

ACTS 28:16-31 ROME AT LAST: FOR TWO YEARS!

Paul, chained to a guard, enters Rome with Luke and Aristarchus in March or April 60 AD, the sixth year of the reign of Nero. The church in Rome, most likely begun by converts from the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2), was thriving. Peter has not yet set foot there. Acts ends with Paul, still a prisoner, established and teaching for two years in his own rented house in Rome.

Rome

- Capital and center of the political, legislative, and military powers of the Roman Empire
- Estimated population: over 1 million plus slaves (M. Cary, A History of Rome, Macmillan, 2nd Edition, 1965)
- Center of a thriving Christian church which by 100 AD would be the Empire's largest
- Paul's letter to the Romans was written 3 years previous: see Rom. 16 for friends there known to Paul.

28:16 Paul's Residence and Chain

v.16 *“Paul was suffered to dwell by himself:”* compare v. 23 and 30

Why this favorable treatment?

- because of a very positive report from Procurator Festus;
- because of the favorable testimony of Officer-Courier Julius.

Question: rent money!?!

“with a soldier that _____ (lit., guarded) him”*

How? Lightly chained by the wrist (v. 20).

*THE PRATORIAN GUARD (The Imperial Guard of the Emperor) comp. Philippians 1:13 for this clear identity.

28:17-22 Paul's First Interview with a Few Jewish Leaders in Rome

v.17a Paul initiates the contact (he could not go to them)

v.17b-20 Paul's summary of his case

v. 17b “Though _____ of any violation of Jewish law, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans.”

v. 18 “The Romans would have _____ me.”

v. 19 “But the Jews contested my case, so I appealed to _____.”

v. 20 “The real reason for my arrest is that I have preached the historic _____ of _____.” That is, the promise made to the Patriarchs: their hope. See 13:26-33; 26:19-23.

v.21-24 Jewish Leaders' Responses to Paul

v. 21 “We know nothing of your case.” If the chief priests of Jerusalem had written, the letter never arrived: perhaps the favorable treatment of Paul as a Roman citizen discouraged them from writing.

v. 22 “Christianity” from their point of view:

1. “We want to hear more of your thoughts on this.”

2. “This sect* everywhere has a bad reputation.”

*αἵρεσις / hairexis = division, faction, false teaching. We get our word _____ from this.

3. “Let's meet and discuss this again.”

(OVER)

28:23-29 Paul's Second Interview: Many Jews Come

- v.23 They Visit Paul at His _____*
- *ξενια/xenia = hospitable place, lodging; Paul may have been temporarily lodged with a friend.
- Paul _____ and _____ of the Kingdom of God.
 - Paul _____ them concerning _____.
 - Paul's sources were the _____ and the _____.
 - Paul's exhortations lasted _____.

v.24,25a Their Responses

1. Some _____.
2. Some did not _____.
3. They _____ among themselves (believers and unbelievers).

v.25a-29 Their Departure After Paul's Finals Words (Isaiah 6:9.10)

“the _____ of _____ rejected by you Jews is now sent to the _____
(the despised *goyim*): AND THEY WILL HEAR IT.”

How could Paul with assurance make such a dogmatic statement?

This is the third of such pronouncements to Jews by Paul:

- the first, in the synagogue at Antioch (Pisidia), Acts 13:46;
- the second, in the synagogue at Corinth, Acts 18:6

28:30, 31 Luke's Concluding Emphasis: The Gospel Advances Unhindered

- v.30 Paul dwelt _____ years with relative liberty. He could not leave the premises anytime he wished, but others could visit him with great liberty.

v.31 Paul's focus and priorities:

1. _____* the Kingdom of God
*κηρυσσω / kerusso = to proclaim, make known
He proclaimed and made known the Kingdom of God in both of its aspects:
 - The Universal Rule of God Over His Creation (Sovereignty)
 - The Mediatorial Kingdom (Past and Future)
2. _____* the things that focus on the Lord Jesus Christ.
*διδασκω / didasko = to teach, to present logically and systematically
HOW? UNHINDERED: the last word in the Book!

Acts began in Jerusalem with an emphasis on Peter's ministries.

Acts ends in Rome with an emphasis on Paul's ministries.

This remarkable Book has taken us from Jerusalem, the center of the Old Testament, Jewish-religious world, to Rome, the center of the contemporaneous political world. Both needed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, as did all points in between. Acts records the opportunities, hindrances, successes, and trials of the early church in this regard. It tells of the advance of gospel geographically just as Jesus had predicted in Acts 1:18: “YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES...”

“...UNTO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE WORLD.”

NEXT WEEK: After Acts 28:31, what? What happened to Paul? What epistles were written while he was under house arrest?