

And it says that they sailed that way because the “winds were contrary.”

v. 5 And when we sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came down to Myra in Lycia.

“And when we sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia”

Now see they are way up there on that north coast heading west. Of course Cilicia is his home territory. Tarsus is in Cilicia so he’s thinking of home.

“and Pamphylia,”—that’s where John Mark flicked it in and went back to Jerusalem so he’s thinking of that when he gets there.

“we came down to Myra in Lycia.”

Okay, how far have we traveled? From Sidon we’ve traveled 500 miles southwest, so we have gone a long way in that little bit of a trip. And they landed at Myra. All those other names are provinces. Myra is a city. And Myra is the city where they change boats. And they’re getting ready here to take another boat.

Why do they wait until they get to Myra? Because Adramyttium is north in the opposite direction up in the

Aegean Sea. And so this fella is evidently going to home port, to Adramyttium, and his boat's going to go this way and they need to go this way in order to get over to Rome now. And so it's time to get another boat.

v. 6 And there the centurion, having found a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy, he put us on board it.

“And there the centurion, having found a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy, he put us on board it.”

Now, obviously we know where Alexandria is and all that because we're excited to read the rest of the story.

Alexandria is straight south, 350 miles from there. They had these huge grain runs that went from Alexandria to Rome. Now when we look at a map, it looks ridiculous but they—because of the contrary winds and the difficulty of sailing—a lot of times would leave Alexandria, Egypt with these gigantic ships that would have 500 tons of grain on them. They're like a floating 747 because there's a bunch of people on board as we're going to see in just a minute. So it's no little ship. It is a freighter.

And it comes north to Myra and they stay there for a period of time. When they can pick up enough passengers, then they head out from there. And this guy was just getting ready to sail to Rome on a grain ship run.

And there are 276 people onboard this ship, to give us an idea

of the magnitude of what's taking place.

And with this huge grain load, they're running against time in order to get this grain there. Because there are certain parts of the year that they just do not go in the water because of the danger of the winds and the winter activity. And we're going to see this in just a minute.

v. 7 And when sailing slowly for a considerable number of days and with difficulty having arrived off Cnidus, since the wind was not permitting us to go farther, we sailed under the sheltered protection of Crete, off Salmone;

“And when sailing slowly for a considerable number of days”

Isn't that interesting? The winds are “contrary.” Now they're “sailing slowly.”

Ever noticed that when we sense a little bit of queasiness inside about when some problem's going to hit and we anticipate it's coming? It's kind of like knowing that it's going to snow or it's going to rain or something. It kind of gets us. We have a feeling inside it's been going so good for too long and we can sense it's coming.

These words just let us know there is something coming that's going to be tough here.

“And [they're] sailing slowly for a considerable number of days

and with difficulty having arrived off Cnidus, since the wind was not permitting us to go farther, we sailed under the sheltered protection of Crete, off Salmone;”

Now when we look at that on the map, that is completely the opposite direction. They sail toward Cnidus which is 140 miles west. That’s okay. That’s on the chart. That’s getting us toward Rome.

But all of a sudden the winds are so bad, they turn straight south. They just make a great big old loop and come back down to the island of Crete. And here they are down on the south side of the island of Crete. And here is Rome back up here, way over on the north side of the island of Crete. They’ve just ducked clear around and come down because the wind wouldn’t allow it.

And so now they’re on the south side of the island of Crete. That is 180 miles south from Cnidus. They went 140 miles west and then they did a big loop and headed straight south. Now we have them down in the middle of the island of Crete.

v. 8 and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

“and with difficulty sailing past it”—that is that corner of Crete—“we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.”

And that's right in the middle of the island of Crete on the south side.

v. 9 Now when a considerable time elapsed and the voyage already being dangerous, and also because the Fast already was past, Paul was admonishing them,

“Now when a considerable time elapsed and the voyage already being dangerous, and also because the Fast already was past, Paul was admonishing them,”

There are some words there that we need to communicate about. First of all, it says a lot of time has elapsed. They'd been trying hard to do this but everything was contrary. Okay?

But it says, “and the voyage already being dangerous.” Does that mean that what they've done so far is dangerous? No, the word “dangerous” means that they're getting ready to sail in the season when nobody sails.

If we want the dates for this, the dates that are marginal for sailing are from September 15th to November the 11th. They can get away with it but watch out. They can run into a storm between September 15th and November the 11th. That is the yellow line. It's a warning to be careful.

Now obviously they left in August from up here in Caesarea. And they've made this big old loop and it's now in the danger

zone. They're somewhere between September and November the 11th here, and it's danger time.

After November 11th until March the 11th they didn't sail at all. So the sea was completely clear of boats because of the storms and the loss that could be encountered at sea. So now we're in the danger zone.

This was the danger time. So it was not only a delay, in verse 9, it'd been a lot of days. But now danger has become a part of the sailing experience.

Then it says the "Fast [is] past." Well that is part of the fast that's involved in the Day of Atonement. And so this is now past and we can begin to date it.

v. 10 saying to them, "Men, I am perceiving that the voyage is destined to be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."

"saying to them, 'Men, I am perceiving that the voyage is destined to be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.'"

Paul says, "Fellas, listen. I've got a premonition that this is going to get bad. And I want to tell you, there's going to be a loss of life and there's going to be a loss and damage to the ship."

But look—verse 11. Julius takes over. He is the authority, right, on the ship? He supersedes the pilot and the owner of the ship, who are both on board.

v. 11 But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the owner of the ship, than by the things which were being spoken by Paul.

“But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the owner of the ship, than by the things which were being spoken by Paul.”

Now what are they doing? They’re saying, “Man we can’t afford to be sitting here with 500 tons of grain inventory through the winter. We have to get to Rome with this or we’re going to be broke. So we want to get on through.”

Paul issues a warning. He says this is the way it’s going to be, but Julius listens to the owner and the pilot who says, “Oh we’ve sailed this a jillion times. No big deal. So it’s October the first, we’ll make it through to Rome! Everything will be fine. We’ve got till November the 11th. It’s just going to be a short little trip up there now. Everything will be okay!”

Now you’ll notice the folks on board ship were worried about where they were going to be spending winter. Notice that?

There just wasn’t too much action in that little town so they wanted to get on down the coast to a bigger city.

The only problem is, the name of that city was Phoenix. And by the time you get to Phoenix there can be a lot of things that happen. And they're going to see that here in the passage.

v. 12 And the harbor being unfit as a place in which to spend the winter, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they might be able to reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, looking northeast and southeast, and spend the winter there.

“And the harbor being unfit as a place in which to spend the winter, the majority reached the decision to put out to sea”—at least Julius gives everybody on ship a chance to vote—“from there, if somehow they might be able to reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, looking northeast and southeast, and spend the winter there.”

Okay, that means that they have to go clear up around the corner 75 miles from Lasea to get up there. In order to be able to see those geographical locations and be able to see southeast and also be able to see northeast at the same time, they have to be clear around the upper corner of the island of Crete—the northeastern corner. They have to be there where they can see both of those directions. So that's where Phoenix is located.

So they're thinking they're going to do it. And a vote onboard ship was 273 for going and 1 for not going, and 2 abstentions.

Now Luke has been around Paul long enough, and Aristarchus, that he just flat doesn't get involved in controversy or he is going to get ticked. And so they have learned just not to vote. So it was 273 to 1 with 2 abstentions and that's the reason they made the decision—let's go to Phoenix.

Now, let's stop for a minute. How many times in the Bible have the majority been wrong? Ever studied that? We always think we want to go with the crowd. We want to go with the flow. We want to be involved with everybody.

How many times is the majority wrong?

What about the TEN SPIES? Ten were wrong! Two of them are right. Joshua and Caleb were the only two. (see Numbers 13)

What about the BROAD WAY and the NARROW WAY? The broad way leads to destruction and many go in there. The narrow way leads to life and few there are who find it. (see Matthew 17:13, 14)

What about DANIEL? Daniel purposed in his heart not to defile himself with the king's meat. Everybody else said go for it. Daniel says he has convictions about it. He ends up standing all alone. Daniel happens to be right. (see Daniel 1:8)

What about ELIJAH? Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal say, "We worship Baal." Elijah all alone, worships the Lord as

God. He's the one that brings fire out of heaven for the living God. (see 2 Kings 1:10)

Lots of times when we cast our lot with a majority we're wrong. And here in this situation Paul's the one who's right and he's going to get a chance to prove it.

v. 13 And a south wind having gently blown, thinking that they had gained their purpose, having hoisted their anchor, they were sailing along Crete close in shore.

“And a south wind having gently blown, thinking that they had gained their purpose, having hoisted their anchor, they were sailing along Crete close in shore.”

We always find that when we leave the will of God, it's always really gentle and really favorable initially. And then WOW, watch out. It'll break loose.

And here they think, “Boy Paul, you sure are a stick in the mud. Come on. You're the only one in the bunch that voted against this. This is nice! We've got a good, nice favorable wind. Everything's fine! We're going to make Phoenix! It's a great town! You're going to love it Paul!”

And Paul's just thinking, “Y'all just wait and see. You'll see.”

v. 14 But before very long there rushed down from it a hurricane wind called Euraquilo;

“But before very long there rushed down from it”—a blue norther, here it comes—“a hurricane wind called Euraquilo;”

They even named their hurricanes then too. That is a sailor’s term for an awful strong wind. We call ours Hazel and Betty and Irene and all that when a hurricane’s going to come up and hit the shore.

This wind came blowing down there. It’s just like the blue norther coming out of Canada and somebody leaves the gate open down in Amarillo and the temperature drops down clear out of sight. That is exactly what happened. It just happened so quickly!

The wind warnings were up on the sea but they didn’t have their ship-to-shore radio working or something, because they were not prepared for this. It hit them while they were still along the coast there.

v. 15 and when the ship was caught in it and not able to face the wind, having given up to it, we were being borne along.

“and when the ship was caught in it and not able to face the wind,”—and boy that’s when it’s bad—“having given up to it, we were being borne along.”

Where were they “being borne along?” They were being borne south and east, down to the coast of Africa and Libya. That is

totally the opposite direction from Rome in the north and the west. So we have an idea in mind that they're being blown terribly off course now because the wind has come down out of the north and is blowing them south.

v. 16 And running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were with difficulty able to get possession of the little boat.

“And running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were with difficulty able to get possession of the little boat.”

They had the dingy trailing out behind and they weren't even expecting this. And the wind hit them so fast and so hard, they didn't even get the dinghy winched in before they had to give up to the wind.

Well they couldn't even get the dinghy attended before they were caught in the storm. Finally they get it onboard—verse 17.

v. 17 Which after they hoisted it up, they were using supports undergirding the ship; fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, having taken in some of the sails, we were in this manner being borne along.

“Which after they hoisted it up, they were using supports undergirding the ship;”—now they're strapping the ship down

to try to keep it together—“fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, having taken in some of the sails, we were in this manner being borne along.”

They come down under the island of Clauda and they’re heading down to the shallows of Syrtis. That is the shallow sandbars off the coast of Africa. And its demise, when they hit a sandbar in a big wind storm like this, the ship would break up and they’d all drown. So they’re scared about that and afraid they’re going to do that now.

And they’re still being “borne along.” Now look at verse 18.

That all happened on the first day. They’re going to log it in the ship’s log. We’re going to just see. There are 14 days involved in this whole thing. And here comes day 2 now in verse 18.

v. 18 The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they were doing a throwing out.

“The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they were doing a throwing out.”

On day 2 they had to start lightening the ship. There had to be some seasick folks on there because they didn’t have Dramamine in those days and they were just really, really looking for the rail and hanging on for dear life on day number 2.

Now look at day 3—verse 19.

v. 19 And on the third day they threw out with their own hands the furnishings of the ship.

“And on the third day they threw out with their own hands the furnishings of the ship.”

Well, here goes the light fixtures, the tables, the chairs, anything that they can do without, save their lives to lighten the ship, they throw it overboard.

v. 20 Now when neither sun nor stars were shining for many days, and no small storm was pressing down upon us, all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

“Now when neither sun nor stars were shining for many days,”

Now that doesn't look too vital but the only way they had to navigate was by the sun and the stars in those days. They didn't have compasses and radar equipment and all of that to help them steer the ship. So when the sun and the stars go, they are lost at sea. There's no way for them to find it.

“Now when neither sun nor stars were shining for many days, and no small storm was pressing down upon us, all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.”

That “many days” is 11 days. Every day they think the wind’s going to stop, they think the sun’s going to shine, that they’re going to see the stars again and figure out where they are. But for 11 long days finally, everybody on ship has given up hope thinking that they’re certainly going to drown.

Ever noticed in life that when we finally give up all hope, God works? Just talk to the disciples about that. They were caught in a little storm on the Sea of Galilee, remember, in Mark chapter 4. And they’re experienced fishermen. They’d been out in storms a lot of times but this was a bad one.

Jesus is asleep in the front of the boat. And it was probably Peter who came up there and said, “Don’t you care that we’re perishing while you lie there asleep?” That’s all Jesus was waiting for. That they had finally given up. So He just stands up and says, “Peace be still.” And the place becomes very calm. (see Mark 4:37-41)

And then He says:

Mark 4:39-41

“Hush, be still.” And the wind died down and it became perfectly calm. And He said to them, “Why are you so timid? How is it that you have no faith?” And they became very much afraid and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?”

A lot of people during this time are writing notes and stuffing

them in bottles. Their last will and testament. They are convinced that they're going to drown, that there's no hope for them—it's all over.

v. 21 And when they had been long without food, then Paul having taken his stand in their midst said, “Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete, and incurred this damage and loss.

“And when they had been long without food, then Paul having taken his stand in their midst said,”—this is great.

“You should have listened to me folks.” That's the way you look at that initially but that's not really true, okay.

“Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete, and incurred this damage and loss.”

Now that sounds kind of like, “If y'all had just listened to me everything would have been alright.” That's always hindsight's 20/20. We hate for a person to come along and say, “Well if you'd just listened to me you wouldn't be in this big mess!” We just hate that when somebody comes along. It doesn't help a bit. It just makes us so mad we want to kick them in the shin.

But Paul's not saying that. Paul is getting ready to give a message from the Lord to them. And he wants to establish his credibility. And so that's what he's doing with this.

Basically he's saying, "Y'all didn't have much respect for me over there at the Fair Haven Harbor when y'all voted against me. But remember what I said? If y'all had stayed there, everything would have been fine. Now please listen to what I have to say because I've got a message from the Lord for you and it's going to help you."

v. 22 And yet now I am urging you to be keeping up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

"And yet now I am urging you to be keeping up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship."

He says, "Y'all ought to be excited. Nobody's going to die. There's not going to be one loss of life out of the 276 passengers. Everybody's going to be fine. The only thing we're going to lose is the ship."

v. 23 For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and to whom I am rendering sacred service stood before me,

"For this very night"—now here's the REASON.

"For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and to whom I am rendering sacred service stood before me,"

v. 24 saying: ‘Stop fearing, Paul; it is necessary for you to stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.’

“saying: “Stop fearing, Paul; it is necessary for you to stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.””

Isn't that great? God is in the storm. He was in the Sanhedrin. And He talked to Paul in that prison cell when he needed Him. We'll always find that when we're in a time of trouble, if we're sensitive to God, He'll be there to speak to us and minister to us through His Word.

And that's some of the greatest joy that a Christian can ever have. When the wheels have come off and things are falling apart, we become sensitive and we look heavenward and God starts to speak in incredible ways. The Word just comes alive and we realize, hey this is God in the storm!

And God's saying, “I'm undaunted in My purpose. It is just that in My purpose, I want to put you through a storm right now.” And so God's going to do that and it has not changed His promise either. His purpose and promise are still intact, even though they're going to lose the ship in the midst of this storm.

And so he says, “Look, this is what God said to me.”

“God said it, I believed it and that settled it!”

v. 25 Therefore, be keeping up your courage, men, for I am believing God, that it shall be exactly as I have been told.

“Therefore, be keeping up your courage, men, for I am believing God, that it shall be exactly as I have been told.”

Now do we have that much faith? Do we believe that with regard to our future inheritance, that it's going to be exactly as we've been told? That when we breathe our last breath we are going to go into the presence of the Lord and receive the inheritance which He has for us. Do we believe that?

Paul's got that faith. He says, “God said this and I'm going to tell you, God's never been wrong! God always keeps His promises. And you know, y'all just keep up your courage now. I believe God. It is going to turn out exactly as I have been told.”

v. 26 But we must run aground on a certain island.”

“But we must run aground on a certain island.”

Okay, that's the message. We're going to land “on a certain island” before this is over.

v. 27 Now when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about

midnight the sailors were surmising that some land was drawing near to them.

“Now when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors were surmising that some land was drawing near to them.”

Where are they? They’re 500 miles south of Rome and they’re right close to the island of Malta, even though they don’t know it. It’s called the island of Melita, as we’re going to see in our next study. But it’s the contemporary island of Malta.

And here for two weeks they’ve been tossed around in the sea. And under favorable conditions they could have made this whole trip in 10 days. But now here they are way, way south off course.

v. 28 And when they took soundings, they found it to be twenty fathoms; and a little farther on having again taken a sounding they found it to be fifteen fathoms.

“And when they took soundings,”— that’s when they sounded off the bottom to determine how deep it is so they can know whether it’s safe to sail there.

“And when they took soundings, they found it to be twenty fathoms;”

Now how deep is that? That’s 6 feet a fathom so we have 120

feet there. So that's okay! The ship can still sail here in 20 fathoms.

“and a little farther on having again taken a sounding they found it to be fifteen fathoms.”—90 feet.

Now that's a concern. This is about midnight when they had taken these soundings. And so they don't have the same faith that Paul does and they're getting shook. They're not willing to believe him.

v. 29 And fearing that we might run aground somewhere against rocky places, having thrown four anchors from the stern, they were praying for it to become day.

“And fearing that we might run aground somewhere against rocky places, having thrown four anchors from the stern, they were praying for it to become day.”

They're fearing instead of believing God! And they're praying when they don't need to. All they have to do is trust the promise here, that God's going to do it just like He said.

But we think so many times in the midst of it, our anxiety is helping, and our prayers are helping. Anything we can do to bring it about, we just do it.

Psalm 50:15

Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee; and thou shalt glorify me.

Let's sing that old hymn:

No water can swallow the ship where lies
The Master of ocean and earth and skies.
(source unknown)

Everything's going to turn out just the way it's supposed to.

Ever been in the water, in the ocean, when the engine dies?
And to feel helpless?

And that's what they're thinking out here. It's dark, they can't see. They know they're getting close to shore because it's dropped from 120 to 90 feet and so immediately they throw four anchors out to stern. That's to keep them from getting to shore prematurely. And that's going to be the means of holding them.

Now want some verses from Psalms on that?

Psalm 107:28-31

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
And He delivered them from their distress.
He made the storm to be still,
And the waves of the sea were hushed.
Then they were glad because they had been quiet;

And He brought them to their desired haven.
Let them thank the Lord for His steadfast love,
For His wonderful works to the sons of men!

What a beautiful illustration of the passage.

v. 30 Now as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and having let down the ship's boat into the sea, under pretense of being about to be laying anchors from the bow,

“Now as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and having let down the ship's boat into the sea, under pretense of being about to be laying anchors from the bow,”

Now does that give us a lot of confidence when the sailors want to jump ship? They're smart enough to know that the thing's going down and so they want to get off and save their skin in this thing. And so they're ready to put the dinghy down under the pretense that they're going out to set some anchors in the front of the boat. And really they're just flat trying to get away from the ship and save themselves in this thing.

And under the presence of this, they're getting ready to leave the ship.

v. 31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, “Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves are not able to be saved.”

“But Paul said to [Julius] the centurion and to the soldiers, ‘Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves are not able to be saved.’”

He turns to the Army and he says, “Look, y’all are going down without the Navy. You have to have him onboard the ship! You guys don’t know anything about sailing. If you’re going to be saved, these fellas have to stay onboard the ship. The Army can’t do it without the Navy in this situation so make them stay.”

Look at verse 32. We can just see this.

v. 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship’s boat, and let it fall away.

“Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship’s boat, and let it fall away.”

They just walked back to the center and said, “Fellas, we are just going to get rid of a dinghy.” Slash—Slash. And off drops the dinghy goes into the water.

And basically they’re saying this, “Look, we’re in this together and if the ship goes down, the Army and the Navy are going down together in it.”

Now that’s probably about four in the morning when they do this. Obviously it was midnight when they started these first

soundings and it's probably about 4:00 now as this next scene unfolds. And we have them all together, still in the ship, and everything's under control.

v. 33 Now, until that time at which it should become day, Paul was encouraging them all to take food, saying: "Today is the fourteenth day in which you are constantly watching, going without eating, having taken nothing."

"Now, until that time at which it should become day, Paul was encouraging them all to take food, saying: 'Today is the fourteenth day in which you are constantly watching, going without eating, having taken nothing.'"

And probably some of them didn't feel like eating anything these last two weeks. And so he says, "You know, you're really going to get in bad shape if you don't eat something."

So he's trying to get them to eat. They're seasick, they're scared and they haven't eaten. They've just been watching and watching.

v. 34 Therefore I am encouraging you to take food, for this is for your preservation; for not a hair from the head of any of you shall perish."

"Therefore I am encouraging you to take food, for this is for your preservation; for not a hair from the head of any of you shall perish."

Does He know all the hairs on our head? Luke 21:18 and Matthew 10:30—they are all numbered.

And he says, Don't worry. Nothing's going to happen to you."

v. 35 And having said these things and having taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and having broken it, he began to be eating.

"And having said these things and having taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and having broken it, he began to be eating."

With all the rest of them, he's saying, "You really need to eat." And so he just gives thanks. It would have been great to have heard his prayer.

And after he gives thanks, he starts to eat before them. And all of a sudden everybody else says, "Hey, that's not too bad an idea."

v. 36 And all of them became cheerful, and they themselves took food.

"And all of them became cheerful, and they themselves took bread."

What happened? There was probably a gigantic moving of the Holy Spirit onboard the ship. And they're saying, "Hey, there

is more to this guy than we give him credit for. He told us not to leave the harbor. He told us that everything was going to be fine—none of us are going to lose our lives. But now he tells us to eat the bread. This is for your preservation. Everything's going to be alright!”

And there's just a great movement of the Spirit onboard the ship. If we were on this ship we would be singing, “Let the Lower Lights be Burning” or “Rescue the Perishing” or something. That's just the way we are when we're in a crisis like that.

But they're singing the Doxology. Just praising the Lord—everything's going to be fine. They're having a meal together on the ship.

v. 37 And all of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six souls.

“And all of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six souls.”

That's a lot of people.

v. 38 And having eaten food to their entire satisfaction, they were making light the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

“And having eaten food to their entire satisfaction,”

That's the way the Lord always does it, isn't it?

In John 6, He took five loaves and a couple of fish. He fed 5,000 until they were satisfied. They got 12 baskets full after they were through.

“having eaten food to their entire satisfaction, they were making light the ship by”—doing what?—“throwing out the wheat into the sea.”

The ship owner and the captain are just saying, “Oh no. There goes our profits—to the bottom of the sea.”

This is the last thing to go. They can throw out the tables and the chairs, but that gold and grain which is their salary on the other end of the line, now has to go to lighten the ship. And so overboard goes several tons of grain as they try to lighten the ship for what's going to happen.

v. 39 Now when day came, they were not recognizing the land; but they were observing a certain bay having a beach, and they were deliberating with one another whether they would be able to drive the ship into it.

“Now when day came, they were not recognizing the land; but they were observing a certain bay having a beach, and they were deliberating with one another whether they would be able to drive the ship into it.”

What are they doing for the first time in the whole study? They are cooperating with God's plan. Paul said, "The ship's going to be run aground. We're going to lose it but nobody's going to lose their lives."

When we really want neat things to happen in our life, cooperate with God's plan! It's just special when we start doing that! And we grow too soon old and too late smart in some of this, in really learning just to accept it the way it is and believe that God is in this and cooperate with His plan. So all of them are now finally doing it. They're scoping it out.

And as sailors they're saying: "Hey, there's a beach. Let's do everything we can to control the ship and navigate it into that beach and drive it aground at that point."

v. 40 And having cast off the anchors, they were leaving them in the sea. While at the same time, having loosened the ropes of the rudders and having hoisted the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the beach.

"And having cast off the anchors,"

In other words, those four anchors on the stern? They cut those loose now, so they're now back at the mercy of the sea.

"they were leaving them in the sea. While at the same time, having loosened the ropes of the rudders"—underneath—"and having hoisted the foresail"—up in the front, to give us this

wind to drive us into the beach—“they were heading for the beach.”

It looks great! Exciting!

Actually we’ll notice the end of it almost looks like the front of it. At the first beginning at Lasea, it was nice and favorable for just a little bit. We’re getting some favorable things here as we get ready to wrap it up.

v. 41 But when they struck a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the bow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the force of the waves.

“But”—what happens?—“when they struck a place where two seas met,”—they hit a riptide—“they ran the vessel aground; and the bow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the force of the waves.”

We can just see it. It just went, “THUNK!” and hit on the front end and the waves are just busting up the stern when it hits.

What do we think is being said onboard?

“Oh no!” We can just hear cries of resignation all over the place. “Hopeless! We’re going down!”

Isn’t it amazing how one little trial causes us to forget everything that God promised us? And they’re not any

different! They're thinking the same thing. They're thinking, "Oh no! We've been led astray in this. We're not going to make it!"

They're all pessimistic. Talk about writing notes and stuffing them in bottles, they're doing it quick because they know that in the midst of this storm it's going to be bad.

v. 42 Now the counsel of the soldiers was to kill the prisoners, lest anyone having swam out should escape;

"Now the counsel of the soldiers"—when this breaks up like this—"was to kill the prisoners, lest anyone having swam out should escape;"

Fine chance for any prisoner to be able to swim out and escape, but that's what they wanted to do.

v. 43 but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and ordered those who were able to swim, having thrown themselves overboard, to get first to the land,

"but"—Julius—"the centurion, wanting"—WHAT?—"to bring Paul safely through,"—that is, God's program.

That little word "safely through," that is a beautiful little phrase. It occurs THREE TIMES here—in this study and in

the beginning of our next study.

“but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and ordered those who were able to swim, having thrown themselves overboard, to get first to the land,”

The thing that is so great about this is they had Red Cross water safety instructions in those days! Julius was smart with regard to water. Are we that smart?

And I’m sure that Paul and Aristarchus and Luke had taken their W.S.I. in Jerusalem at some time, so they were among the swimmers and went ashore first. But they were all there ready to rescue anybody else that came. And he is really smart here in the way he handles this whole rescue operation.

v. 44 and the rest should follow, some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And thus it happened that they all were brought safely through to the land.

“and the rest should follow, some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And thus it happened”—WHAT?

According to the promise, what?

“that they all were brought safely through to land.”

Isaiah 43:2

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

Even in the storm, God is there and He's gracious to protect and to provide and they're "brought safely" to shore.

There was an experience of Corrie ten Boom when she was stricken with her first stroke before she died:

Pastor Mylander took out his Bible and read from Matthew 28 [to Tante Corrie] where Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." He reminded Corrie that this promise was for those who gave themselves to fulfill the Great Commission, as she had done so faithfully. Her face brightened as she began to speak with confidence, "Always...always...always." Mylander, remembering that tender moment said, "The joy of the Lord returned. Only later did I learn that this passage was one of Tante Corrie's favorites."

Pam's role was suddenly switched by circumstances from that of an assistant to that of a nurse. She remembered that Corrie had often said, "Pam, it is not so much what happens but how we take it that is important. This is part of the training for the end of the battle.

(source unknown)

And for the apostle Paul, he's not exempt from storms. He's not exempt from heartache and unpredictable circumstances that come. God uses it for His glory here and witnesses to these 275 fellow passengers, to God's faithfulness in what has taken place.

Now we have several lessons out of it. Let's cover them as we try to wrap up our study.

Lesson #1: The Lord is fulfilling His purpose in taking Paul to Rome.

Lesson #2: Paul is cared for by his friends.

Make lots of friends. When he gets to Sidon he's cared for by his friends.

Lesson #3: Many times the majority have been wrong in the Bible.

Lesson #4: Things must become hopeless before God really does a good work.

Remember in John 5, the only man who was laying by the pool had been there for 38 years—nobody to put him in. He's the only one among all those who were sick that Jesus says, "Pick up your bed and walk."

Hopeless—God works.

Lesson #5: The Lord has a message for Paul in the midst of the storm.

And he does for us too, if we'll just be still and know that He's God and allow Him to speak. The Lord has a message for Paul in the midst of the storm.

Lesson #6: The Lord's words of encouragement and affirmation are always right on schedule.

The Lord's words of encouragement and affirmation are always right on schedule.

Remember after he sat for a day in the cell, the Lord came and spoke to him in the Sanhedrin. And here the same thing happens on the ship.

Lesson #6: Paul is of good courage in the midst of the storm because he is believing God.

He knows God's in it so he's courageous and up.

Lesson #7: He who believes God will never be disappointed.

Lesson #8: God has promised to bring us safely through to glory. We have been sealed by the Spirit of God until the day of redemption.

Let's talk about a very troublesome phrase in one of Paul's letters to Timothy. It fits with study, and with this we will

close.

1 Timothy 1:18-20

This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymanaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered over to Satan, so they may be taught not to blaspheme.

How can we make a shipwreck of our faith?

Paul, sitting there in that Roman prison writing his last letter to his young understudy, takes this experience and he writes of a shipwreck of faith.

How do we do that? We make a shipwreck of our faith by the **THREE D's**:

1. **DOCTRINE**—We can be run aground by doctrine, tossed to-and-fro by every wind of doctrine. Sink our roots deep in the Word of God and be “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, bringing forth fruit in its season” as we meditate day and night in the Word. (ref. Psalm 1:3)

Please in these days when the very elect can be deceived, don't be cast to-and-fro by high sounding nonsense that comes and sounds under the guise of wisdom as though it's truth. Focus

upon the Word of God.

2. **DESIRES**—that run rampant. We are told in 1 John 2:15 to “not love the world, neither the things that are in the world.” We have the world, the flesh and the devil, all desiring to put our ship on the rocks. Watch it! Desires can get out of hand.

3. **Personal DISCIPLINE**—1 Corinthians 9:27: “I treat my body roughly and I make it serve me, lest when I preach to others, I myself should be ordered to stand aside.”

We’ve never met an undisciplined, godly person. And we can lose the opportunity for our ship to sail on the high seas by a lack of personal discipline to spend time with God, to study His Word and to become what He wants us to become.

Paul tells young Timothy, “Don’t be like Hymanaeus and Alexander who made a shipwreck of their faith.”

Watch our teaching. Watch our personal desires. Watch that personal discipline, lest we too end up on the rocks.

But perhaps you’re a Christian and know that your ship’s close to the rocks. It’s kind of a rudderless thing, it’s being tossed to-and-fro by every wind. There’s really not an awful lot of direction in life. May God speak to each of you about charting that course in the Word of God and setting sail for His glory, watching Him pilot your ship into that desired and blessed harbor.

Father, we thank You for Your Word. We pray that this experience of the apostle in the midst of the storm would encourage us to hear Your voice over the storm saying, “Peace be still.” Knowing that can be our experience, we pray that You’ll enable us to keep our focus upon You. And not like Peter getting his eyes off of You and on the waves, begin to sink, but to focus on You and to experience the joy and victory of having You lead and direct. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Copyright © 2024 by Bible Teaching Resources by Don Anderson Ministries. The author's teacher notes incorporate quoted, paraphrased and summarized material from a variety of sources, all of which have been appropriately credited to the best of our ability. Quotations particularly reside within the realm of fair use. It is the nature of teacher notes to contain references that may prove difficult to accurately attribute. Any use of material without proper citation is unintentional. Teacher notes have been compiled by Genevieve Martin.

A Practical Study of ACTS:

Take It To Them!

“Putting the GO Back in the Gospel”

STUDY NUMBER TWENTY-THREE – ACTS 27:1-44

NOTES

v. 1 Now when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they were delivering Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan cohort.

v. 2 And having gone on board a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to be sailing to places along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea, there being with us Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica.

v. 3 And on the next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius, having treated Paul, kindly allowed him to go to his friends to receive care.

v. 4 And from there having put out to sea, we sailed under the sheltered protection of Cyprus because the winds were contrary.

v. 5 And when we sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came down to Myra in Lycia.

v. 6 And there the centurion, having found a ship of Alexandria sailing to Italy, he put us on board it.

v. 7 And when sailing slowly for a considerable number of days and with difficulty having arrived off Cnidus, since the wind was not permitting us to go farther, we sailed under the sheltered protection of Crete, off Salmone;

v. 8 and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.

v. 9 Now when a considerable time elapsed and the voyage already being dangerous, and also because the Fast already was past, Paul was admonishing them,

NOTES

v. 10 saying to them, “Men, I am perceiving that the voyage is destined to be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives.”

v. 11 But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the owner of the ship, than by the things which were being spoken by Paul.

v. 12 And the harbor being unfit as a place in which to spend the winter, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they might be able to reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, looking northeast and southeast, and spend the winter there.

v. 13 And a south wind having gently blown, thinking that they had gained their purpose, having hoisted their anchor, they were sailing along Crete close in shore.

v. 14 But before very long there rushed down from it a hurricane wind called Euraquilo;

v. 15 and when the ship was caught in it and not able to face the wind, having given up to it, we were being borne along.

v. 16 And running under the shelter of a small island called Claudia, we were with difficulty able to get possession of the little boat.

v. 17 Which after they hoisted it up, they were using supports undergirding the ship; fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, having taken in some of the sails, we were in this manner being borne along.

v. 18 The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they were doing a throwing out.

v. 19 And on the third day they threw out with their own hands the furnishings of the ship.

v. 20 Now when neither sun nor stars were shining for many days, and no small storm was pressing down upon us, all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

v. 21 And when they had been long without food, then Paul having taken his stand in their midst said, “Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete, and incurred this damage and loss.

v. 22 And yet now I am urging you to be keeping up your courage, for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

v. 23 For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and to whom I am rendering sacred service stood before me,

NOTES

v. 24 saying: ‘Stop fearing, Paul; it is necessary for you to stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.’

v. 25 Therefore, be keeping up your courage, men, for I am believing God, that it shall be exactly as I have been told.

v. 26 But we must run aground on a certain island.”

v. 27 Now when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors were surmising that some land was drawing near to them.

v. 28 And when they took soundings, they found it to be twenty fathoms; and a little farther on having again taken a sounding they found it to be fifteen fathoms.

v. 29 And fearing that we might run aground somewhere against rocky places, having thrown four anchors from the stern, they were praying for it to become day.

v. 30 Now as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and having let down the ship’s boat into the sea, under pretense of being about to be laying anchors from the bow,

v. 31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, “Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves are not able to be saved.”

v. 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship’s boat, and let it fall away.

v. 33 Now, until that time at which it should become day, Paul was encouraging them all to take food, saying: “Today is the fourteenth day in which you are constantly watching, going without eating, having taken nothing.

v. 34 Therefore I am encouraging you to take food, for this is for your preservation; for not a hair from the head of any of you shall perish.”

v. 35 And having said these things and having taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and having broken it, he began to be eating.

v. 36 And all of them became cheerful, and they themselves took food.

v. 37 And all of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six souls.

v. 38 And having eaten food to their entire satisfaction, they were making light the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

NOTES

v. 39 Now when day came, they were not recognizing the land; but they were observing a certain bay having a beach, and they were deliberating with one another whether they would be able to drive the ship into it.

v. 40 And having cast off the anchors, they were leaving them in the sea. While at the same time, having loosened the ropes of the rudders and having hoisted the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the beach.

v. 41 But when they struck a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the bow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the force of the waves.

v. 42 Now the counsel of the soldiers was to kill the prisoners, lest anyone having swam out should escape;

v. 43 but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and ordered those who were able to swim, having thrown themselves overboard, to get first to the land,

v. 44 and the rest should follow, some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And thus it happened that they all were brought safely through to the land.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Acts 27:1-44 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. When they are sailing toward Rome, how does Paul admonish them in verse 10?

3. How do the centurion and the pilot of the ship respond to Paul's warning, according to verse 11?

4. What happened to them on their voyage, according to verse 14?

5. Describe what was happening in verses 17-20.

6. What is Paul's advice in verses 22-25?

7. What is Paul's warning in verse 31?

8. Describe what happened to all the passengers of the boat, according to verse 44.

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The Lord is fulfilling His purpose in taking Paul to Rome.

LESSON #2: Paul is cared for by his friends.

LESSON #3: Many times the majority have been wrong in the Bible.

LESSON #4: The Lord has a message for Paul in the midst of the storm.

LESSON #5: The Lord's words of encouragement and affirmation are always right on schedule.

LESSON #6: Paul is of good courage in the midst of the storm because he is believing God.

LESSON #7: He who believes God will never be disappointed.

LESSON #8: God has promised to bring us safely through to glory. We have been sealed by the Spirit of God until the day of redemption.