

THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 84 | ACTS 28:28-31

ACTS 28:17-29 | PAUL MEETS WITH THE ROMAN JEWS

- Verses 17-27 – see session 83
- Verse 28 –
 - Having quoted Isaiah 6:9-10, we *expect* Isaiah 6:11-13, but Paul comes with an unbelievable truth that was *mystery* until given to him by revelation: **that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.**
 - At first glance we expect that **the salvation** in reference is *the Kingdom salvation*. We expect this for two reasons:
 - Allowing Scripture to interpret itself, we are reminded of Luke 3:6, where the same words are used, in reference to the Kingdom.
 - The context of the words, including the Jewish audience and the Hebrew scriptures just quoted.
 - It is probably that Bullinger (with his Acts 28 position for the start of the church) concluded from this verse that the *kingdom* salvation was still being proclaimed, and that the mystery was still unrevealed.
 - The two reasons above are *very strong*. However, Paul also says **they will hear it**. Unless **hear** is *simply acoustics*, then this has not, nor will it ever be fulfilled, and thus Paul would have been sorely mistaken.
 - Could it have been simply acoustics?
 - The Greek is ἀκούω [akouo], which is a word for *physical hearing*, and from which we get *acoustics*.
 - However, the same word is used in verses 27-28 and clearly means much more than hearing alone.
 - It is arguable that the **Gentiles** have never heard the Kingdom Gospel (they certainly do not understand what the Kingdom is, and history shows little evidence they ever did).
 - Since the Gentiles *never heard* the Kingdom Gospel, and since the Kingdom Gospel to the Gentiles was *not* in the prophetic program, this (it seems to me) is an instance in which we can say that *the plain sense does NOT make common sense* and that the **salvation of God** is a reference to salvation in the dispensation of the grace of God, not Kingdom salvation.
- Verse 29 - It would be mere speculation, but such wonderment, to know more about this discussion!

ACTS 28:30-31 | CONCLUDING INFORMATION

- Verse 30 –
 - These two years are mid-60s of the first century. Paul is **in his own hired house** rather than in prison. In Caesarea he was in a government-provided house, under “house arrest.” Now, it appears, he is *not in prison* and is able to rent his own home. Note that there is no word about the soldier, as mentioned in 28:16.
 - Based on some of the words written in the so-called “prison epistles,” Paul appears constrained (perhaps to his house?), but this is not as certain as often taught.

- Verse 31 –
 - To deny that Paul was **preaching the kingdom of God** is to deny scripture. To deny that the kingdom that he was preaching is the *future, physical, fraternal kingdom of God* is to venture into make-believe.
 - The **things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ** appear to be Kingdom related. In fact, almost everything Christ did is Kingdom related. He was, after all, **a minister of the circumcision...to confirm the promises to the fathers** (Romans 15:8).
 - There are four reasons he would have taught the kingdom at this point:
 - He had no other message. This is the Bullinger position (in his last days, but not found in *The Companion Bible*).
 - He was simply giving *information* about the *now-withdrawn* offer of the kingdom. This is a standard “mid-Acts” position.
 - The kingdom is still offered, and thus still needs to be proclaimed, while at the same time the Gospel of the dispensation of the grace of God is also being offered. This is the “overlap” position that we have taught in this study.
 - His definition of the Kingdom was spiritual. This is the standard evangelical answer, and is related to the “make believe” mentioned above.
 - Paul carried out these last known days of his ministry **with all confidence, no man forbidding him**.

WHAT HAPPENED TO PAUL AFTER THE CLOSE OF ACTS?

- We believe he wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon during the two-year period of Acts 28.
- As he wrote these books, he seemed to be free to travel (Phil. 2:24, Philemon 22).
- In letters believed to be written after the two years, he writes about traveling to several places (1 Timothy 1:3, Titus 3:12-13, and 2 Timothy 4:20).
- By 2 Timothy, however, Paul appears to be in imprisonment, much worse than Acts 28. (2 Tim. 1:16-18, 2:8-9, 4:6-8).
- Thus it appears that in Acts 28, Paul was living in Rome, either under a loose house arrest or no arrest at all. During or shortly after this time he makes some fairly extensive travels though Greece. Later, he is in chains in Rome, where the story of Paul’s journey’s likely ends.
- One further piece of evidence that Acts 28 is not the end of the story: In Acts 28:31 Paul is teaching **with all confidence**. By 2 Timothy 1:15, **all they which are in Asia** had turned away from him.

Stay tuned: Session 85 will be a summary lesson on the transition, whether there is an “Acts 29,” and more!