



Acts Chapter 28 The End Of Acts

As we finish our study on the 28th chapter of the book of Acts today, we'll also be finishing our study on the entire book of Acts. After about a year long study into the book of Acts we now find ourselves standing at the end of this journey looking back... and pondering just how much more knowledge we now have then when we first began this journey.

The book of Acts is one of the most important books in the Bible, not only to this ministry, and it's growth.. but also to every single Christian around the world. To many would be Christians see the book of Acts as the beginning of Christianity. They see it as the beginning of the Christian church... and they see it as the beginning of all things "Christian". But for those of us who have actually read the book of Acts and studied it closely... we know that the book of Acts is nothing more than the continuation and fulfillment of prophecy that had been proclaimed from the beginning of the book. But before we get to far ahead of ourselves... Lets go back and read chapter 28 again so that we can get a better understanding of just how the book of Acts comes to a close.

ACTS CHAPTER 28:

Act 28:1 After we were brought safely through, we then learned that the island was called Malta.

Act 28:2 The native people showed us unusual kindness, for they kindled a fire and welcomed us all, because it had begun to rain and was cold.

Act 28:3 When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire, a viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand.

Act 28:4 When the native people saw the creature hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer. Though he has escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live."

Act 28:5 He, however, shook off the creature into the fire and suffered no harm.

Act 28:6 They were waiting for him to swell up or suddenly fall down dead. But when they had waited a long time and saw no misfortune come to him, they changed their minds and said that he was a god.

Act 28:7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days.

Act 28:8 It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him.

Act 28:9 And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured.

Act 28:10 They also honored us greatly, and when we were about to sail, they put on board whatever we needed.

Act 28:11 After three months we set sail in a ship that had wintered in the island, a ship of Alexandria, with the twin gods as a figurehead.

Act 28:12 Putting in at Syracuse, we stayed there for three days.

Act 28:13 And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli.

Act 28:14 There we found brothers and were invited to stay with them for seven days. And so we came to Rome.

Act 28:15 And the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

Act 28:16 And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.

Act 28:17 After three days he called together the local leaders of the Jews, and when they had gathered, he said to them, "Brothers, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

Act 28:18 When they had examined me, they wished to set me at liberty, because there was no reason for the death penalty in my case.

Act 28:19 But because the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—though I had no charge to bring against my nation.

Act 28:20 For this reason, therefore, I have asked to see you and speak with you, since it is because of the hope of Israel that I am wearing this chain."

Act 28:21 And they said to him, "We have received no letters from Judea about you, and none of the brothers coming here has reported or spoken any evil about you.

Act 28:22 But we desire to hear from you what your views are, for with regard to this sect we know that everywhere it is spoken against."

Act 28:23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.

Act 28:24 And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved.

Act 28:25 And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:

Act 28:26 "Go to this people, and say, "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive."

Act 28:27 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.'

Act 28:28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

Act 28:30 He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him,

Act 28:31 proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

One of the things we find here in chapter 28 is that the Jews of Rome don't really seem to know what's going on with the Jews of Jerusalem. Notice in verse 21 that the Jews of Rome tell Paul that they haven't heard anything about Paul or what he's been through. This should help us to understand the relationship between the Jews of Rome and the Jews of Jerusalem.

It's most likely that the Jews of Rome were more interested in living in peace with the Romans, and may have been more accommodating to the Roman way of life than the Jews of Jerusalem who were found to be more zealous for the law. Of course this accommodating lifestyle would come with a price when it came to compromising the Jewish faith with Roman Pagan ways and supporting Roman political rulings and a more Hellenistic lifestyle. And yet because there had been no correspondence between the Jerusalem Jews and the Roman Jews... the Roman Jews were open to at least hear what Paul had to say for himself. One thing was for sure.. these Roman Jews had no desire to be associated with Paul if it might damage their relationship between themselves and the Romans.

Paul doesn't waste any time telling these Roman Jews that the reason that he's a prisoner in chains is because of his hope for Israel.. and of course that hope is indeed found in the resurrection of their Messiah. Paul longed to come to Rome so that he could tell them about the hope that had been given not just all Jews... but all Gentiles as well.

And so Paul begins to tell them that it is his devotion to Israel that has put him in the very chains that he is bound in. One thing to remember here is that these Roman Jews had already heard of this new found sect of Judaism called "The Way". Notice in verse 22 the Roman Jews refused to the followers of "The Way" as a "Sect"... in other words it was known as just another sect of Judaism just like the Saducees who ran the temple or the Pharisees who ran the synagogues, or the Samaritan Jews, or the Essene's or any number of other Jewish sects.

It's important to understand that the followers of "The Way" who were Christians were not seen as some new found Gentile belief system or a different religion in any way. This Gospel message was being spread by Jews to other Jews as well as Gentiles. It was not at all like what we see today as modern day Christianity. The original Gospel message came from the Jews, and by the Jews it was spread throughout the land. In fact listen to what our own Messiah tells the Samaritan women at the well with his own breath, his own tongue, and in his own red letter words in John chapter 4 verse 22:

Joh 4:22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.

Let there be no doubt my friends that today's modern day Gentile Christians and their over 5000 different denominational charters of men constantly miss the mark when they so proudly and so wrongly proclaim that Christianity is some kind of Gentile religion that's separate and apart from the Jews.

Far to many of today's modern day Christian denominations have separated themselves from the Jews because of their antisemitism, and their love of control and manipulation. To many of these modern day Christian denominational charters have set themselves up upon a pedestal of wickedness and selfishness... greed, and self loathing, only to soon find out that they themselves will be the victims of their own demise. It would serve them well to go back and read Matthew chapter 7 verses 21 through 23:

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Mat 7:22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'

Mat 7:23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

Not all of these modern day Christian denominational charters will enter the kingdom of Heaven with all of their man made, man created, man fabricated, self taught 1st day of the week Sunday Sabbaths, and pagan Easter celebrations, and their pagan rituals, traditions, and myths that are found no where in their Bibles. They will have chosen to follow after the little g god of this world rather than the one true God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. To many of them worship him with their lips but their harts are from from him, and they have made void the Word of God in order to hold onto their own traditions.

Here in the 28th chapter of the book of Acts we find a much more truthful depiction of exactly what the original Gospel message was, and who it was given to. And it would do today's modern day professing Christians well to remember that the Gospel message was not given to the Gentiles... it was given to the Jews to give to the Gentiles. To show a little humility and a little respect... would serve us all well.

And once again while we're on this subject... it's also important to remember what Paul used to convince the Jews who Yahshua Jesus was. Paul most certainly did not use the "New Testament". There was no "New Testament" back in Paul's time. The "New Testament" would not even be written for at least another 70 years after the death, burial, and resurrection of

Yahshua Jesus. We're told very clearly what Paul used to convince both Jew and Gentile of who his Messiah was in verse 23:

*Act 28:23 When they had appointed a day for him, they came to him at his lodging in greater numbers. From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both **from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.***

Paul used the law of Moses and the Prophets... in other words my friends... he used what we know today as "The Old Testament"... you know... that part of the Bible that most Christian denominations tell us not to read because it's all nailed to the cross? It was indeed the "Old Testament" that Paul used to convince them, and it was the "Old Testament" that the Berians were combing through daily to see if what Paul was telling them was true or not. Lets go back and read Acts chapter 17 verses 10 and 11:

Act 17:10 The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue.

Act 17:11 Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Once again my friends.. they did not have a "New Testament" to examine. All they had at that time was... "The Old Testament". And when Timothy so proudly proclaimed that all scripture is God breathed and profitable for teaching and reproof, and correction and training in righteousness in 2nd Timothy 3:16... once again my friends... he was not talking about the "New Testament"...he was talking about the "Old Testament". Timothy had no "New Testament" when he spoke those most famous words.

To think for one moment... that the very "Old Testament Scriptures" that Paul and Timothy and James and the rest of the Apostles were using to convince both Jew and Gentile of who their Messiah truly was...is some kind of bondage or curse or that it's all nailed to some tree somewhere is blasphemous on it's face my friends, and I assure you that nothing could be farther from the truth. And when you know that truth... you will also know how absolutely brilliant our adversary really is. He is the father of all lies.. and his deception knows no bounds.

And with that being said I want us to take a moment and go back and just read verses 25 through 28:

Act 28:25 And disagreeing among themselves, they departed after Paul had made one statement: "The Holy Spirit was right in saying to your fathers through Isaiah the prophet:

Act 28:26 "Go to this people, and say, "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive."

Act 28:27 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and

understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.'

Act 28:28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

I want us to once again notice that Paul is using the "Old Testament" here to once again convince these unbelieving Jews that Yahshua Jesus truly is their Messiah. Lets go read Isiah chapter 6 verses 8 and 10 just so we can see where Paul is getting these words that he just spoke to these unbelieving Roman Jews.

Isa 6:9 And he said, "Go, and say to this people: "'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

Isa 6:10 Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

Once again my friends Paul does not pull from the "New Testament"... he pulls from the "Old Testament" and he quotes Isaiah chapter 6 verses 9 and 10 because he knows that they know these scriptures and he's trying to ring some bells in their memories but just as the scripture says.. their hearts were dull and their ears could not hear and their eyes could not see. Once again.. another prophecy come true.

What these unbelieving Jews did not understand is that repentance alone can not get a man into the gates of Heaven. Repentance with out "faith" is redundant. Faith must come first... and it must be because of our faith in him that we repent... and this faith and only this faith will keep us from returning like a dog to it's vomit back to our sin. It is because of the love that we have for him and what he did for us.. that keeps us away from sin, and turns us away from the past, and moves us into the future. I would submit to you my friends that both "faith" and "love" are the same. Faith my friends.. is love, and love is faith.

1Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

Something ells very profound that I want us to see is found in verse 28:

Act 28:28 Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen."

This one verse has been the controversy of many a denominational charter. Once again our modern day denominational charters of men just love to cherry pick the scriptures that best suit their denominational agenda. Once again my friends this one scripture has been the bedrock of

way to many denominational churches.

They will take this verse and proclaim that the Gentile Christian has replaced the Jews and the House of Israel, and that there is no more House of Israel because God did away with it (even though just like most of their other doctrines...we won't find that anywhere in our Bibles either).

Once again God knew that many of the Gentiles would accept the truth because many of the Gentiles had always accepted the truth. Clear back in the book of Exodus, and Numbers, and in Deuteronomy we find the Gentiles over and over and over again accepting the one true God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob, and our Father tells us very clearly he saw those Gentiles as a native of the land, and that there would be one law for the Israelite and for the Gentile...not two different laws. Lets read Numbers chapter 15 verses 14 through 16:

Num 15:14 And if a stranger is sojourning with you, or anyone is living permanently among you, and he wishes to offer a food offering, with a pleasing aroma to the LORD, he shall do as you do.

Num 15:15 For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you, a statute forever throughout your generations. You and the sojourner shall be alike before the LORD.

Num 15:16 One law and one rule shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you."

So our Father already knew that the Gentiles were all to ready to do what these unbelieving Jews would not do... and that was to simply come to the truth of Gods Word and accept the free gift of salvation that was being offered by him through his son who was.. the sacrificial Passover Lamb by the way.

As we close the book of Acts we know that God wanted Paul to stand before Caesar, but we're never really told whether he did or not. We can only assume that he did. What we are told is that Paul lived in Rome for two years at his own expense and that he ministered to all who came to him. This may imply that Paul never really did get out of prison. Some biblical scholars even believe that Paul died while in prison. Eusebius and early church historian claimed that Paul was beheaded by Nero or one of his cohorts. Paul's martyrdom occurred shortly after much of Rome had burned in a great fire.. and this was an event that Nero blamed on Christians.

It's also very possible that the Apostle Peter was martyred around about the same time that Nero was murdering these same Christians. It's said that Peter was crucified upside down and that Paul was beheaded because Paul was a Roman citizen and Roman citizens were exempt from crucifixion.. but the truth is that the Bible does not tell us how they died, so all we have to go by are the few historical documents that we can find from different historians that lived back in those days.

LOOKING BACK:

In the end we can look back at the book of Acts and know and understand that the “Old Testament” was what backed up the Gospel message of our Messiah. It was these writings that we find between the pages of what we know as our “Old Testament” that tell us of the coming of our Messiah, and proclaim his very existence just as much today as they did back then.

None of the Apostles ever tell us that our Fathers laws are bondage, or a curse, and none of the Apostles ever tell us that our Fathers laws are nailed to some tree somewhere. The law that Paul spoke about being bondage and a curse was not the law of his Father or his Messiah... but rather the law of the Pharisees who had written their man made laws over top of Gods laws. These were the same laws that our Messiah detested so badly in Matthew chapter 23 when he called them a brood of vipers, blind guides, white washed tombs, and two fold children of hell.

The book of Acts tells us that Paul always lived in observance of the law in Acts chapter 21 verse 24, and even Paul himself asked that all important question.. “Do we overthrow the law by our faith? By no means Paul says... on the contrary Paul says... we uphold the law. And again you can find that in Romans 3:31 if you've never heard that scripture before... and by the way... most of us haven't heard it... because it's not something that today's modern day version of Christianity likes to share... for obvious reasons.

We've not only learned a lot of things in our study of the book of Acts... but we un-learned a lot of things as well... like the idea that Acts chapter 10 has anything to do with eating un-clean animals. We know full well from our study that the sheet that Peter saw full of animals had nothing to do with our ability to eat clean or un-clean animals. The scripture tells us that even Peter was perplexed as to what the dream of the sheet of animals meant in verse 17.. and the scriptures tell us very clearly in Acts chapter 10 verses 34 and 35 that the dream of the sheet full of animals had nothing to do with eating unclean animals:

Act 10:34 So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,

Act 10:35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

We also learned that Paul never preached against Circumcision in Acts chapter 15. Paul was simply telling the new Gentile converts that they did not have to be circumcised right away like the circumcision group was telling them. It was more important to know and understand the reason behind getting circumcised.. and Paul and James both knew that.. and they knew that it would take time for them to study in order for them to come to the truth. The circumcision group was trying to force the new converts into being circumcised because they believed that circumcision is what saved a person. Paul knew that circumcision does not save anyone anymore that baptizim saves someone.

If your heart does not lead you to these things that God has commanded... then doing them is meaningless. Once again it is about the circumcision of the heart.. that leads a new Christian to do the will of God our Father. For this is the love of God... that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not burdensome to us. James simply gives the new Converts 4 simple things to do right out of the Torah I might add and then he says in verse 21 that from ancient generations Moses has in every synagogue those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the Synagogues. In other words... give them time... they will learn... and then we even see Paul himself circumcises Timothy in Acts chapter 16 verse 3 while both Paul and Timothy took the decision that James had made about circumcision and deliver it to all of the churches.

We saw the sons of Sceva try to exorcise demons from people by using the name of Yahshua, and we saw the demon strip them of their clothes and almost kill them because they did not believe in Yahshua.

And we even see Paul at the Temple performing a ritual ceremony and purifying himself and four other men and even paying for their offerings when they came to drag him out of the Temple and into the streets to kill him.

There should be no doubt in anyone's mind who has truly studied the book of Acts. Paul and the rest of the Apostles always lived in observance of the law of God... and we should too.