

1. Open the Word of Truth to Acts 28:14. We are studying Paul's journey to Rome. Before we continue our Bible study you may want to take advantage of God's protocol for fellowship by silently naming your sins to God as we pray.
2. Last week I exegeted Acts 28:14 and when time expired we were in the middle of studying the Doctrine of the Roman Empire.
3. Before we resume, I want us to take a look at a map of the journey to Rome and then review an expanded translation of Acts 28:11-14.

### Expanded Translation

**Acts 28:11** Now after three months we put out to sea in an Alexandrian grain ship which had wintered on the island; the vessel sailed under the ensign of Castor and Pollux, sons of Jupiter.

**Acts 28:12** After landing at Syracuse the ship's captain decided to remain in port for three days hoping for favorable winds,

**Acts 28:13** and from Syracuse, with some difficulty we made our way north arriving on the southern tip of Italy at the city of Rhegium. And the next day a gentle wind from the south began to blow so the captain after conferring with the Centurion decided we should begin our journey north to the bay of Naples and the city of Puteoli,

**Acts 28:14** there at Puteoli we found several brothers and sisters in Christ who graciously invited us to spend the week with them; and after spending the week in Puteoli we began the long walk to Rome.

4. When time expired last week we were studying a history of the Roman Empire taken mainly from the *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* and Michael Grant's books *The Twelve Caesars* and *The Army of the Caesars*.
5. After a brief review we will resume our study of the Roman Empire.
6. Let's first review how we arrived at our expanded translation.

WHERE WE FOUND BRETHREN, **ὅς εὕρισκω ἀδελφός**

1. **Hos Heurisko Adelphos** is better "there at Puteoli we found several brothers and sisters in Christ ..."
2. **Heurisko** means to find or to discover. In this particular verse it describes an action by Paul or one of his companions. There were several believing families in Puteoli who desired Paul and his friends to spend time with them for seven days. **Heurisko** can be found more than 150 times in the New Testament where it is translated "discover, find, findeth" and "perceived."

3. **Adelphos** was often used to describe both familial and spiritual relationships.

AND WERE DESIRED παρακαλεω

1. **Parakaleo** is better translated "who were very gracious and invited us ..."
2. **Parakaleo** is a compound verb consisting of **Para** meaning "alongside and **Kaleo** meaning "to call." **Parakaleo** came to mean "to comfort, to beseech, to pray, to intreat" or "to exhort."

TO TARRY WITH THEM επιμενω παρα αυτος

1. **Epimeno Para Autos** is better translated "to stay with them ..." or "to abide with them ..."
2. **Epimeno** is a compound consisting of **Epi** meaning "upon" and **Meno** meaning to abide, to live, to stay to tarry" or "to reside." **Epimeno** came to mean "to continue, to abide" or "to remain." In our context it clearly means to stay in someone else's home."
3. The prepositional phrase "**Para Autos**" is well translated "with them." The antecedent of them being some one or perhaps several families desirous of housing Paul and his friends for the week.

SEVEN DAYS: επτα ημερα

1. **Hepta Hemera** is well translated "seven days; ..." though it could also be rendered "a week; ..."
2. Apparently Julius, the centurion in charge of the prisoners, had official business that detained him in Puteoli. The delay permitted Paul's visit with his new found friends. Similar permission had been granted at Sidon.

AND SO WE WENT και ουτως ερχομαι

1. **Kai Houtos Erchomai** is better "and after visiting for a week in Puteoli we began the long walk ..."
2. **Erchomai** means "to come, to go" or "he or she went."

TOWARD ROME εις ο Ρωμη

1. **Eis Ho Rome** is better "toward Rome."
2. Rome appears eight times in the New Testament where it is always translated Rome.

3. Our Doctrine of The Roman Empire is taken mainly from the *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia* and Michael Grant's books *The Twelve Caesars* and *The Army of the Caesars*. I will review some of that learned last week and then resume new material with a study of Rome's Conquest of the Mediterranean World.

## THE DOCTRINE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

**Introduction**--Rome and her empire have meant many things to many people.

- To Constantine (306-337) it meant a restoration of greatness and a creation of a new Rome on the Bosphorus in ca. 325.
- To Charlemagne it meant establishment of a Holy Roman Empire in the image of the first Rome.
- To Innocent III, other popes and faithful Catholics through the ages the term has become synonymous with the mother church.
- To many contemporary students of prophecy, the Roman Empire is an object of speculation: when and how will it be restored?
- To most Romans of the 1st and 2nd century A.D. it was "the world," and the Mediterranean (*Mare Nostrum*--our sea).
- To the apostle Paul the empire meant a place to preach and to suffer; its citizenship meant protection from undue harassment and a place to seek legal vindication, and eventually to die.
- For early Christians the empire was not only home but a persecutor for their belief in Christ.

**Early Development**--Rome was strategically placed to dominate the Italian peninsula and Italy. It was also strategically located to dominate the Mediterranean world. The Mediterranean is surrounded by a rim of deserts and mountains and other natural barriers.

This topography facilitated the unification of the land around the sea. In a very real sense Roman history began with the entrance of several Italic tribes into the peninsula from the north between 1000 and 750 B.C.



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These peoples intermarried with the Mediterranean and Indo-European stock already in the land, and began settlements on the hills of Rome. About 800 B.C. Etruscan peoples moved into west and northwest Italy, apparently from the Near East. The early Etruscans settled in what is today known as Tuscany. These people made numerous contributions to Roman civilization, not the least of which, was urbanization of the city of Rome. The great Etruscan period at Rome occurred during the 6th century B.C. The Etruscans came from Etruria, an ancient country in central Italy coextensive with modern Tuscany but originally called Umbria.

During the 8th century B.C. Greek migrations began to hit the Italian mainland and continued for a couple of centuries. They located primarily in southwest Italy and Sicily. Gauls or Celts moved into the Po Valley in the north of Italy at the end of the 6th century B.C. and posed a threat to the Romans for some three centuries thereafter. The Po

Valley extends for some 405 miles following the Po River. The river begins in northern Italy flowing from the slopes of Mt. Viso just southwest of the Alps until it reaches the Adriatic Sea.

Kings ruled during these early years, assisted by their councils of nobles. Then, as the traditional view has it, around 500 B.C. the Latins successfully revolted against the Etruscans and set up a republic, ruled by consuls, a senate and an assembly. The tendency now is to hold that the change from monarchy to republic was more evolutionary and required a considerable period of time. At any rate, Rome found herself almost incessantly at war with a variety of powers for hundreds of years. As already noted, Rome's first struggle was with the Etruscans. First wresting control of Rome from these people, the Latins of the city were forced to war upon them intermittently for about 200 years. In the ensuing struggle the Romans were successful and absorbed the territory of Latium into the Roman state. Now Rome had new borders and became embroiled in struggles with neighboring Italic tribes.

Meanwhile a new threat blew in from the north. The Gauls descended from the Po Valley on the largely defenseless city in 390 B.C. Rome ultimately got rid of them by paying a ransom. But the Gauls made an indelible impression by instilling a fear and insecurity that would affect Roman affairs for a long time.

During the 4th century Rome overcame her foes one after another. She brought an end to the Etruscan, Greek, Gaul and Italian threats. Rome organized her territory in a threefold way. Some towns had full Roman citizenship and rights. Others were known as Latin allies and had lesser privileges.

**Conquest of the Mediterranean World**--Hardly had Rome united the peninsula when she became involved in a series of wars (the Punic Wars) with the Carthaginians. As Rome's power grew she came increasingly into conflict or competition with these prosperous Phoenician peoples centered in modern Tunisia. The immediate issue before them was who would control Sicily--at that time a rich agricultural region. This question was of great importance to Rome because Sicily was then within shouting distance of the Italian coast, though today the straits are a little wider. During the first war with Carthage (264-241 B.C.) Rome took Sicily, developed a first-rate navy and became the dominant naval power in the western Mediterranean. Subsequently she took Sardinia and Corsica and pushed her boundaries in the north to the Alps, thereby erasing any future Gallic threat. The second war with Carthage (218-202 B.C.) was essentially a land war. Hannibal marched from Spain, through southern France and over the Alps into Italy.

His war elephants helped to terrorize the many small city states located outside of Rome. Hannibal counted heavily on a revolution of the Gauls and numerous Italian cities to bring Rome to her knees. Many Gauls and Italians did join his armies, and numerous Italian towns did rise in rebellion; but somehow the Romans managed to fight on, subduing the rebellious towns one by one. Ultimately Rome won the war by invading the Carthaginian homeland and decisively defeating the Carthaginians. She now annexed Spain and a piece of France. Much later (149-146 B.C.) Rome fought a third war with Carthage, destroyed the city and Phoenician power in the west, and annexed

Carthaginian territory in north Africa. Meanwhile Rome had been forced to turn her attention to the eastern Mediterranean. Macedonia had allied with Hannibal during the second Carthaginian war and Rome had neutralized the threat by making alliances with other Greeks who then engaged the Macedonians. But she was also faced with the possible destruction of a balance of power in the east.

After Alexander the Great died in 323 B.C., his empire broke up and ultimately fell into three major divisions: Macedonia under Cassander, Seleucia (including initially Syria, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and other territories) under Seleucid, and Egypt under Ptolemy. As long as a balance of power was maintained between these empires, Rome was safe. Should that balance of power be upset, one eastern nation might become strong enough to defeat Rome. It should be remembered that the east was more wealthy and more populous than the western Mediterranean. Just before 200 B.C. a boy king ascended the throne of Egypt. Seeking to take advantage of the situation. Seleucia and Macedonia went into action. Egypt appealed to Rome. Rome felt obliged to intervene to restore the balance of power and to settle accounts with Macedonia for declaring war on Rome in one of her darkest hours. A series of wars ensued between Seleucia and Egypt; these finally ended when in 146 B.C. Rome took this opportunity to destroy the venerable old city of Corinth in an effort to cow the Greeks, who periodically had risen against Roman power. Rome annexed all of Greece, but allowed other eastern Mediterranean powers to remain independent as long as they remained allied to Rome. A few years later (133 B.C.) the king of Pergamum willed his kingdom to Rome and it came into the empire as the province of Asia. Encompassing the western third of Asia Minor, it constituted the brightest jewel in the imperial crown.

**Demise of the Republic**--As is clearly evident, Rome had been involved in prolonged warfare, during which time she used her allies without properly sharing the booty of war with them. As a result of imperial acquisitions, numerous problems rose in Rome, on the Italian peninsula and elsewhere in the empire. The senatorial class and republican institutions proved incapable of handling the increasing emergencies. A series of revolutions broke out which gradually destroyed the republic. One of the most important involved an Italian revolt (90-88 B.C.) during which most of the peninsula rose against Roman domination.

Rome was forced to grant full citizenship to all free Italians in order to quell the uprising. The activities of Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Julius Caesar, Crassus, Mark Antony and others cannot be commented on in detail here. But select activities require attention if one is to gain some idea of Roman development. Pompey was granted emergency powers to exterminate Mithradates's pirate threat to Roman shipping. As a by-product of that campaign, he took several eastern provinces in 64-63 B.C., including Syria and Palestine. Subsequently (in 60 B.C.), Pompey, Julius Caesar and Crassus organized a triumvirate. By pooling their political support they sought to gain certain personal concessions. The most important was the grant of an army to Caesar to conquer Gaul. The triumvirate was renewed in 55 B.C., but it gradually disintegrated in the heat of personal ambition. In 48 B.C. a civil war left Julius Caesar ruler of the empire when he defeated Pompey at Pharsalus in Greece.

Granted dictatorship, Caesar set about with great vigor and ability to restore order and prosperity to the Roman state, governing it as an empire. Not the least of his reforms was the Julian calendar, which remained in effect for several centuries. Unfortunately Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C. by men distraught over the demise of the republic. But they did not realize it was impossible to restore the old political institutions. Octavius, Caesar's adopted heir, Mark Antony and Lepidus in 44 B.C. had themselves appointed by the Senate to rule the state and in 42 B.C. destroyed the republican forces led by Brutus and Cassius. Soon Octavius and Antony pushed Lepidus into the background and began to square off for an ultimate struggle. Again the decision as to who would rule the empire was made in Greece, this time at a naval battle off the coast of Actium in western Greece. In 31 B.C. Octavius pursued the fleeing Antony and Cleopatra to Egypt, where they both subsequently committed suicide; Egypt came into the empire in 30 B.C.

**Government Under the Principate**--Now Octavius was free to restore the empire, which by this time was in a very disheveled condition. Wracked by civil war for decades, the Mediterranean world suffered severe economic dislocation and some provinces tottered on the brink of bankruptcy. Political and social evils long unattended in the midst of military activity and political uncertainty now received needed attention. Augustus brought in the Pax Romana or Roman Peace, which was to grace the Mediterranean area almost without interruption for some two centuries. Augustus wiped out debts of many towns that were virtually bankrupt. When he had restored order, he appeared before the Senate in 28 B.C. to return to that body rule of the state. But they were neither able nor willing to reassume the full burden of administration. So they conferred upon him numerous powers, to which they periodically added. Thus, although Augustus (a title bestowed by the Senate) was the real ruler, his power was legally conferred upon him by the Senate. And he shared rule with the Senate both in Italy and the empire.

Of special importance in this arrangement is the fact that Augustus became in effect commander-in-chief of all armed forces. Augustus proceeded to carry out numerous programs initiated by Julius and to launch some of his own. He brought peace and prosperity to the empire, reorganized political institutions everywhere, provided the first real police and fire protection for Rome, and in many other ways benefited the empire. A grateful populace revered him greatly, and some (especially in the East) actually worshipped the cult of the divine Augustus. Thus emperor worship was born. But during his reign, so was the Prince of Peace born in Bethlehem, where Joseph and Mary reported for a census-taking order by Augustus as part of his effort to tidy up the empire.

Augustus (27 B.C. - A.D. 14) was succeeded by his adopted heir, Tiberius (a stepson by his third wife). In adopting his heir before his death and associating him with himself, Augustus guaranteed a regular and peaceful succession and set a precedent that was to characterize subsequent imperial administrations. Augustus also inaugurated what is known as the Principate (rule of princeps, first citizen), an arrangement in which the ruler was to be viewed as first citizen of the empire rather than dictator. In practice, however, the princeps enjoyed increasing power either because he preempted it or

because he gained it by senatorial default.

Tiberius (A.D. 14-37) is especially significant for the New Testament student because Christ was crucified during his reign. He also appointed Pontius Pilate procurator of Judea (A.D. 26-36). Though much maligned as an embittered and suspicious ruler, Tiberius' greatest difficulty was with the Senate; he gave good government to the empire.

Caligula (A.D. 37-41), grandson of Augustus' daughter Julia, next occupied the imperial chair. As a result of a serious illness he seems to have become mentally deranged. Among his wilder projects was the erection of a temple to himself out of public funds and appointment of his favorite horse as high priest of the cult. In order to obtain needed funds, he resorted to new taxes and confiscations, and used treason laws as a means of seizing money and property. Caligula had alienated not only the Romans but Jews as well. Their monotheistic beliefs prevented them from worshiping images of the princeps, and his statues were forcibly erected in the synagogues in Alexandria. Before the order to set up his statue in the temple in Jerusalem could be carried out, news of the emperor's death arrived.

The Praetorian Guard elevated Caligula's uncle, Claudius (41-54) to the imperial office. The Senate had no choice but to rubber stamp the action. Claudius seems to have provided a high quality of administration for the empire. He adjusted tax burdens and inaugurated an extensive program of public works. This involved building new aqueducts, roads and canals, and especially the development of Ostia as a harbor for Rome.

For some decades, however, Puteoli (modern Pozzuoli), near Naples, was to remain the chief port of the capital. Paul landed at this far away port, some 150 miles distant from the capital, when he came to Rome. Claudius also added Britain and Thrace to the empire and extended Roman citizenship in the provinces. Claudius' activities crossed paths with the New Testament narrative on at least two occasions. He permitted Judea a brief experience as a client kingdom under Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 41-44) and then restored it to its position as an imperial province under the rule of procurators. Pursuant to some trouble with Jews in Rome, he expelled them all from the capital (Acts 18:2; the historian Suetonius confirms this action).

Acts 18:1 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth;  
Acts 18:2 And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

Acts 18:3 And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

Claudius adopted as his son and successor Nero, son of his second wife by a previous marriage. Nero (A.D. 54-68) ruled well during his first five years, when he was under the domination of his mother and capable heads of the executive departments of government, chief of whom was the philosopher Seneca.

When Nero became his own man, he came increasingly into conflict with various individuals and factions in the government. As he did he became fearful of plots against his life, and his rule took on aspects of a reign of terror. Ultimately he disposed of his mother, his wife and his stepbrother. One hot July night in 64, fire broke out in Rome in the slums east of the Circus Maximus and burned with unabated force for nine days, gutting more than half the city. No effort to check it succeeded. Even Nero's palace lay a charred mass. In spite of the emperor's measures to alleviate the sufferings of the homeless, he could not allay the people's suspicion that he had started the fire in order to have the glory of rebuilding Rome along grander lines. To divert criticism from himself, he laid blame for the fire on Christians of the city and initiated the first official persecution of them. This began in the latter part of 64 and lasted until 66; it was restricted to Rome because those elsewhere could hardly have had a part in the catastrophe. Paul and Peter were apparently martyred in Rome during this persecution. Nero ultimately managed to alienate important segments of society in Rome, Italy and the empire. Of special importance was his failure to hold allegiance of the military, who launched a successful rebellion in 68. Nero committed suicide, and with him died the Julio-Claudian line.

End Lesson Taught 3-28-10