



Lesson 40 – In Rome

Based on Acts 28:11-31, Philemon

Paul had appealed to Caesar, and Festus could not do otherwise than send him to Rome. Paul and a ship of fellow prisoners nearing the end of their harrowing journey, survived a shipwreck and after a bit, set sail towards Rome.

1) How does our lesson begin today?

Acts 28:11-13 And after _____ months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle, whose sign was Castor and Pollux. And landing at _____, we tarried there three days. And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to _____: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:

2) Where did Paul and his fellow travelers stay in Rhegium?

Acts 28:14 Where we found _____, and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we went toward Rome.

In this place there were a few Christians, and they entreated the apostle to remain with them for seven days, a privilege kindly granted by the centurion. Since receiving Paul's epistle to the Romans, the Christians of Italy had eagerly looked forward to a visit from the apostle. They had not thought to see him come as a prisoner, but his sufferings only endeared him to them the more.

3) On the way to Rome, who met up with Paul?

Acts 28:15 And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as _____, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.

The Appii Forum was forty miles from Rome.

Suddenly a cry of joy is heard, and a man springs from the passing throng and falls upon the prisoner's neck, embracing him with tears and rejoicing, as a son would welcome a long-absent father. Again, and again is the scene repeated as, with eyes made keen by loving expectation, many discern in the chained captive the one who at Corinth, at Philippi, at Ephesus, had spoken to them the words of life.

4) What effect did these have on Paul?

Acts 28:15 ... he thanked God, and took _____.

The cloud of sadness that had rested upon his spirit was swept away. His Christian life had been a succession of trials, sufferings, and disappointments, but in that hour, he felt abundantly repaid. With firmer step and joyful heart, he continued on his way. He would not complain of the past, nor fear for the future. Bonds and afflictions awaited him, he knew; but he knew also that it had been his to deliver souls from a bondage infinitely more terrible, and he rejoiced in his sufferings for Christ's sake.

5) At Rome, what did the Centurion do for Paul?

Acts 28:16 And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by _____ with a soldier that kept him.

The good account which he gave of Paul, together with the letter from Festus, caused the apostle to be favorably regarded by the chief captain, and, instead of being thrown into prison, he was permitted to live in his own hired house. Although still constantly chained to a soldier, he was at liberty to receive his friends and to labor for the advancement of the cause of Christ.



6) What did Paul do when he got to Rome?

Acts 28:17 And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed _____ against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.

Paul was determined to present the facts concerning himself and his work, before his enemies should have opportunity to embitter them against him. Three days after his arrival in Rome, therefore, he called together their leading men and in a simple, direct manner stated why he had come to Rome as a prisoner.

7) What did he say?

Acts 28:18-20 Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no _____ of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was _____ to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for the _____ of Israel I am bound with this chain.

He said nothing of the abuse which he had suffered at the hands of the Jews, or of their repeated plots to assassinate him. His words were marked with caution and kindness. He was not seeking to win personal attention or sympathy, but to defend the truth and to maintain the honor of the gospel.

8) How did they reply?

Acts 28:21-22 And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of _____ concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came shewed or spake any _____ of thee. But we desire to _____ of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against.

9) Did Paul comply with their request?

Acts 28:23 And when they had appointed him a day, there came _____ to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the _____ of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

The apostle showed that religion does not consist in rites and ceremonies, creeds and theories. If it did, the natural man could understand it by investigation, as he understands worldly things. Paul taught that religion is a practical, saving energy, a principle wholly from God, a personal experience of God's renewing power upon the soul.

He showed how Moses had pointed Israel forward to Christ as that Prophet whom they were to hear; how all the prophets had testified of Him as God's great remedy for sin, the guiltless One who was to bear the sins of the guilty. He did not find fault with their observance of forms and ceremonies but showed that while they maintained the ritual service with great exactness, they were rejecting Him who was the antitype of all that system.

The apostle asserted that he did not present to them Christ after the flesh. Herod had seen Christ in the days of His humanity; Annas had seen Him; Pilate and the priests and rulers had seen Him; the Roman soldiers had seen Him. But they had not seen Him with the eye of faith; they had not seen Him as the glorified Redeemer. To apprehend Christ by faith, to have a spiritual knowledge of Him, was more to be desired than a personal acquaintance with Him as He appeared on the earth.



10) How did they respond?

Acts 28:24-26 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed _____. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall _____, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not _____:

11) What was the conclusion of this meeting?

Acts 28:28-29 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the _____, and that they will hear it. And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great _____ among themselves.

12) How long did Luke record Paul live in Rome?

Acts 28:30 And Paul dwelt two whole _____ in his own hired house...

Many months passed by after Paul's arrival in Rome, before the Jews of Jerusalem appeared in person to present their accusations against the prisoner. They had been repeatedly thwarted in their designs; and now that Paul was to be tried before the highest tribunal of the Roman Empire, they had no desire to risk another defeat. Lysias, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa had all declared their belief in his innocence. His enemies could hope for success only in seeking by intrigue to influence the emperor in their favor. Delay would further their object, as it would afford them time to perfect and execute their plans, and so they waited for a while before preferring their charges in person against the apostle.

13) How did God use their evil intentions?

Acts 28:30-31 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and _____ all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man _____ him.

During this time the churches that he had established in many lands were not forgotten. Realizing the dangers that threatened the converts to the new faith, the apostle sought so far as possible to meet their needs by letters of warning and practical instruction. And from Rome he sent out consecrated workers to labor not only for these churches, but in fields that he himself had not visited.

Thus, while apparently cut off from active labor, Paul exerted a wider and more lasting influence than if he had been free to travel among the churches as in former years. As a prisoner of the Lord, he had a firmer hold upon the affections of his brethren; and his words, written by one under bonds for the sake of Christ, commanded greater attention and respect than they did when he was personally with them.

14) Who was with him in Rome?

Colossians 4:7-9 All my state shall _____ declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts; With _____, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here.

Colossians 4:14 _____, the beloved physician, and _____, greet you.

Colossians 4:10 _____ my fellowprisoner saluteth you, and _____, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;)

Mark's Christian experience had deepened. As he had studied more closely the life and death of Christ he had obtained clearer views of the Saviour's mission, its toils and conflicts. Reading in the scars in Christ's hands and feet the marks of His service for humanity, and the length to which self-abnegation leads to save the lost and perishing, Mark had become willing to follow the Master in the path of self-sacrifice. Now, sharing the lot of Paul the prisoner, he understood better than ever before that it is infinite gain to win Christ, infinite loss to win the world and lose the soul for whose redemption the blood of Christ



was shed. In the face of severe trial and adversity, Mark continued steadfast, a wise and beloved helper of the apostle.

15) What happened to Demas?

2 Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath _____ me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica...

For worldly gain, Demas bartered every high and noble consideration. How shortsighted the exchange! Possessing only worldly wealth or honor, Demas was poor indeed, however much he might proudly call his own; while Mark, choosing to suffer for Christ's sake, possessed eternal riches, being accounted in heaven an heir of God and a joint heir with His Son.

Onesimus endeared himself to Paul by his piety and sincerity, no less than by his tender care for the apostle's comfort, and his zeal in promoting the work of the gospel. Paul saw in him traits of character that would render him a useful helper in missionary labor, and he counseled him to return without delay to Philemon, beg his forgiveness, and plan for the future. The apostle promised to hold himself responsible for the sum of which Philemon had been robbed. Being about to dispatch Tychicus with letters to various churches in Asia Minor, he sent Onesimus with him. It was a severe test for this servant thus to deliver himself up to the master he had wronged; but he had been truly converted, and he did not turn aside from his duty.

16) What was in the letter Onesimus was to bear to his owner Philemon?

Philemon 1:3-6 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, Hearing of thy _____ and _____, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints; That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every _____ thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

The apostle reminded Philemon that every good purpose and trait of character which he possessed was due to the grace of Christ; this alone made him different from the perverse and the sinful. The same grace could make the debased criminal a child of God and a useful laborer in the gospel.

17) What plea did Paul make on behalf of Onesimus?

Philemon 1:9-11 Yet for love's sake I rather _____ thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds: Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now _____ to thee and to me:

Philemon 1:15-16 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; Not now as a _____, but above a servant, a _____ beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?

The apostle asked Philemon, in view of the conversion of Onesimus, to receive the repentant slave as his own child, showing him such affection that he would choose to dwell with his former master.

He tried to write to him in a way that would arouse his deepest and tenderest feelings as a Christian. The conversion of Onesimus had made him a brother in the faith, and any punishment inflicted on this new convert would be regarded by Paul as inflicted on himself.

18) What did Paul ask of his brother in faith, Philemon?

Philemon 1:17-19 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as _____. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine _____; I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will _____ it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.



How fitting an illustration of the love of Christ for the repentant sinner! The servant who had defrauded his master had nothing with which to make restitution. The sinner who has robbed God of years of service has no means of canceling the debt. Jesus interposes between the sinner and God, saying, I will pay the debt. Let the sinner be spared; I will suffer in his stead.

19) What faith did Paul have in Philemon?

Philemon 1:21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do _____ than I say.

It was not the apostle's work to overturn arbitrarily or suddenly the established order of society. To attempt this would be to prevent the success of the gospel. But he taught principles which struck at the very foundation of slavery and which, if carried into effect, would surely undermine the whole system.

20) What did Paul declare to the Corinthians?

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is _____.

When converted, the slave became a member of the body of Christ, and as such was to be loved and treated as a brother, a fellow heir with his master to the blessings of God and the privileges of the gospel.

21) How are we to serve?

Ephesians 6:6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the _____;

Christianity makes a strong bond of union between master and slave, king and subject, the gospel minister and the degraded sinner who has found in Christ cleansing from sin. They have been washed in the same blood, quickened by the same Spirit; and they are made one in Christ Jesus.

Can you see that God's plans supersede the evil Satan is doing?

Would you like to serve God no matter what?

When is the time to not worry?