

## Introduction

Paul's arrival at Rome brings Luke's narrative in the Book of Acts to its conclusion. The open-endedness of the Book of Acts is deliberate.

It is unfinished because the work of God remains unfinished and because the preaching of the gospel is to go on until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory. The book of Acts is about the continuing work of God in and through his church and this is emphasized one last time in its very conclusion.

## Summary

**In Acts 28:11-31, Luke concludes the book of Acts by recording Paul's arrival in Rome and his two year ministry there; the absence of a formal, tidy ending is intentional, indicating that it is an unfinished story because the preaching of the Gospel is to go on until the Lord Jesus returns at the end of the age.**

### 1. Brotherly Encouragement vv. 11-16

The survivors from the shipwreck spent the three months of winter on the island of Malta. An Alexandrian ship, which had wintered there, had space and was ready to set sail. It first sailed to Syracuse on the east coast of Sicily, then on to Rhegium, on the Italian side of the strait between Sicily and Italy and finally to Puteoli on the Bay of Naples( **Acts 28:11-13**).

Paul, Aristarchus, and Luke found brothers in Christ at Puteoli, who offered them their hospitality. Are you hospitable to the brethren?

Two delegations of Roman Christians set out to meet Paul and his company on their way to Rome. Their appearance moved Paul to thanksgiving and steeled his courage to face the threats ahead. When Christians are in trouble, fellow brothers and sisters ought to rally around them and offer help and support.

On arrival in Rome, Paul was permitted to rent his own quarters. This 'minimum security' arrangement allowed him to receive guests freely, although he remained chained to a Roman soldier. Next time we feel sorry for ourselves, let us resolve to say, with Paul: "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content" (**Phil. 4:11**).

### 2. Consulted Jewish Leaders vv. 17-28

Paul, moved proactively to clear his name with the leaders of the Jewish community in Rome.

He addressed them as brothers and insisted that he had committed no offense.

Paul gives an abbreviated summary of his arrest in Jerusalem and being 'delivered ... into the hands of the Romans.'

He closed his 'brief' with the declaration that his Fidelity to the hope of Israel - the resurrection of the dead - was the reason for the chain he now wore (**23:6, 26:6-8**).

The answer of the Jewish Elders not only relieved Paul's legal concerns but also, more importantly, opened another door for his life's mission, to bear witness to Jesus. Paul's stamina was astonishing. He went from dawn to dusk in dialogue with his Jewish brothers, trying to persuade them from Moses and the prophets that Jesus is the promised Messiah who establishes the kingdom of God. This challenges the preferences and demands in our own day for short sermons.

This also tells us a lot about how the Bible should be proclaimed in our time.

**First**, Paul employed a variety of preaching and teaching methods.

**Secondly**, Paul employed no other means but the exposition of Scripture.

**Thirdly**, Paul preached Jesus.

**Fourthly**, Paul preached the kingdom of God.

Some of Paul's hearers were persuaded while others remained unbelieving (**2 Cor 2:16**). Their disagreement among themselves prompted Paul to issue a prophetic warning to those who refused to believe.

### 3. Unhindered Proclaiming of the Word vv. 29–31

Luke implies that Paul's circumstances changed after he had spent 'an entire two-year period' under house arrest awaiting a hearing, but the change is not revealed.

He is writing a history of the spread of God's Word from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

He does not close with legal vindication or with martyrdom, but with the image of Paul chained to a soldier but continuously, boldly, and freely, proclaiming God's kingdom and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke's open-ended 'conclusion implies a 'To Be Continued' that embraces the whole history and mission of the church until the return of Jesus from heaven (**Acts 1:11**).

The invincible power of the Word, however fragile its messengers, is shown in the final phrase in the book of Acts, 'without hindrance.'

The gospel's unhindered, irresistible victory is the note that Luke leaves ringing in our ears.

That confidence must steel our own commitment to advance, by the Spirit's power, the church's mission of proclaiming Christ's salvation to the very ends of the earth.