

Acts 28:17-31 (NLT)

¹⁷ Three days after Paul's arrival, he called together the local Jewish leaders. He said to them, "Brothers, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Roman government, even though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our ancestors. ¹⁸ The Romans tried me and wanted to release me, because they found no cause for the death sentence. ¹⁹ But when the Jewish leaders protested the decision, I felt it necessary to appeal to Caesar, even though I had no desire to press charges against my own people. ²⁰ I asked you to come here today so we could get acquainted and so I could explain to you that I am bound with this chain because I believe that the hope of Israel—the Messiah—has already come."

²¹ They replied, "We have had no letters from Judea or reports against you from anyone who has come here. ²² But we want to hear what you believe, for the only thing we know about this movement is that it is denounced everywhere."

²³ So a time was set, and on that day a large number of people came to Paul's lodging. He explained and testified about the Kingdom of God and tried to persuade them about Jesus from the Scriptures. Using the law of Moses and the books of the prophets, he spoke to them from morning until evening. ²⁴ Some were persuaded by the things he said, but others did not believe. ²⁵ And after they had argued back and forth among themselves, they left with this final word from Paul: "The Holy Spirit was right when he said to your ancestors through Isaiah the prophet,

²⁶ 'Go and say to this people:

When you hear what I say,
you will not understand.

When you see what I do,
you will not comprehend.

²⁷ For the hearts of these people are hardened,
and their ears cannot hear,
and they have closed their eyes—

so their eyes cannot see,
and their ears cannot hear,
and their hearts cannot understand,
and they cannot turn to me
and let me heal them.'

²⁸ So I want you to know that this salvation from God has also been offered to the Gentiles, and they will accept it."

³⁰ For the next two years, Paul lived in Rome at his own expense. He welcomed all who visited him, ³¹ boldly proclaiming the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ. And no one tried to stop him.

Romans 8:28 (ESV)

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Deuteronomy 31:8 (ESV)

⁸ It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.”

Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control.