

Saints who crossed the Acts 28 boundary

Question/s

Paul and others appear in the pre-Acts28 dispensation and the post-Acts28 one as well. Are they in the earthly Kingdom as chaste virgins or the Heavenly Kingdom as members of the church which is his body?

The assemblies Paul wrote to after Acts 28 were already established on earlier doctrine, what hope were they looking towards prior to this new information received in the epistles written to them. Did their hope move from an earthly aspect to a heavenly hope, and if so, why only these assemblies and not all Acts period assemblies?

Response

Acts 28 was a huge dispensational boundary and a unique turning point in God's purposes. Prior to Acts 28 it was the earth and the new earth, post Acts 28 it is now purposes for the heavenly places. Prior to Acts 28, Christ was raised to Israel and to sit on David's throne but after Acts 28, He was among the Nations to sit on a throne in the heavenly places.

At Acts 28, Israel was nationally placed aside for a time. The hope for all believers up until Acts 28, was the hope of Israel, Acts 28:20 et al. Gentile believers were blessed with faithful Abraham and enjoyed the hope of the Promised Land and the New Jerusalem which would eventually descend out of heaven, see Gals. 3, 4 and Rev.21:2, 9-10.

Paul had written to numerous assemblies during the Acts period and in all of those letters; Galatians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Corinthians, Romans and Hebrews, the constant hope was that of Israel's Feasts and the great last Trumpet blast which would herald the return of Christ to rule the world from Jerusalem. Those letters also included the doctrine of righteousness reckoned but this is a redemption truth which carries across the Acts 28 boundary.

After Acts 28, the new dispensational truths were conveyed to the faithful in various ways. Paul shared this truth on a personal level, but apostles of the new order also carried the truth through the known world, including those assemblies addressed by Paul prior to Acts 28. While the following passage might suggest the foundation is that laid by Christ and the 12 in the Gospels, it could also be understood to mean the foundation laid by the new order of apostles raised up after Acts 28.

[Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; Eph 2:19-20](#)

Here are the new apostles and prophets featured in Ephesians again;
[.....the mystery of Christ\) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the](#)

Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Eph 3:4b-6

While Paul did not write to the same assemblies after Acts 28 as he had prior to it, the new dispensational truths were shared, so that Paul could write in Colossians 1;

We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth: As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; Col 1:3-7

Paul and Titus certainly crossed that boundary but Paul did not look back to the hope he had previously held, he pressed onwards. He prayed the Ephesians, who had also crossed the Acts 28 boundary, would be given the wise and revealing spirit in the knowledge of Christ so they would know the new hope, the new inheritance and the new power. These last three things had changed for all believers, including the assemblies Paul wrote to prior to Acts 28, but there was no change in Christ's death burial and resurrection and faith in Him for salvation.

Paul wanted all believers to know about the change, to embrace it as he did. He wrote this to the Ephesians;

Therefore I also, hearing of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened,
1. that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and
2. what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and
3. what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing according to the working of His mighty strength which He worked in Christ in raising Him from the dead, and He seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, Eph 1:15-20

Paul had been at Ephesus for 2 years prior to Acts 28 and declared to them all the counsel of God and held back nothing, Acts 19, 20:20, 27, but now he prayed they would know the things that had changed after Acts 28.

The New hope is the new inheritance in the heavenly places; the riches of glory. We there are the habitation of God. The new power is the same power wrought in Christ when He was raised and seated at the Father's right.

This new set of conditions, this new dispensation was something God wanted his children to know. If God's wishes; if it is His will that Christians know the changes He has wrought, then we are confident the believers of that time heard it and it is our obligation to find and understand these new things.

I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God; the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. For to them God would (wishes) make known

what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory, Col 1:24-27

Worship must be centered around the dispensation in operation, not the things that have been set aside for a time.

Here are some passages to consider;

My brothers, I do not count myself to have taken possession, but one *thing I do*, forgetting the things behind and reaching forward to the things before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as *are perfect*, be of this mind. And if in anything you are otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this to you. Php 3:13-15

for us to be to *the* praise of His glory, who previously had trusted (who had hoped before) in Christ; Eph 1:12

Paul did not look back to his previous hope and inheritance and we must leave those things behind as well. We don't leave behind the continuing things of righteousness by faith through grace, but the dispensational things prior to Acts 28 must be recognized and left. One example would be the relationship between the saved Gentiles and Abraham with the Promised Land as found in Gals. 3-4, this is to be left for the blessings all spiritual in the heavenly places, Eph. 1:3.

Paul rejoiced in his new ministry, desired the faithful know and rejoice in it and didn't look back. This should be our attitude as well.

For this reason I desire that you faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, Eph 3:13-14

who now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf, and I fill up the things lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh, on behalf of His body, which is the church; of which I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you, to fulfill the Word of God; the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. For to them God would make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory, Col 1:24-27

Paul makes it clear that the riches of glory for all nations is found in the new set of conditions that God introduced which is Christ among the nations. Prior to Acts 28 He was raised to Israel but now raised to the heavenly places for the entire world, independent of Israel.

Our mindset must be to test the things differing in Paul, and in faith, leave those who crossed that Acts 28 dispensational boundary with the Lord who knows those who are His.

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