

Acts 28:26-27; Part 4 "" 4/13/2025

Review & Intro:

We are wrapping up our study of Acts. We have seen the progression of the gospel from a small group of Jews in Jerusalem to adherents all over the Roman empire. Now, we find that in Rome. The gospel surely has spread to "the ends of the earth" and would continue outwards.

One of Luke's purposes in writing Acts as the second volume of his two volume set, seems to be to show how the person and work of Christ impacted the **world**. Another purpose is to display how the gospel moved from being a primarily Jewish movement to being a **Christian** movement. He displays again and again, the Jewish leadership's rejection of their messiah. Even though there are several individual Jews who "repent and believe" the Jewish leadership itself is direct defiance of God's plan for the world. They reject the "holy one of Israel" and reject their place in displaying God's favor in the world for the sake of the nations.

Today, we will look at a controversial passage that incites some controversial theology. In verses 26-27, Paul quotes Isaiah 6:9-10. We will look at the original context first. Second, we will examine the use of this prophecy in the gospels and finally, see how Paul employs it. OT, gospels, and Acts...

I. Isaiah 6 in the immediate, original context:

-The throne room vision (1-7)

"**Holy, Holy, Holy**..." different, exalted, transcendent, morally superior...

"Yahweh of hosts" Who are the "hosts?" They are angel armies.

"the whole earth is full of His **glory**." Psalm 19:1, 8:1, 72:19, 96:13; Isaiah 6:3, 11:9, 40:5, 60:1-2, 66:18-19; Numbers 14:21; Exodus 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11; Ezekiel 43:2; Habakkuk 2:14; John 1:14; Luke 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Hebrews 1:3; Romans 9:22-23; Revelation 21:23-24

-God's message through Isaiah to Israel (8-10): Preach it down to a stump. They won't listen. They are hardened. Like Pharaoh, God is sovereign over all. People are not guiltless even if they are blind and deaf. It is a willing blindness even though God is the one doing it. It is a "both and" not an "either or" situation. God is divinely reprobating them.

-Connection to judgment (11-13)

II. Isaiah 6 in the rest of the **New Testament**:

-Matt. 13:14-15; explanation as to why Jesus speaks plainly to the disciples while using parables or less clear communication to the crowds.

-Mark 4:11-12; is basically the same thing concluding with ““To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those who are outside, everything comes in parables,¹² so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, lest they return and be forgiven.”

-Luke 8:10; is a repeat of Mark.

-John 12:40; of the four passages listed here, this is the most explicit reference to divine reprobation. Listen to how it reads:

These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.³⁷ But though He had done so many signs before them, they *still* were not believing in Him,³⁸ so that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”³⁹ For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart, and return and I heal them.”⁴¹ These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke about Him.⁴² Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing *Him*, or fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;⁴³ for they loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God.”

So, in the OT original context we see this prophecy in conjunction with the holiness of God and judgement.

In the NT, we see that Jesus uses this text to explain the reason people don't believe.

III. Isaiah 6 in Acts 28:26-27:

-Jewish rejection of Jesus see also: Romans 9:14-22, Romans 1:24-28, 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12, Proverbs 16:4, 1 Peter 2:8, and Jude 1:4. If you're having difficulty with this message lookup these verses. Read Romans 9 about 10 times and write down what that means. It does in fact mean what you think it means, as do these other passages. There is no conflict here between the responsibility of man and the sovereignty of God. The Jews corporately rejected their messiah. They mocked and tortured and killed Him. Talmudic Judaism today believes that Jesus is boiling in a pot of dung. They are not our

friends. They oppose the Lord of glory. I can't imagine why any Christian would want to send money to people who hate Jesus.

*the book of revelation is not some future oriented book for the most part. Certainly, the bodily return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the final judgement are to come. However, the apocalypse decreed by John happened in 70AD when God judged and divorced Israel. RC Sproul's book "The Last Days According to Jesus" explains this interpretation well.

-Inclusion of the gentiles or "nations." Over 560 times the Hebrew word "goy" usually translated "nations" but more aptly translated "gentiles" is used. God's plan was always to call a people to Himself from every tribe, nation and tongue. It should have been no surprise when God poured out His Spirit on them.

-Connection to the kingdom of God (v23 & 31). When God's Spirit moves in people's lives, He establishes His kingdom. He is ruling their lives and they are His faithful people. He is building His church. He is establishing His rule over the planet in this way. Paul is saying that the Jew's rejection of Jesus and His people, is a result of the hardening of God. God is doing something bigger than just dealing with the Jews. He is fulfilling the prophecy to fill the entire earth, and indeed, that is what we see next.

-Ends of the earth... Rome and beyond. According to early church history, Paul was eventually released from this imprisonment and went as far as Spain, which was the western edge of the Roman Empire.

-History of western civilization is a story of the spread of Christianity and its influence eventually disrupting and overcoming the Empire itself.

Early church spread as far east as India and perhaps even into China.

Medieval period, Christianity was the predominant religion in Europe with significant footholds in Asia as well.

Reformation: Luther (Germany), Calvin (France and Switzerland), Knox (Scotland) the kingdom of God continued to spread.

"How the Scots Invented the Modern World" by Herman

-**American** history: You and I are an extension of this mission. Not only by virtue of our allegiance to Christ, but by our nationality as well. This land was most certainly established by Reformed people to extend His rule and reign, whether it be the Puritans or us Presbyterians.

The recent moves by the Methodists embracing homosexuality and the Baptists ordaining women preachers, are both signs of disobedience and reprobation. Our own Presbyterian world has been largely decimated from it's revolutionary timeframe and core. The embracing of liberal theology and most recently, the acceptance of the "revoice" conference is turning the PCA into the PCGay. The United church of Christ, the Episcopalians, many of the Anglicans, Disciples of Christ, etc. etc. have all significantly lost touch with Biblical fidelity and have become blind guides. They have embraced the cultural shift and justified positions such as abortion and rampant immigration. Make no mistake, even though they use the Bible, they do not believe the Bible. They twist the Scriptures to tickle their ears. They are accommodating to the culture, not to the Bible and the historical faith. They are sentimental cemeteries. They are deaf and mute. They are hollowed out forms of religion with no power, no living God, no kingdom impact, no work of the Spirit. They are dead. And we say good riddance. Go to hell. That is what God says to them. We say the same.

We will not be like them. We will be careful to be faithful to all of what God has said. We will be married, man and wife. We will have children. We will love our wives and respect our husbands. We will obey our parents. We will serve the one living and true God, knowing that in His right hand are pleasures forever. We love Him and serve him with our whole hearts, not turning to the left or the right. He is our hope and our shield. He is the living water for our souls. He is the bread that sustains our lives. He is the resurrection and the life having conquered death, and hell and the devil. He is glorious and mighty, and sovereign, and magnificent, and holy, and he is our Father. We are His children, the sheep of His pasture. He makes us lie down in green pastures. He leads us beside still waters, He restores our souls. We will never forsake Him because He will never forsake us. We will not bend the knee to any king but the Lord Jesus. We will build the kingdom of God. We will embrace all of Christ for all of life. No excuses. No regret. No looking back, lest we also be like those with blind eyes and deaf ears. Take heart and take caution. Half-hearted devotion is no devotion at all. God is building His kingdom and the gates of hell will not prevail.

God is filling the earth with the knowledge of His glory. This is the kingdom of God. This is the rule of King Jesus. Luke is giving us the tipping point as he concludes the book of Acts.

Conclusion:

Corporate Israel rejected Jesus as their King, and as **THE KING**.

Application:

1. **SUBMIT** all of yourself and everything that you are, to the king.
2. Walk in **FAITHFULNESS**
3. Spread the word. PRAY! Pray that God will open the eyes and ears of people.

To him be the glory and honor forevermore.

Closing Prayer:

Our God and our Father, we know You are with us. We know that Jesus is building His church.
We know that His kingdom shall have no end. Help us to trust. Let us be filled with Your Spirit for the work at hand.

And now, as we take the Lord's supper, we indeed, we trust that the Lord Jesus gave His life as a ransom for many and we get to experience Your grace in this meal. Let us commune with You as we take the elements. Be with us and let us experience Your presence now at the table. Thank you for the bread and the wine and for the Lord Jesus. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.