

Introduction: In the concluding chapters of the Book of Acts, we see scriptures that give us insight into the life and final years of ministry of the apostle Paul.

1. First, Jesus' words: *Paul is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake (Acts 9:15)*
2. Paul's own knowing by the Holy Spirit the conditions ahead: *In every city that chains and tribulations await me. (Acts 20:23)*
3. His commitment to 'press on' - *But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24) (see also Phil 3:12-14)*

I. Paul in Jerusalem & Caesarea (Acts 23-26)

- A. Jerusalem: In the midst of 'chains and tribulations,' Jesus came to Paul: *But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, so you must also bear witness at Rome." (Acts 23:11)*
 1. Because of the danger to his life, Paul was taken to Caesarea by night and delivered to Felix.
 2. Paul 'testified for Jesus' at every opportunity regardless of the situation he was experiencing.
 3. God, thru tribulations, made opportunity for Paul to speak to many about Jesus, including Ananias the high priest, Felix and Festus (governors in Caesarea) and King Agrippa.
 4. Paul's circumstances and conversation with King Agrippa in Caesarea are recorded in Acts 25:13-26:32.

II. The Journey to Rome (Caesarea to Rome - Acts 27-28)

- A. Travel Highlights – (6 month trip)
 1. Very bad weather and sailing conditions... Paul warning (27:9-11)...
 2. Paul's 'comforting words' as things got worse...(v.21-26)
 3. Shipwrecked on Malta (v.39-44)
 4. Ministry in the midst of disaster (28:1-10)
 - a. Protection from snake-bite
 - b. Healing lots of people (v.7-10) {the journey is as important as the destination}
 5. How did Paul remain focused, sane, and strong thru it all?

III. Rome – the prisoner Paul delivered – was granted personal lodging, with guard

- A. First call was to the leaders of the Jews to explain his situation and... (v.17-22)
 1. They wanted to hear him, and scheduled a day...
 2. When gathered, Paul spoke to them *from morning to evening...*
 - a. *...he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God...*
 - b. *...persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets.*
 3. The Jew's response: *Some were persuaded and some disbelieved (v.24)*
 4. Paul quoted a familiar scripture from Isaiah 6:9-10 (also by Jesus (Mat 13:14) & John (12:39,40))
- B. Two years in two verses (v.30-31)
 1. *Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him,*
 2. *...preaching the kingdom of God (evangelism) and teaching (discipleship) the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him (unhindered).*
 3. It was during this time that Paul wrote the letters Philemon, Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians.
- C. The Book of Acts... to be continued...