

ACTS 21-28

ON TRIAL FOR THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL



"The following night the Lord stood near Paul and said, 'Take courage! As you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must also testify in Rome - Acts 23:11



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ACTS OUTLINE

- THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM (1:1–8:3)
- THE CHURCH IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA (8:4–12:25)
- PAUL'S MISSIONS TO THE GENTILES (13:1–21:16)
- PAUL IN JERUSALEM (21:17–26:32)
- PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME (27:1–28:31)

Previous series.

ACTS 13-20 – The Unstoppable Advance of the Gospel

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ACTS

The book of Acts (also called Acts of the Apostles) begins where the Gospel of Luke left off. Before ascending into heaven, Jesus commissions His disciples to be His witnesses from Jerusalem to the end of the Earth (ACTS 1:8). In fulfillment of this command, and through the power of the Holy Spirit, the early church expands. Acts shows what it means to be part of Jesus' mission to the world. The apostles set the example of what it means to be fully devoted to Christ and enveloped by the Holy Spirit.

BACKGROUND

According to early church tradition, the author of Acts is Luke the physician, who traveled with the Apostle Paul. The Gospel of Luke is also ascribed to him; this makes Acts his second volume about the story of early Christianity. Four passages in Acts seem to indicate that the narrator is a firsthand witness of particular events he describes (ACTS 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:16)—which is fitting with Luke being the author. Like the Gospel of Luke, the book of Acts is addressed to Theophilus, who might have provided financial support for Luke to write both books (LUKE 1:3; ACTS 1:1). Luke's broader audience appears to have been people who were already Christians, or at least were interested in Christianity (LUKE 1:4). Since the narrative of Acts ends with Paul's captivity in Rome, it might have been written shortly after his arrival there, in the early to mid-60s AD.



01

Acts 21-22:29

02

Acts 22:30-23:35

03

Acts 24:1-25:12

04

Acts 25:13-26:32

05

Acts 27

06

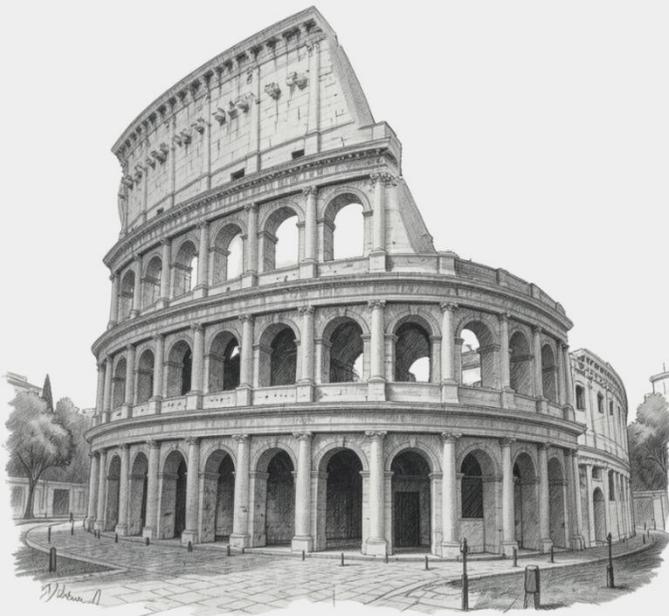
Acts 28



Acts 21 – 28

Acts 21–28 details Paul's arrest in Jerusalem, his subsequent imprisonment and trials before Roman and Jewish leaders in Caesarea, his dramatic sea journey to Rome, and his final, unhindered preaching of the gospel in Rome despite being under house arrest.

ON TRIAL FOR THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL



Acts 21 – 28

Trial before the crowd in Jerusalem ([Acts 21:37–22:29](#))

Trial before the council (Sanhedrin) in Jerusalem ([Acts 22:30–23:11](#))

Journey from Jerusalem to Caesarea (23:12–35)

Trial before Felix in Caesarea ([Acts 24:1–27](#))

Trial before Festus in Caesarea ([Acts 25:1–27](#))

Trial before Festus and Herod Agrippa II in Caesarea ([Acts 26:1–32](#))

Journey from Caesarea to Rome ([Acts 27:1–28:16](#))

Proclamation to the Jewish leaders in Rome ([Acts 28:17–31](#))

Commentary available at

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/acts/>

The bible Project – Acts 21 – 28

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJsiwOB0Pvg>



Bound for Rome: Acts 21-28

01

Acts 21-22:29

Notes:

01

Acts 21-22:29

- 1** What is the best piece of advice you've ever been given?
- 2** How might Paul be interpreting these warnings differently to his friends? Why might he have a different perspective? (21: 4, 10,13)
- 3** Why is Paul so intent on going to Rome?
- 4** What is the issue Paul is solving in verses 17 -26? How does Galatians 5:2-6 shed light on this?
- 5** How do you decide when you should compromise for the sake of others, when do you hold to your convictions?
- 6** How do verses 27 - 36, parallel with Jesus' experience?
- 7** What triggers the crowd in verse 22? Why?
- 8** What gives Paul courage throughout these two chapters?
- 9** What gives you courage in mission?
- 10** How does the hope of the gospel shape your life?

02

Acts 22:30–23:35

Summary

From Peter proclaiming the risen and exalted Christ at Pentecost, Acts traces the Spirit-empowered spread of the gospel through Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond amid growth, persecution, and opposition, culminating in Paul's arrest and transfer under Roman protection as God advances his mission through faithful witnesses.

- 1** Have you ever been misunderstood or judged before you got a chance to explain yourself? What happened?
- 2** Given the rumors and accusations against Paul's statement in verses (21: 21, 28) why would the high priest react so violently to Paul's statement in verse 1?
- 3** Why does Paul say he is on trial in verse 6?
- 4** What happens in verse 11? Why is this significant?
- 5** What gives you hope in hard times?
- 6** Why are the Jews so intent on eliminating Paul? (V12)
- 7** What opposition to, or distraction from the gospel, do we experience today?
- 8** How does Paul consistently articulate the truth of the gospel in the face of opposition?
- 9** How does Paul avoid mission fatigue?

03

Acts 24:1-25:12

Summary

Paul is repeatedly accused before Roman governors Felix and Festus, defends his faith and innocence, remains imprisoned despite no proven guilt, and ultimately appeals to Caesar when faced with a plot to hand him over to his enemies.

03

Acts 24:1-25:12

- 1** Has there ever been a famous trial or legal case that has caught your attention? What was it? Why did it interest you?
- 2** How is Paul described in verse 5?
- 3** What is Paul's defence in verses 10-21?
- 4** From 24:27 to 25:9, how is Paul being used as a pawn by these Roman officials? How might this account for Paul's decision to appeal to Caesar?
- 5** Verses 22-27 may have seemed like 'dead time' for Paul. How does he describe his time in prison? Philippians 1:12-13.
- 6** How does this reframe your perspective on how suffering can advance the gospel?
- 7** How is your perspective/attitude a witness for the gospel?

04

Acts 25:13-26:32

Summary

Paul boldly testifies before King Agrippa and Festus about his conversion and mission to proclaim the risen Christ, and though found innocent of any crime deserving death or imprisonment, he must be sent to Caesar because he has appealed to Rome.

04

Acts 25:13–26:32

- 1** If you were king or queen for a day, what new law would you enact?
- 2** How fair is Festus in describing the case? How much does he seem to know about Judaism and Christianity?
- 3** Agrippa was the son of Herod (12:1–23) Why might he be interested in hearing from Paul?
- 4** Compare verse 26:20 with 20:21. How would you tell someone what it means to be a Christian from these two verses?
- 5** Would you describe Paul's speech as defence or personal testimony? How could both be effective?
- 6** What do verses 25–27 show us about Paul?
What difference does it make to you that Jesus really rose from the dead?
- 7** Why is it important that the events of Jesus' life, death & resurrection are public?

05

Acts 27

Summary

Acts 27 recounts Paul's dangerous journey by sea to Rome, where despite his wise warnings being ignored, the ship is caught in a violent storm and driven helplessly for many days, yet Paul encourages the crew and passengers with God's promise that all lives will be spared. After the ship is wrecked on the island of Malta, everyone reaches shore safely, showing God's faithfulness and Paul's calm, Spirit-filled leadership in the midst of chaos.

05

Acts 27

- 1** What was one of the most memorable storms you have experienced? Why did it stand out?
- 2** Explain Paul's warning in verse 10.
- 3** Retell the events of the shipwreck as they unfolded.
- 4** Why does Paul have composure/confidence in verses 21-26?
- 5** What gives us composure/confidence when unfortunate events take place in our life?
- 6** We may never have a specific message from God (v23). Do you think we really need one? (Psalm 23:4)?
- 7** How is God at work to ensure the gospel spreads to the ends of the earth?
- 8** Can you describe the relationship between God's sovereignty and human decisions? (Genesis 50:20). - How does God's Kingdom advance through Acts?

06

Acts 28

Summary

Acts 28 describes Paul's arrival on Malta, where he survives a snake bite and heals many people, leading the islanders to show him great kindness, and then his journey on to Rome, where he lives under house arrest and boldly proclaims the kingdom of God and teaches about the Lord Jesus Christ without hindrance, showing that the gospel continues to advance even while Paul is imprisoned.

06

Acts 28

- 1** When have you experience unexpected hospitality?
- 2** In light of the fact God intended for Paul to get to Rome, why do you think he allowed all the events of 27:1-28:9 to unfold?
- 3** How do you see Acts 1:8 unfolding?
- 4** Given the long delay, the shipwreck, his continuing prisoner status - how might Paul feel now that he has arrived in Rome?
- 5** What is Paul doing in verse 23?
- 7** How does Paul preach the gospel in verse 31?
- 8** How has the gospel advanced across the book of Acts?
What is our role in the continuation of this story today?