



THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The Record of the Beginning of Jesus' Reign

Chapter Twenty-Eight

INTRODUCTION

THIS is the last installment in our study of The Acts of The Apostles. The making and publishing of these studies has taken nine years. We found some surprises, and they strengthened our faith. We found answers to important questions, and we became more closely acquainted with the inspiration that changed the lives of the apostles ... and changed the world.

We placed this book under the microscope and examined it verse-by-verse. We dissected it and evaluated it. We clarified important words from the Greek text, and we eliminated some of the long-standing confusions and cover-ups fomented by centuries of government interference and church bias. We discovered a treasure of foundational documentation of Christ's Kingship as it was recorded by Luke the physician who penned this book in the first century.

As the title implies, The Acts of The Apostles is action-filled. It is the inspired account of the beginning of Christ's Kingship. It was an exiting time in history; it marked the focal point of history. This record gives us strength of faith, and prepares us to understand what follows in the rest of the New Testament. It acquaints us personally with the gospel of the kingdom. It communicates more than mere words; it communicates life: the same life that inspired these early disciples. The Acts of The Apostles is the record of the experiences of the apostles as they witnessed Jesus overcoming the power of death by infusing men with new LIFE.

We showed that the churches have intentionally instituted errors to cover up the great truths of Christ's Kingship. Those errors were institutionalized through church doctrine and through authorized versions and translations of the Bible. They have blinded Bible students for centuries. The errors were institutionalized to prevent men from finding truths that would disempower the rulers. We corrected those translational and doctrinal errors as we found them, and we dispelled several pagan doctrines and interpretations that have bound men in ignorance in the past.

In keeping with the intent of the writers, notwithstanding church traditions, we brought the gospel story into focus and cleared away clouds of confusion that have obscured the Kingdom of God from the eyes of those to whom it was given.

It is my sincere hope that these seeds humbly planted will germinate and produce fruit to feed the spirit of hungry Bible students now and in years to come.

Now, as we continue with Paul's voyage to Rome, we find that he and the ship's crew have barely escaped their sinking ship and made it to the shore of an island. And just as Paul had promised, they all made it alive.

NOTE: Many people consider the ending of the Book of Acts the end of an era. But it is not. Rather, the book of Acts hails the beginning of an era: the era of the Eonian Kingdom (i.e., the age of Christ's Kingship).

Christ's Ecclesia (Mtt. 16:18) is established, and cannot be stopped. It was the beginning of the Reign of Christ.

ACTS 28:1-6 "BARBARIAN" HOSPITALITY

And having been saved, we learned that the island was called Melita.

And the barbarians had remarkable kindness toward us, and built a fire and received us all because of the pressing rain and the cold.

But as Paul collected a bunch of dry sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper that had come out of the heat fastened itself upon his hand.

And when the barbarians saw the beast hanging off his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he was saved out of the sea, justice did not permit him to keep living.

But he shook off the beast into the fire, and suffered no harm.

And they were expecting him to swell, or suddenly fall down dead: but as they watched and waited and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds and acclaimed him to be a god.

HAVING survived shipwreck, the crew and passengers found themselves on a beach of the island of Melita. Today, the island is called Malta.

As they came on shore they were met by local inhabitants of the island, whom Luke calls "Barbarians." In light of the modern use of this term, we should clarify its true meaning.

The Greek word is "Barbaroi" and is correctly rendered "Barbarians." However, in modern vernacular "Barbarian" has come to mean something different than it meant in Paul's day. In first-century Greece and Rome a Barbarian was someone with foreign speech. Anyone who did not speak the civilized languages (Latin, Greek, etc.) was called a "Barbarian."

This fact also clarifies a point of history about Europe's "Barbarians." We were taught in school that Rome fell to Germanic "Barbarians" in 476

AD. We were also told that the term "Barbarian" means primitive, backward, ignorant, cruel, etc.. But if "Barbarians" were primitive, backward and ignorant, how did they conquer Rome, the greatest empire of its day? And if "Barbarians" were cruel, why were they kind to Paul and the men cast upon their beach? Deeper investigation reveals that "Barbarians" were not ignorant naked savages as the term has come to be understood.

The "Barbarians" who invaded Rome were Teutonic tribes known as "Goths," "Ostrogoths," "Visigoths," "Vandals," "Burgundians," "Lombards," "Franks," "Angles," "Saxons," etc.. To the Romans, all these were "Barbarians." They were Germanic tribes descended from Vikings. They were descendants of Israelites who had migrated into northern Europe, and then moved south and invaded Rome.

"Germanic" means "genuine": they were the genuine Israelites. They were our ancestors. One thing that has been proven through the centuries is that Vikings (Israelites) knew how to fight. They also were good herdsmen and farmers. Some of them were Christian.

Rome had become decadent and ripe for a fall. The government and the people had been debauched by the excesses of Roman lifestyle. The "Barbarians," on the other hand, were not spiritually ruined by excesses, and were still strong. They overran the debauched and weak Roman leadership and assumed rule themselves.

Contrary to common belief, Rome never really fell; it merely evolved. In effect, the Teutonic tribes became the new Romans. They infused Rome with new strength, and carried it on. They continued Roman civics and incorporated Roman culture with their own. Through these "Barbarians," Roman government (the Beast system) fragmented and was transplanted into many nations. Thus, the Roman system begat offspring all over Europe. The Beast, once enthroned at Rome, became the mother of many nations with various names. It spread across Europe and eventually most of the world. The U.S. Government, for instance, is Roman in origin and nature. Britain's government comes from Roman roots. In fact, nearly every government today, especially those claiming to be Republics or Democracies, are products of Rome's legacy to the world.

In part, this was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the great metallic statue in Daniel 2:41-43, as well as the prophecy of Revelation 12 & 13. In Daniel 2, Rome is depicted by the statue's iron legs ... which became mixed with clay at its feet. The clay depicted the non-Roman civic systems of Europe. Thus, the iron system of Rome mixed with the clay systems of Europe. Thus, the Roman model of government was adapted to the systems of many nations. Then, as we know, the Romanized European model of government was

eventually transplanted the world over true to the prophecy. The central strength of Rome had been diluted, but its progeny would take root throughout the “civilized world.”

The new Rome (the Romanized governments of Europe) was the evolved Beast system of the Book of Revelation. In Revelation 13 this new European beast is the image of the old Roman Beast. It appears as a lamb, but speaks with the voice of the old Dragon (Rome, Babylon, etc.). It was a serpent in sheep’s clothing.

Meanwhile, the Stone Kingdom of Jesus (Dan. 2:44-45) was also established. Christ’s Kingdom received its King when Jesus ascended the throne in 29 AD (Mtt. 28:18 & Acts 1). Daniel foretold that in those days God would set up a kingship that would never be destroyed. That kingship (the “manchild”: Rev. 12) was born at the time of Paul. It was the Reign of Christ; the Kingdom of God. It gave men the ability to change the world.

Both the “Stone Kingdom” and the Beast Kingdom have existed side-by-side ever since. These two kingdoms are at war. It is the great struggle between good and evil; Life and Death. The man of sin wages war against Heaven to set himself up as God, but he always fails. This leaves man in a “fallen” (defeated) state of blindness and degradation until he repents, converts, and accepts Jesus as King of Kings ... whose Kingship is indestructible.

Christ’s Kingship began in Paul’s day and continues today. Although it has been misunderstood by most men throughout the age, it has set the whole Earth upon a certain course. Time itself is measured by the establishment of his Kingship (i.e., (A.D.: “in the year of our Lord ...”).

The barbarians of the island of Melita welcomed the shipwrecked voyagers. It was raining and cold, so they helped build a fire for them.

Paul gathered up an armload of wood and laid it upon the fire. As he did, a venomous snake, escaping from the heat of the fire, came out of the pile of wood and bit him on his hand.

The local people’s reaction to this incident gives us an indication of their religion. They concluded that since a venomous snake bit Paul he must have been a criminal worthy of death. Evidently, they believed that venomous snakes didn’t bite good people. Oddly enough, this reminds us of the snake-handler churches in the south east United States. Members of these churches tempt poisonous snakes to bite them, and then commit their fate to “God’s protection.” If the snake doesn’t bite, they attribute that to God. If the snake does bite, and they survive, they attribute that to God as well. These churches seem to have gotten some of their ideas from a twisted interpretation of this passage.

The local Melitans reasoned that Paul must be a criminal; that he escaped death from the stormy seas, but now was receiving his judgment by snakebite. Justice would be served. Their reasoning may have been faulty, but it reveals a basic morality where righteousness is rewarded and sin is punished.

When Paul was unaffected by the snakebite they marveled. Why exactly he was not affected, it doesn’t

say. It may or may not have been a miracle from God. Whatever it was, it made an impression on the Melitans.

Their reaction was one of superstition. It is reminiscent of the crowd’s reaction in Acts 14 when God healed a man at Lystra. The people attributed the healing to Paul ... assuming that he was a god come down to earth in the form of man. This was the common pagan doctrine of “incarnation” – i.e., supernatural gods taking the form of men, or entering into (i.e., incarnating) and possessing the bodies of men.

This pagan belief is central to most religions, including churches. Incarnation (spirit-beings possessing the bodies of men). They also teach that Yahweh is a spirit being, and that He took on flesh and became Jesus – that Jesus was actually Yahweh in flesh form. However, the truth is that Jesus is the Son of Yahweh ... not Yahweh himself. The Father is not his own Son, nor is the Son his own Father. If that were the case it would make the very words themselves meaningless.

POINT OF INTEREST:

We often hear the term “superstitious natives” to describe a backward, primitive people. But is it possible that our modern 21st-century civilization with its advanced technology and modern education is made up of its own kind of “superstitious natives”? While learning to launch crafts into outer space and build skyscrapers and computers, does modern man still hold to primitive pagan religious rituals, superstitions, ghosts, and all manner of backward culture?

Apparently any people, even “backward pagans,” can learn to push buttons, run computers, and learn technology. Technology and “civilization,” therefore, do not necessarily indicate godliness. They may imply cleverness but not necessarily high mentality and spiritual acuity. Higher intelligence and spiritual development appear only in those societies that adopt the ways of God. Even though a society may have satellites, skyscrapers, and computers, if the people have not assimilated the spirit of God they are still “backward pagans” and “superstitious natives,” and their society cannot be free.

ACTS 28:7-10 PAUL CARES FOR THE SICK

Now the chief man of the island, one named Publius, had lands in that vicinity. And he, being hospitable, received us and lodged us three days.

And it so happened that the father of Publius was lying sick with a fever and dysentery: and Paul went in to him, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him.

So when this was done, others on the island who had diseases came and were being healed:

These also honored us with many gifts; and they loaded us with things that were needed when we set sail.

IN THIS area of the island a man named Publius was a landholder. He was apparently the chief of the island. This hospitable “Barbarian” was obviously not a naked savage. He even had a Roman name.

Publius’ father was sick with a fever and dysentery. So Paul went in, prayed and “laid his hands on him.” To “lay hands on” someone, in this sense, was not merely a ritual and a prayer. To “lay hands on” meant to attend to him, to use your hands to minister to the patient. So, what Paul did for Publius’ father was a combination of common-sense nursing, caring and praying for him. When you read about “the laying on of hands” in other parts of the Bible, you should realize it was not merely a ritual prayer like the churches have made it out to be.

When the other people of the island saw that Publius’ father was being healed, they brought their sick to Paul too. Being a man of God helped Paul to know how to help the sick.

The people were grateful and they “honored” Paul and his companions with many gifts. The term “honors” usually meant “offerings” in New Testament vernacular. They gave Paul many offerings to repay him for attending to them.

QUESTION: Don't you believe in miracles? Don't you believe that when men pray over a sick or dying man, their prayers have the power to heal him?

ACTS 28:11-15 A LESSON IN ETYMOLOGY (word origins)

After three months (on the island) we departed in a ship having the ensign “Sons of Zeus,” which had wintered in the isle of Alexandria.

And landing at Syracuse, we stayed there three days.

And from there we went around and came to Rhegium: and after one day a south wind came, and the second day we came into Puteoli:

Here we found brethren, and were invited to stay with them seven days: and thus we were coming toward Rome.

And from there, the brethren (in Rome) heard of us and came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and Three Taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

THE group stayed approximately three months on the island of Melita, and then boarded an Alexandrian ship whose ensign (flag) was “Sons of Zeus.”

The King James Version rendered this, “Castor and Pollux.” The Greek text only says “Dioscuri” which means, literally, “Sons of Zeus.” In Roman mythology Zeus had two sons named Castor and Pollux. These are also the twins in the constellation of “Gemini” in the Roman zodiac.

The flag this ship flew apparently had the symbols or drawings of

Castor and Pollux, and that was the way the ship was identified, not unlike the way ships, cars, trucks or planes today are identified by putting a logo or number on them.

Studying this word “Dioscuri” actually answers a troublesome claim made in some circles about the pronunciation of the name “Jesus.” Stay with me on this, and I’ll take you through the steps to a logical conclusion.

Certain people, in their attempt to be accurate about the name of our Savior, claim that we shouldn’t use the name “Jesus.” Their reason is stated thusly: the word “Jesus,” or “Iesus” (pronounced “Yay-sus” in Greek), was another way of saying “Zeus.” And if that is so, then we shouldn’t use the name “Jesus,” because it would be like calling our Savior “Zeus!”

They say that instead of using the English word “Jesus” we should use the Hebrew word “Yashua.”

These well-meaning people reject the name “Jesus.”

But while their intentions are good, their Etymology and reasoning are faulty. In first-century Greek, the name of the Roman god we call “Zeus” was NOT pronounced the way we pronounce it today. Instead, it was pronounced “Dzeus” (when a word began with the Greek zeta [z] it was pronounced with the hard d sound). The King James Version renders this word “Jupiter” (an alternate name for Zeus) in Acts 14 & Acts 19.

Another common form of “Dzeus” was “Dios,” pronounced the same as it is in Spanish (“dee-os”). Later, in English, the word “deus” became commonly used to mean “two” or “twins.” The word “deus” also was an alternate word for “god.” You can see the connection to both “Dzeus” as well as the twin “Sons of Dzeus.”

The word inscribed on the ship’s flag was “Dioscuri” – a two-part word: “Dios” and “curi.” “Dios” meant “Dzeus,” and “curi” meant “sons.” In the Latin languages “Dios” means god, and obviously Dzeus was a god of the Romans and the Greeks.

“Dzeus” or “Dios” had no connection nor similarity with the name “Iesus” (pronounced Yay-sus).

The pronunciation of Jesus’ name changed slightly

from one nation to another. In Hebrew it was “Yashua.” In Aramaic it was “Yesoo” (pronounced “Yay-soo”). In Greek it was “Iesus” (pronounced “Yay-sus”). In pre 17th-century England it was written and pronounced as in Greek (“Iesus”). Later, in the 17th century English language, “I’s” were replaced with “J’s” when they were the first letter of a word. It was done for purposes of pronunciation. Thus, in 17th century England, “Iewes” was changed to “Jews,” “Iohn” was changed to “John,” “Iane” became “Jane,” “Iacob” became “Jacob,” “Iames” became “James,” and “Iesus” became “Jesus.”

Through it all the name is the same, but the spelling and pronunciation varies with different dialects and languages. This is not unusual.

For instance, my name (Williams) in France is Guillaume, in Spain it is Guillermo, and Wilhelm (pronounced with a “V”) in Germany, etc.. The name is the same, but the spelling and pronunciation varies with different dialects and languages.

Thus, the English pronunciation of “Jesus” is clearly the Anglicized form of “Yashua” or “Iesus.”

Back to Paul’s trek to Rome. After three days at Syracuse, on the southeast coast of Sicily, they sailed north between the island of Sicily and the mainland of Italy, to Puteoli. In Puteoli they found brethren who asked them to stay over for a week.

When word reached Rome that Paul was coming, some people came as far as Appii Forum (“Market of Appii”) to meet him along the road. They also came to a place called “The Three Taverns” which was thirty-three miles from Rome. The word “tavern” comes from the Greek word “tabernai” (“taberna” in Latin). “Tabernacle” is another variation of this word. Isn’t it amusing that both “tavern” and “tabernacle” come from the same word and mean essentially the same? It simply meant “an inn” or “a hut.” Paul did not meet his brethren at a bar. A “tavern” was a roadside inn or shelter.

QUESTION: What about the energy vibrations in words? Isn’t it true that certain combinations of letters emit certain kinds of energy transmissions, and shouldn’t we take this seriously? If the word “Jesus” emits negative vibrations, shouldn’t we avoid it? On the other hand, if the word “Yashua” emits positive vibrations shouldn’t we always use that? Isn’t there power in that name?

ACTS 28:16-22 THE HOPE OF ISRAEL

And when we entered into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself with a soldier guarding him.

After three days it happened that he (Paul) called together the chiefs of the Jews: and when they had come together, he said to them, Men and brethren, though I have done nothing contrary to the people, or to the customs of the fathers, yet I was imprisoned in Jerusalem and delivered into the hands of the Romans.

Who, when they had examined me, would have released me because there was no cause of death in me.

But the Jews objected, and I was forced to appeal to Caesar; not that I had any cause against my nation.

Therefore, for this reason I have asked to see you, and to speak to you: because it is for the hope of Israel that I am held in these bonds.

And they said to him, We neither received letters out of Judea concerning you, nor have any of the brethren reported or spoken anything wicked about you.

But we think it is worthwhile to hear from you what you think: for indeed we know that as concerning this movement it is spoken against everywhere.

WHEN the troupe finally reached Rome, Paul was not put in prison. Instead, he was left on his own recognizance and loosely watched by one soldier.

This whole ordeal had come upon Paul because of accusations from Jews in Jerusalem. You'd think that Paul would have been fed up with Jews. Even so, Paul still reached out to them in Rome.

In verse 17, Paul called these Jews "men and brethren." Obviously, some of those Jews were Israelites, otherwise he would not have called them "brethren."

"Jews" or "Judaists" – either term suffices, providing we understand the meaning. This term designated a religion/culture – not a race. Within "Jewish" ("Judaist") culture there

were some Israelites, some Edomites, some Persians, and other races as well. The same is true yet today. Paul, an Israelite, was himself at one time a Judaist (a "Jew"). There were obviously some Israelites among the Jews in Rome because Paul addressed them as "brethren" in verse 17. The non-Israelite Jews he addressed as "men."

Paul refers back to his testimony in Cesarea before Agrippa and Festus, and once again proclaims his innocence. In verse 20, he makes the point that his preaching about "**the hope of Israel**" was the offense that put him at odds with the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. That was why they hated him, accused him, and caused him to be arrested.

When Paul referred to "the hope

of Israel" he was talking about the life that Jesus was giving them. Paul refers at least four times in the last six chapters of Acts (Acts 23:6; Acts 24:21; Acts 26:6-8 and Acts 28:20) to "the first raising." This term refers to the rebirth and new life in Christ. It was occurring at that present time. That was Israel's hope!

That "life" was not in the Sanhedrin or among the Pharisees. But it WAS being discovered in Israelites, both in and outside Judea.

This was not a physical "resurrection" like the one taught by the churches and the synagogues. Rather, it was a spiritual awakening – a giving of new life to reborn Israelites.

Paul's so-called crime was that he believed in "the hope of Israel" – the "first raising."

News of Paul's teachings had been heard in Rome, and the news bearers had cast it in a bad light. Paul and his comrades were labeled "a movement" in the sense that groups today are labeled "cults," "hate groups" and "terrorists" when they don't align themselves with mainline churches and political parties.

In Rome, oddly enough, Paul was not confronted with angry Jews. Jews had accosted Paul in other cities, trying to get him killed or imprisoned by fomenting trouble with the local people. But contrary to expectation, they did not attack him in Rome. The Roman Jews had heard nothing personal about Paul. They had heard only that the "movement" called Christians were spoken against, and they were interested in learning more about it.

QUESTION: Aren't we fortunate today that Christians aren't persecuted by the government because of religion? In fact, the church is now protected by the government.

ACTS 28:23-30 PAUL RELATES THE GOSPEL TO BRETHREN IN ROME

And having appointed a day for him, many came to him in his lodging: to whom he expounded and witnessed about the Kingship of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening.

And some indeed were being persuaded of the things being said, and some were disbelieving.

And being in disagreement with one another, some began leaving and Paul made this one comment: The holy spirit spoke well through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers.

Saying, Go to this people, and say, Hearing you

shall hear, and shall not discern; and seeing you shall see, and not perceive:

For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest sometime they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and discern with their heart, and they should return, and I should heal them.

Let it be known therefore to you, that the saving (message) of God is sent to the nations, and they will hear it.

And he remained two whole years in his own rented house, and received all that came in to him.

Preaching the Kingship of God, and teaching those things about the Lord Jesus Christ, boldly and unhindered.

IT HAS been debated by some people as to what constitutes a “day” in the Bible. The modern calendar calculates “a day” as a 24-hour period from midnight to midnight. Others insist that a “day” begins in the evening and lasts until the following evening. But notice that in verse 23 we find a definitive statement telling us what a “day” is. It speaks of an “appointed day,” then it defines the duration of that day as “from morning till evening.” So here is a Biblical definition of a day: “from morning to evening.” This fits the Hebrew “yom” (day) which means the light and warm period as opposed to the dark and cold period. “Day” was divided into two parts: morning and evening. Night was divided into three “watches.”

Paul spoke all day long telling them about Jesus by explaining Moses, the law, and the prophets. In other words, he talked about the history of Israel. That history, and those prophecies, explained Jesus and his Reign. In fact, you can't understand Jesus unless you first understand the history of Israel and the writings of the prophets.

Here again is proof that at least some of the people Paul was speaking to were Israelites, whose fathers were addressed by the prophet Isaiah. Paul quotes a prophecy from Isaiah 6:

8. And I heard the voice of Yahweh, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I. Send me!

9. And He said, Go and tell this people, Hearing you hear, but do not understand; and seeing you see, but do not perceive.

10. The heart of this people is made fat, and their ears made heavy, and their eyes shut, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn and be healed.

Isaiah 6:8-10

Paul quoted Isaiah's prophecy about Israel, and told his audience that they, of all people, should hear and accept the truth ... but they were rejecting it. Therefore, the message would be sent to the nations, and there it would be heard.

Verse 29 from the KJV is not in the oldest and best texts, so I

excluded it.

Apparently, Paul had no accusers in Rome. Paul never stood trial in Rome because his accusers never showed up. And so he stayed there for two years, preaching the gospel of the kingdom without being hindered - not even by the Jews.

That ends the book of The Acts of The Apostles.

Tradition has it that Paul went on from there to Britain and to Spain, and later returned to Rome where he was martyred. That is tradition. Some of it is probably based in fact. I can only speculate how much is fact, and how much is legend. There is also speculation that this book originally had at least one more chapter. I have seen a copy of one such writing claiming to be the 29th chapter of Acts. However, I am not convinced of its authenticity, so I do not include it.

REVIEW OF THE IMPORTANT POINTS OF ACTS

What have we learned from this book?

It began with Jesus ascending the Throne and becoming King of Israel.

He sends out his apostles with the good news of his Reign; to Judea, then Samaria, then to the nations. Some folks accept it and some don't.

Through his apostles He established ecclesias (not churches) as branches of his Kingdom. Ecclesias were civil bodies politic; communities or tribes of Christian families organized in patriarchal bodies ... somewhat like the old Clans of Scotland that warred with the Britons, or the old tribal societies of Arabia that warred with every nation.

Persecution began from the Jewish synagogues, and from the governments of men which are always in competition with Christ's Reign. Religion and government constitute the Beast System of prophecy. The Jewish religion and governments were the oldest enemies of Christ and his Kingship. Then churches also carried on the tradition of the synagogues by persecuting true Christians.

The Jews objected to the message in most locations. They also were usually connected with the government, so they arranged to cause trouble for the apostles.

The Book of Acts gives us a

perspective of how the world system reacts to the idea that Jesus is King of Kings. Governments reject (sometimes violently) the idea that God proclaimed Jesus King of Kings!

We learned that preaching the true gospel made the apostles hated, stoned, imprisoned, beat, killed or, at the very least, publicly vilified by the powers that be.

We learned that the apostles saw hardships similar to the ones we face today.

We learned that the persecution that come upon Jesus and the apostles was not for getting the people to go to church. Rather it was for preaching freedom and light. THAT was the reason they were persecuted.

They preached freedom from religious and political oppression:

17. Wherefore come out from among them, and be you separate, says the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,

2Cor. 6:17

Christ brought salvation and freedom (light and truth), and the rulers and the priests who controlled the governments and kept the nations under slavery didn't like that message. Peter, Barnabas, Silas, Paul, the rest of the apostles were teaching freedom, and it didn't go over well with religion and politics. So they tried to shut them up.

We still see it today. Anyone who speaks or publishes the true gospel of

Christ as King is hated. Anyone who teaches men to be loyal to Christ's Kingship instead of the kingdoms of men, and to follow the teachings of the Bible rather than the laws of men, or any other man-made government, is hated and persecuted like Jesus and the apostles. They were, and we are, labeled subversives, unpatriotic, and believe it or not, un-Christian.

Nevertheless, true Christianity is unassailable and will not come to an end ... because Christ is its Head. Jesus himself proclaimed that "... *the gates of hell would not prevail against it.*" (Mtt. 16:18). The world may attempt to redefine the words; the churches may brainwash millions so that they cannot recognize truth; government institutions may persecute people and attempt to kill their spirit. But, truth and Christ's Kingship will NOT BE STOPPED! And we who follow that truth, and that Reign, are a blessed people.

14. If you are being reproached for the name of Christ, be glad; for the glory and the spirit of God is resting upon you.

1 Peter 4:14

It was the Good News of The Kingdom of God as preached by Jesus and the Apostles. It is still Good News today for all who can truly hear and truly see.

May Yahweh, the God of Israel, give you eyes to see and ears to hear!

END OF CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

FOR ANSWERS AND NOTES, SEE ENCLOSED "ANSWER SECTION."

POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. The word “Barbarian,” as it was used in Paul’s day, did not mean the same as it does today. Back then it meant a foreigner with foreign speech. Today people use it to mean “backward, savage, or cruel.” It has become a derision used to belittle and infer inferiority and backwardness.

2. In first-century Rome the term “Barbarian” applied to people outside the Roman civil system. That means that true Christians of all ages have fallen into that category, and are thought of as “Barbarians” by those who prefer the Beast system.

3. From God’s perspective, the anti-Christ powers of the world (like Rome or the US) are the real backward and savage systems.

32. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Luke 12:32

27. But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

1Cor. 1:27

Come out of her, my people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.

Rev. 18:4

4. Most centralized governments, especially European-type governments, are modeled after the Roman Empire. The symbolic metal statue of Daniel 2 depicts how governments and civilizations evolved: Babylonian government evolved into Persian government, Persian government evolved into Grecian government, Grecian government evolved into Roman government, Roman government evolved into various European governments, and European governments were colonized and planted into “Republics” and “Democracies” all over the world. This

international Beast System continues today.

5. “Healing” is not always of a miraculous nature. Paul, and others, sometimes worked with the sick and cured them through “hands-on” healing skills. “Laying on of hands” often meant to work with one’s hands ... not to merely pray for a miracle.

6. The name “Jesus” is the Anglicized form of the Hebrew “Yashua” and the Greek “Iesus.”

7. Paul was treated more fairly in Rome than he was in Judea or Cesarea. Apparently, Paul’s greatest adversaries – the Jews – had less influence in Rome.

8. Paul’s accusers never showed up in Rome, so he never stood trial. He was not imprisoned in Rome, and was only assigned a guard for a short while. Paul stayed in Rome for at least two years, and spoke freely about the Kingship of God ... and suffered no persecution during those two years.

ANSWERS:

pg.4

Men’s prayers have no intrinsic powers of their own. The prayers of men are only petitions to God; requests for God’s intervention. These prayers are effective only to the extent that God agrees to the requests, and grants the petitions.

Whether one man prays alone, or a hundred pray together, the principle is the same. Prayers have no intrinsic powers of their own ... neither singly nor collectively. It all depends upon God opting to take action in the matter. If men could somehow marshal prayer power by organizing great numbers of prayers in unison, they could conceivably achieve anything under the Sun – but, as everyone knows, they cannot. Numbers do not create power

in prayer. Neither does ritualistic performance. Only God’s intervention brings power to the prayer.

On the other hand, repentance and obedience to God does achieve great things. When greater numbers of people repent it does have a good effect upon the world.

pg. 5

Nonsense! Witches and sorcerers seek mystical power through so-called sonic vibrations of words, and through sorcery like numerology. It is idolatry and superstition.

The actual power in someone’s name is something else altogether. By pursuing fantastic myths, witches and sorcerers completely miss the source of true power.

In Biblical terminology, “a name” equates to “authority.” Therefore, evoking Jesus’ “name” means to call upon his “authority.” He has authority because of the position and office his Father gave to Him. He now has “... *all authority in heaven and in earth*” (Mtt. 28:18).

Jesus has power through authority given him by Yahweh. It has nothing at all to do with numeric values of words, or sonic vibrations as taught in sorcery and witchcraft.

pg.6

True Christianity is not protected by the state. Churches (religion), on the other hand, are protected by government because “church and state” are co-conspirators in organized crime (called “government”). “Church” is religion, but it is not Christianity (although they call themselves “Christian”).

Today, just as in Paul’s day, true Christians are still persecuted by governments and churches. However, you won’t hear about it in the establishment news media.