

Witness to the Ends of the Earth (11:19 – 28:31)

7. Paul in Jerusalem (Con't) 21:17-23:11
8. Paul in Caesarea (23:12 – 26:32)
9. The Journey to Rome (27:1 – 28:15)
10. Ministering in Rome (28:16-31)

Paul in Jerusalem

Paul Speaks to the Mob (21:37-22:21)

Paul's identity is mistaken by the commander as he assumes he is an Egyptian who tried to lead a revolt against Rome.

- The revolt that was being referenced was one where an Egyptian had taken a large number of people to the Mount of Olives promising them God's intervention. The revolt was aborted by Governor Felix with the loss of much life but the escape of the Egyptian.⁴⁰

Paul mentions his citizenship in Tarsus. This does not seem to impress the commander but he allows him to speak to the mob that is trying to persecute him.

Paul Speaks Their Language. This caused the people to listen.

Paul most likely knows what the outcome is going to be after his address yet it does not derail him from the opportunity.

A new piece is added to the story as Paul recounts the experience personally; His vision to leave Jerusalem. Notice Paul had a desire to stay and witness to his own people but was asked by the Lord to forgo until later.

Paul uses His Roman Citizenship (22:22-29)

Paul makes a comment that he was sent to the Gentiles by God. This statement sends the Jews of Jerusalem into an outburst. They called for his death, threw off their cloaks, and kicked dust.

Paul uses his gift of speaking to again seize the opportunity to share the gospel. This time his own story becomes the launch point for those present to hear of the resurrection of Christ.

⁴⁰ See Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, 20.7.6; Wars of the Jews, 2.13.5; in Josephus, Complete Works, 422, 483.

These actions were a symbol of anger and an indication they were ready to fight to the death if needed. It was an invitation to “throw down,” as the slang term would say. It was clear that nothing constructive was going to occur during this time.

The throwing down of the cloaks results in a soon to be executed flogging.

Paul, again, uses his Roman citizenship to escape his intended flogging as it was illegal to punish a citizen in such a way with a trial first. Paul also mentions his citizenship is not one that has been paid for but one that he was born into, authenticating his claim.

Paul Before the Sanhedrin (22:30 – 23:11)

The Sanhedrin becomes involved because the commander realizes this to be a religious dispute. While he cannot be involved in their deliberation he can order them to meet and resolve the issue because he is in charge of keeping the peace in the city.

An interesting back and forth occurs between Paul and the High Priest, Ananias.

Paul states his exemplary status as a Jew (23:1)	Ananias has him struck on the mouth for his statement (23:2)
Paul responds by calling the priest a hypocrite and a violator of the law. (23:3)	Ananias is offended because of the way Paul is speaking to him, the high priest. (23:5)
Paul apologizes for speaking in such a way by quoting the law. (He most likely did not recognize him as the High Priest at the time)	Ananias allows Paul to speak further indicating he has accepted his apology for the strong rebuke. (23:6-7)

Paul’s prophetic word about judgment coming upon the one who had him slapped came true approximately 10 years later as Ananias fled from his burning house and was eventually killed. He was known as greedy, corrupt, and violent.

Paul’s line of thinking shifted in v.6 and following. He began to now focus on the issue at hand which was the resurrection. He knew that among him were Pharisee’s who would believe the resurrection and the Sadducees that would not. Throwing this argument out for them to discuss ultimately got him dismissed from the courts as they could clearly not settle on who was right and wrong.

Even though Paul was willing to suffer for the gospel he made it clear there was not need to take on unnecessary suffering. This was clear as there was no accusation of significance made against him to warrant a flogging.

Paul in Caesarea (23:12- 26:32)

Paul moved to Caesarea (23:12 -35)

- Paul remains in prison in Jerusalem.
- Devout Jews take an oath to not eat or drink till they kill Paul.
 - Ironic that they are the most devout of law followers but have pardoned themselves of following the “thou shalt not murder” command.
- Jews convince the chief priest to help carry out the plan
- Paul’s nephew hears of the plan and informs Paul and the commander.
- Paul is moved from Jerusalem prison to Caesarea prison under orders from the commander to protect him.
- The justice to be carried out has now been given to Felix, governor of Caesarea.
- Felix agrees to hear Paul’s case

The Trial before Felix (24:1 -23)

- Seriousness of the case causes the High Priest to travel 65 miles to another town to resolve the case.

The Courtroom

- Tertullus – compliments and flatters Felix as he presents his accusations against Paul.
- Paul – presents a well ordered defense against what is clearly a professional forensic orator.
 - It was convincing enough to give Felix the impression that Paul is innocent.
 - Paul admits being part of THE WAY.

Felix and the Gospel (24:24-27)

- The gospel penetrates the heart of Felix and his wife.
- They retain Paul in prison for 2 years so that they can hear from him when they feel the need.
- New governor named Procius Festus is appointed as successor.

Paul is prepared to preach in season and out of season, in all occasions.

Paul Appeals to Caesar (25:1-12)

- Paul realizes that the trial has stalled for 2 years and now appeals to Caesar, the highest court possible.
- He knows that when he goes to the highest court at least something will be done. He is ready for freedom or for death depending on what verdict is given.

Festus Consults King Agrippa (25:13-22)

- Festus shares the story with Agrippa
- Agrippa wants to hear Paul for himself

Paul's Speech Before Agrippa (25:23-26:23)

- Vision of Ananias (who healed and baptized Paul) is coming true: "Paul would appear before the kings of the Gentiles (9:15)"
- Paul's speech follows the typical format of defense in the 1st Century. It also is an account of Paul's fullest testimony that we receive in Acts.

Your testimony of coming to faith is one of the most powerful tools you possess for sharing the gospel. It will not be Paul's but it will be personal and because it is personal it will be powerful.



Festus and Agrippa Respond to Paul's Speech (26:24-32)

- They find no fault in Paul and would set him free had he not appealed to Caesar –at least that is what they indicate in their conversation. Their actions to this point have not hinted and freedom as he has been in chains for 2+ years at the moment.

**Paul's message each time he speaks centers on the reality of Jesus' resurrection.
The audience present to hear the message never influences that reality.**

The Journey to Rome (27:1- 28:15)

The final two chapters show the fulfillment of Paul's longing desire to return to Rome. Rome was politically the most powerful city of the time and Paul had been a citizen from birth. Prior to Paul's coming, three years before, he had complied the letter the Romans in preparation for his visit. It was Paul's desire that Rome be the hub for his future ministry. The journey to get him there is one of great excitement as Luke recounts the story in his concluding chapters.

The Journey Begins (27:1-12)

Luke now returns to the first person plural using we/us.

They were traveling around the fall of that year and would be heading into winter as they continued their journey. Paul even suggest they stop to wait out the winter in Fair Havens. Paul was an avid traveler and had already been shipwrecked 3 times to this point (2 Cor. 11:25).

The Storm (27:13-26)

Paul was correct in his cautious advice to the crew. They experienced the "northeastern" which is the equivalent of a hurricane as they were at sea.

- All Cargo is thrown overboard
- No one eats for 2 weeks as they fight this storm night and day to survive
- Paul is given a vision from the Lord that all will survive the storm because he had ministry for him to do in Rome.
- Paul gives what to many might look like an "I told you so statement" but really he is trying to gain the attention of the crew.

The Shipwreck (27:27-44)

- The crew saw land, and even though they did not recognize it knew it had to be safer than the sea and so they pursued it and drove the boat into the ground.

Ministering in Malta (28:1-10)

- Spent the winter in Malta before they could pursue the journey to Rome
- While in Malta Paul did some significant ministry

Being bitten by a snake opened the door for Paul to speak truth and bring healing to the people.

Rome at Last (28:11-15)

- 2 ½ years from the time God had told Paul that he would go to Rome before he actually made his appearance.
- He was encouraged by those who meet him along the road as he came into the city.
 - Forum of Appia – 43 miles from Rome
 - Three Taverns – 33 miles from Rome

God's Sovereignty is exhibited as Paul made his journey to Rome.

Ministering in Rome (28:16-31)

Luke ends the book of Acts very abruptly. The last verses are most likely a summation of the book as he focuses on the ministry to the Gentiles.

A Rented Home in Rome (28:16)

- Paul was given the privilege to live by himself while in Rome.
- A soldier was to guard him meaning someone was chained to him at all times – the equivalent of house arrest.

Paul and the Jews in Rome (28:17-28)

- Paul attempts to witness to the Jewish community. This has been the key theme in Acts.
- The Jews seem to not know much about Christianity despite the Christian community in Rome (v22)

Bold Preaching and Teaching (28:30-31)

- Acts ends not on the rejection of the Jews to the gospel but by the freedom Paul had found to proclaim boldly the message of Jesus that he had been given.

We cannot be sure of what Paul did after the events in Acts. Tradition affirms that he was released from this imprisonment, had more evangelistic campaigns, and probably made additional visits to Macedonia and Asia.

Paul was arrested again and wrote the Pastoral Letters during his second imprisonment in Rome. In the last of his letters, 2 Timothy, he speaks of his impending death. He was martyred sometime between A.D 64 and 67.

We end the book with Paul chained to a soldier while the gospel was unchained as he shared it with the many who came to him.
