

**Saturday, August 19, 2023 • Read Acts 28:11–31**

*Questions from the Scripture text: How long had they been on Malta (v11)? In what did they sail? Where were they three days (v12)? Then where and where (v13)? What did they find in Puteoli (v14)? What were they invited to do? Then toward where did they go (on foot)? Who came to them from Rome (v15)? How far did they come? What effect did these believers from the church at Rome have upon Paul? When they finally arrived, what special treatment did the centurion give Paul (v16)? How long did Paul take to settle in (v17)? Whom did he then call? What does he call them? What does he tell them about his charges? And the Romans' conclusion (v18)? How did he explain the appeal to Caesar (v19)? What is he careful to note? What does he explain to them as the reason for calling them (v20)? But what do they report (v21)? Then for what do they ask (v22)? What do they appoint for him (v23)? Who comes on that day? What does he explain and solemnly witness to them? What, especially, does he seek to persuade them? With what results (v24)? Whose speaking does Paul employ as a parting word (v25)? What does he say, with respect to those who did not believe (v26–27)? What has been sent to whom, and how will they respond (v28)? What do the Jews do when they depart (v29)? How much time is covered in v30? Where is Paul dwelling? Whom is he receiving? And what does he preach to them (v31)? And what does he teach them? With what demeanor? And what hindrance?*

**What promise does the book of Acts emphasize that God has kept?** Acts 28:11–31 looks forward to the morning sermon on the coming Lord's Day. In these twenty-one verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the conclusion to the book of Acts demonstrates that God has kept His promise to send the gospel to the nations.**

**Brethren everywhere.** The trip to Rome is lined with brethren. They land at the port of Puteoli (v13, 120 miles from Rome), and what do they find there? Brethren! Indeed, Brethren who delay them seven days in order to enjoy showing them hospitality (v14). They make it 2/3 of the way from Puteoli to Rome, and brethren meet them at the Appii Forum. Another ten miles, and brethren meet them at the Three Inns. The implication in v15 is that brethren keep coming out to meet them. The closer they get to Rome, the more brethren. Jesus has kept His promise to get him to Rome. And Jesus has been keeping His promise to build His church. So Paul thanked God and took courage (v15).

Dear reader, I hope you see your brethren in the Lord as the fruit of His faithfulness. They are kept promises from Him! Indeed, He is continually fulfilling in our lives things that He has promised to do. So let us continually give Him thanks and continually take courage.

**Liberty for the gospel.** Paul's liberty for the gospel is a theme throughout the text. He is the only prisoner who is not handed over to the captain of the guard. The last four months together have left an impression upon the centurion, as must have the continual greeting parties coming from Rome. However He did it, the Lord put it in the centurion's heart to live in his own rented house (v30), with just a soldier guarding him (v16). But the point of this is that the Lord gave him this liberty for the purpose of preaching the kingdom and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ (v31).

There are many sorts of liberty that we may have. I write in the USA in 2023, and I have a tremendous amount of liberty. As a pastor, shall I not use it to preach the kingdom of God and teach the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ? And as a Christian, shall you not use it to serve God as King and learn and follow all the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ?

**God keeps His promises.** Paul is keenly aware that "for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain" (v20). So, he calls the Jewish leaders to himself (v17), even though we know that there is already a church established at Rome. His introduction sparks their interest, and they appoint a day upon which his rental home gets filled with Jews. He persuades about Christ from their whole Bible, and some refuse to believe (v24), enough that after they leave they have a great dispute among themselves (v29).

But what does Paul see? Paul sees the Lord keeping His Word. This was what the Lord had said in Isaiah 6:9–10. In the same prophecy, the Holy Spirit had emphasized that the salvation of the Servant would go to the Gentiles (cf. Isa 42:1–9; 49:5–6). Paul tells them so (v28). God keeps His promises.

The Lord is with him always. He has brought him to the center of "all the nations." For two years, the Lord brings him those whom He is making into disciples. And confidently, unhindered, Paul teaches them all things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ. The Great Commission is being fulfilled by the authority that Jesus has in heaven and on earth. Surely He is with us always. He keeps His promises.

I don't know what the current details of your life are, dear reader. But I do know that the Lord is keeping His promises. And I know that He is doing so especially with regard to gathering in His elect and building them up into Himself. Trust and worship and serve Him!

How long has Jesus been keeping His promise to build His church? How sure are you that He will continue to do so? How does this give you confidence to serve Him? To speak for Him?

*Sample prayer: Lord, for two thousand years, You have kept Your promise to build Your church. You kept that promise until You proclaimed peace to us, who had been very far off indeed. We thank You and praise You, who are still keeping Your promises, and who are still surely with us always, even to the end of the age. Grant that we would have confidence in You to trust You and worship You and serve You, we ask in Your own Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP98 "O Sing a New Song to the LORD" or TPH424 "All Authority and Power"**

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Acts 28 versus 11 through 31. After three months, we sailed and in Alexandrian ship. His figure head was the twin brothers, which had wintered in the at the island. And landing in Syracuse, we stayed three days from there. We circled around and reached Regium. And after one day, the south wind blew.

And the next day we came to putioli. Where we found brethren and were invited to stay with them, seven days. And so, we went toward Rome. And from there when the brethren heard about us, they came to meet us. As far as apple forum. And three ends. When paul saw them, he thanked god and took courage.

Now, when we came to Rome the centurion delivered, the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but paul. Was permitted to dwell by himself with a soldier guarded him. And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them men and brethren.

I have 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. Here, when they had examined me. Wanted to let me go because there was no cause for putting me to death. But when the jews spoke against it, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar, not that i had anything of which to accuse my nation.

For this reason, therefore i have called for you to see you and speak with you. Because for the hope of israel, when i'm bound to this chain, Then they said to him, we neither received letters from judea concerning you. More have any of the brethren who came reported or spoken any evil of you?

But we desire to hear from you. What you think, for concerning this sect, we know That it is spoken against everywhere. So, when they had appointed him a day, Many came to him and his lodging to him, he explained and solemnly testified. Of the kingdom of god. Persuading them concerning jesus from both the law of Moses and the prophets from morning until evening.

And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken in some disbelieved. And so when they did not agree among themselves, They departed after paul had said in one word, The holy spirit spoke rightly through isaiah, the prophet to our father saying, Go to this people and say, hearing you will hear and shall not understand and seeing you will see and not perceive For the hearts of this, people have grown dull, their ears are hard of hearing.

Their eyes, they have closed lest they should see with their ears. Sorry. See what their eyes and hear with their ears. Last, they should understand with their hearts and turn. So that i should heal them. Therefore, let it be known to you that the salvation of god has been sent.

To the gentiles. And they will hear it. And when he had said these words, The Jews departed and had a great dispute. Among themselves. Then paul, dwelt two whole years in his unren rented house. And received all who came to him preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things, which concern the lord jesus christ with all confidence.

No one. Forbidding him. So far, the reading of gods inspired and inherent. Word in which we hear the conclusion. Of what jesus continued to do. And to teach You remember at the beginning of the book of Acts, Luke wrote to theophilist the god lover. Perhaps using that as a name for all believers throughout time, Including us including you.

You love god. Luke wrote to the office saying that the previous book was what jesus said begun. To do and to teach, And the implication is that this book is what jesus has continued. To do and to teach, And certainly, the lord has. And kept his promise and followed his plan.

And done. His work, we see. Brethren. Everywhere. It's Very intentional that Um, That translates for us the the name of the Alexander and ship and verse 11. It's the twin brothers and You can see even a picture in. Um, In earthly things or in. Common things is maybe a better word.

The. The brotherhood of This Alexandrian chip. With the other Alexandrian ship. Trying to find it.

Maybe it's just from. The shit name.

I guess i have to go back and Look for where a dramatum was. Oh, There it is. Number six. The other Alexandrian ship the ship that had wrecked. You see back in. Uh, chapter 27 and verse 6. That was in Alexandrian, chef and so Uh, both of these sailors with the With the quality and see where the ship.

From the same. A city of alexandria. They would have known each other. And the ship itself was called the twin brothers. And so you can see the usefulness of having a brotherhood even an earthly things even among unbelievers. A fellowship or brotherhood is an encouraging thing. But when you have, The son of god who became a man?

So that we could be counted his brethren. And he has started to save from among all the nations. And usually paul is the one who is Going places where there are no brethren yet. And he is preaching the gospel and god makes brethren By the. The, the preaching of the gospel.

In this case, and Famously. So to to some extent as he you remember, he writes when he writes to the Romans, you know, he's never been there yet. It's a full A brethren. In this case, one of the things that got highlights for us is How brethren everywhere? You know, seeing them encourages paul reminds him The lord jesus who has kept his promise in jerusalem there.

You must justify in Rome as you have in jerusalem. The lord jesus who has kept his promise, you must stand before Caesar and indeed i have granted Uh, you all those who sell with you. He is working in. Um, in the whole world, and he's keeping his promised to build his church.

So they land. And, They land it putioli and at that point, they're about 120 miles, southwest of rome. And there's brother and there. And, They are. Invited to spend with them. Seven days, of course, They take that time. Which means? I think it's implied that one of the reasons for the exact length of the invitation So that they could have at least one lord's day together.

If they had happened to land on the lord's day, then they had two lord states together. And so they enjoy the brethren there. And so, they make their way to Rome. And they're about two thirds of the way there and they get to api forum. And now they are.

About 40 miles away. And they find that there are brethren who had heard about their arrival, during the seven days that they were input Yoli. And they make a 2J journey. To meet them early to see them early. And then they go 10 more miles and they get to the, the three ends and there are more brethren because i'm out Of room.

To greet them. And paul. Sees all these brother in any thanks god. He takes courage. The lord is keeping his promise. Now paul this continuing to minister according to the promise of the lord jesus you remember the lord jesus said that the gospel would go to the Jew first.

And and then to the Gentile that was Something that was taught throughout the Old Testament. That was something that was even built into jesus's plan and jesus's instruction jerusalem, judea and Maria. And then to the ends of the earth. Even remembering, of course that this Samaritans as mixed as their history has become as their bloodlines have become over the last couple, hundred years.

Uh, You're a few hundred years 500 years at this point. Uh, that they are still descended from israel and have a A special place and a special place in jesus's own earthly ministry, but the Jew first, and then, The gentiles taught in the Old Testament. Paul of course writes it in his letters.

When he's interpreting salvation history, jesus instructs it when he tells them where they're going to take the gospel where he's going to, where he is going to take the gospel, using them and paul still follows that plan. Uh, god gives him favor with the third. Roman military officer in a row.

You remember the previous centurion? And then when he was handed off to julius and now he's handed off to another one and all the prisoners stay with the captain of the guard but paul is permitted to just be changed to one man and live in his own rented house.

And you see the lord, jesus ruling history. For the proclamation of the gospel for that application of his redemption to his elect. And and paul sees that the lord jesus is doing this. So he follows jesus's plan. He invites not the christians but the Jews. To the Jew first.

And then to the gentile, And he invites the Jews, and Um, yeah, apparently christians are still a minority, you know, some people want to Over claim. Because of the absolutely certain, it's true that there's a victorious and triumphant. Um, Subtext to to this passage the lord jesus is building his kingdom, the gates of help and not prevail against it.

He storms the gates whenever he wants and he takes from him whomever he will. Uh so powerful is our lord jesus christ. Praise god. Um, But the questions are still a minority. They're still Considered a sectant. And the jews, you know, these particular Jews haven't heard much about them.

And paul starts to maybe summarize his case and they like you know, we don't know anything about that or about you but we have heard and he's Followers of the way the sect. These christians. Tell us about them. That's all the opening he needs. Because they read the hebrew bible.

And the Hebrew Bible, whether you're in Moses, or whether you're in the prophets. Is all about how God's salvation to hope that he has promised Israel. Is hope in Jesus Christ. The God, man. Who is the prophet that Moses has promised to is the son of David? That is greater than David.

And who came the first time not on the horse, to destroy his enemies. But as the one who had to suffer for our sins, The way the prophet said, And so there's enough, of course, Um, Not just to fill an hour and a half with A Jew, his name is Moses but ironically introduces himself as Paul.

Uh, but there's enough there for Paul, to talk to them, of course, from morning till evening. It's It's wonderful. It's like Jesus on the road to Emmaus opening all the things concerning himself. With which the Gospel of Luke. Uh very nearly concludes and Luke chapter 24 and then you have some the same thing.

Don't you in the second volume of his Gospel. The things that Jesus concluded to do and to teach in a very similar conversation except for this one is all day. And the teacher is, the apostle. Paul Jesus is taking his Gospel, they takes it to the Jew first, but then to the Gentile, And he quotes from.

The the great book of the Old Testament in, which that progression is made, clear, you know, Isaiah opening with all that the Lord had done for Israel and offering himself to them. And, And Israel, not being what they should have been. But they're actually being a light to the Gentiles.

They're actually being a A king and a kingdom. In which there would be redemption, not only for Israel, but the end gathering of the world, and that would be the servant capital s. Who was faithful? Uh, Instead of Israel and that of course, is our Lord Jesus Christ. And, So, The book of Isaiah was the book.

That really taught to the Jew first and then to the Gentiles. And then you see at the end, the Gentiles includes, of course, a remnant from Israel. Uh, to whom The Lord starts gathering believers from all the nations. Uh, eject very prominently. Being one of the nations from which you would gather believers.

Praise God. And so when there is, you know, there are some who believe and some who disbelieve Well, i Paul quotes. From Isaiah. Concerning the fact that, you know, this does not mean that God's arm is shortened. This does not mean that the Gospel is so true. In fact, in the very place that he had prophesied all of this, He had prophesied the disbelief.

Of some of the Jews. And yet a greater wonder than that some Jews disbelieve is that there will be a multitude of non-Jews a multitude from the nation's. Who do believe? And that's how he finishes the book. Therefore, let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the nations.

They will hear it. Jesus has fulfilled. His plan and his promise. And we'll keep doing. So, Until every last elect. Person. God was determined to love and adopt as his child. Whom the son, the determined to die for. And now has lived righteously and died at turningly and risen again powerfully, Wow, and the sun has done that when the spirit has come now.

To apply the redemption of the Lord Jesus to every single one. For him, they have done that will. Saved. So the Jews depart and have a great dispute among themselves. And then, Hold dwells. You know, there's two years of the last, the last two verses you dwells were two years and this rented house.

And coming at the end of the book of Acts you don't just see. Oh, you know, just people happen to show up. No. We know that it's in the providence of God that this is happening. And so God is bringing Paul people who he's going to say, they show up at the store.

This is, aha more people, that Jesus is saying And they proclaims to them. The kingdom of God and he teaches them. The things which concerned the Lord Jesus Christ, And, There's no doubt, there's no fear. You think of what the Lord has brought him to you? How the Lord has confirmed his word over?

And over again. And, And so, he's Has no confidence on it's not just no one forbidding him, but The last word there is actually unindereed. Nothing. Can stop it. Nothing can stop. The Gospel going out. Nothing can stop. Jesus applying his redemption. To every single one. Whom he is redee.

What confidence a question should have. And how glad we should be then. So long as the Lord doesn't returned. What is he doing? Well, he's still Storm in the gates of hell. Whatever he wishes. Taking from Satan. Whomever he wishes. Nothing the devil can do about it. Shouldn't we be praying for people to be converted?

Desiring for people to be concerned. Taking the opportunity whenever the Lord forces. Someone And telling them the Gospel. Praise God. Let's pray.

Our gracious God and our heavenly Father, I want a wonderful. Mercy, the book of Acts has been to us, And we thank you for. The conclusion that the spirit carried Luke along as he wrote, and

The confidence and unindereedness. That. Belongs to Christ's mission. So we pray that you would give us to participate in that confidence. And to be sure of the unhindredness. That we would love the salvation of Christ. That. The sight of brethren would make us. Thank you and take courage. We do pray, Lord, particularly for the Jews.

That you would bring in the full compliment. The ones who are the Israel of promise and not just The Israel of blood. Only thank you for joining us to them that we might come under. The son of David and the prophet that are the Moses. We praise you. Lord Jesus.

And this is who you are. Were amazed that it is you are God who became man. In order to redeem us, we thank you for The unstoppable work of your Holy Spirit. We ask concerning. That work, which remains to be done in each one of us. That your spirit would persist with us in power and in love.

And that we would have confidence about his working in us. As much as we have confidence about him working in the world. Give it we ask, oh Lord in Jesus name. Amen.