visited by different leaders. Now while Paul was here in Rome, he wrote several letters. He wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Let us notice a list of leaders who were with Paul in Rome.

**Colossians 4:3-4, 7-12**

<sup>3</sup> *Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:*

<sup>4</sup> *That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.*

<sup>7</sup> *All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord:*

<sup>8</sup> *Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;*

<sup>9</sup> *With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.*

<sup>10</sup> *Aristarchus my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)*

<sup>11</sup> *And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me.*

<sup>12</sup> *Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.*

These were some who were with Paul. They were friendly faces in the crowd.

**Notice Acts 28:24**

Those who were hearing the Truth explained from the Old Testament had two different responses. Some believed and some did not.

**Application:**

We should expect nothing different when we share the Truth of God's Word with people. Some will believe and some will not.

There is something else here that we need to see. This house that Paul was in became his pulpit. Many people feel chained to home, work, to raising children, or sickness. But let us understand that God has permitted it and we can make a difference where He has placed us.

Sussanah Wesley was chained to her home raising 19 children. Do you think she felt chained? Two of her children changed the British Isles, they were John and Charles Wesley.

Notice what Paul writes at the end of Philippians.

**Philippians 4:21-22**

<sup>21</sup> Salute every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren which are with me greet you.

<sup>22</sup> All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.

We see here that the Gospel penetrated the household of Caesar and most likely this referred to the guards chained to Paul. No matter where we are we can make a difference for our God if we accept the situation as His will.

**Notice Acts 28:25-29**

This was Paul ending as he spoke to the Jewish leaders. It was a reminder of what God had spoken through Isaiah concerning the people of Israel. Notice the words of Gilbrant.

*"Paul quoted from Isaiah because he wanted those Jews who were rejecting the gospel to realize they were not merely turning away from him and his message. They were closing their hearts and minds to God and His plan, and in doing so they were coming under judgment just as the Israelites did who rejected Isaiah's message when it was first given over 700 years before."*

In verse 27 we see that THEY CLOSED THEIR EYES, and the result was they could not hear, they could not see, and they could not understand. These are the consequences for those who hear the Gospel and make the choice to reject it as God's offer of salvation.

**Notice Acts 28:30-31**

After two years Paul was released, and it is believed his accusers never showed up because they had nothing on him. After his release he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus. Then after another two years he was placed in prison again and there he wrote 2 Timothy. Some believe he was arrested the second time because it was believed he was the leader of the Jews who were accused of burning Rome. In the second imprisonment he was martyred.

**Conclusion:**

The book of Acts ends like there should be more. The reason is because this letter tells how the Gospel went from Jerusalem to Rome and now the Gospel is to be carried further into the world therefore the letter can be seen as not yet completed.