

The Tempestuous Travels of a Believer

Acts Chapter 27

7 years earlier he has said to the Ephesians, "I must also go to Rome." (Acts 19:21)

2 years earlier, Acts 23:11 "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

Paul has been in custody for over 2 years. Has had 2 trials (Felix then Festus) and 1 hearing (Agrippa). Paul appeals to Caesar. Paul will sail to Rome. This journey will take over **7 Months**.

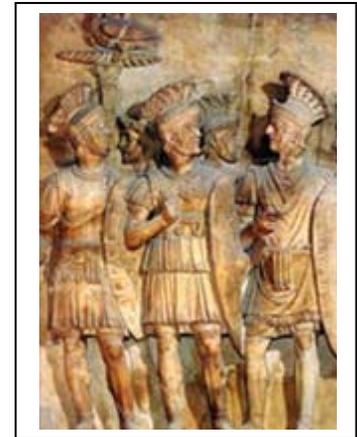
Act 27:1 **1) Sailing from Caesera to Fair Havens** vs 1-12

When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, they proceeded to deliver Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan cohort named Julius.

Act 27:2 And embarking in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to sail to the regions along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica.

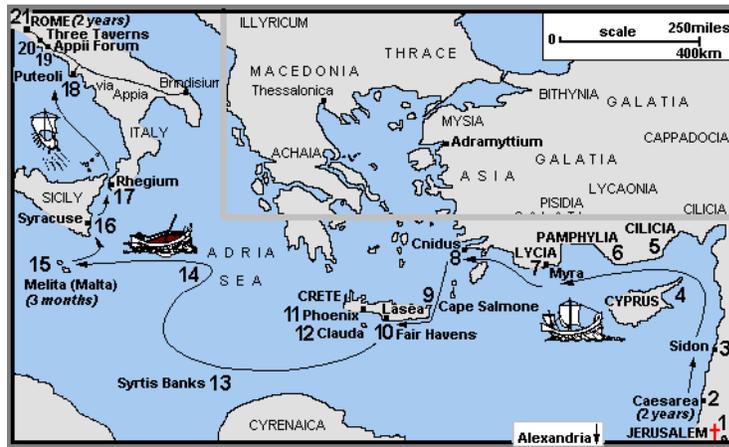
- This was a Adramyttian ship. It will not be going to Rome. These who are headed to Rome will have to catch a connecting voyage somewhere along the way.
- Who is on this ship? (vs 37 says 237 persons were on the second ship)
 - Paul
 - Luke - notice is pronoun "that WE would sail".
 - Aristarchus - a friend of Paul's from Thessalonica.
 - Other prisoners - Not all were like Paul (A man found not guilty who appealed to Caesar) But others who were found guilty headed to Rome to be put to death. (to the circus for amusement)
 - The ship's crew
 - Julius - a centurion of the Augustan regiment.
 - Possibly other soldiers or passengers

- Augustan or Praetorian Guard - The Praetorian Guard was the Imperial Guard of Rome. This guard was an elite corps of soldiers, established to guard the Emperor of the Roman Empire.
- "The body was instituted by Augustus and was called by him *praetoriae cohortes*, praetorian cohorts, in imitation of the select troop which attended the person of the praetor or Roman general. Augustus originally stationed only three thousand of them, three cohorts, at Rome, and dispersed the remainder in the adjacent Italian towns. Under Tiberius they were all assembled at Rome in a fortified camp. They were distinguished by double pay and special privileges. Their term of service was originally twelve years, afterward increased to sixteen. On completing his term, each soldier received a little over eight hundred dollars. They all seem to have had the same rank as centurions in the regular legions. They became the most powerful body in the state; the emperors were obliged to court their favor, and each emperor on his accession was expected to bestow on them a liberal donatives.



Act 27:3 The next day we put in at Sidon; and Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him to go to his friends and receive care.

- Julius knowing Paul to be innocent kept him in custody but treated him more favorably than the other prisoners.
- This could also be the great character of a Christian that impressed Julius.
- Julius allows Paul to go visit the brethren in at the Church at Sidon while they were in port.
- Look at the map to follow the journey in this chapter.



- Act 27:4 From there we put out to sea and sailed under the shelter of Cyprus because the winds were contrary.
- Act 27:5 When we had sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia.
- Act 27:6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy, and he put us aboard it.
- Act 27:7 When we had sailed slowly for a good many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, since the wind did not permit us {to go} farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone;
- Sailing to Rome At this time of year was starting to become difficult, but not impossible. The captain of the ship would sail between islands and the main body of land rather than the open sea to find a more favorable wind.
 - The Centurion found the connecting voyage to Rome.
 - Paul is familiar with the wind (Spirit) giving direction. Acts 16:6-7 "They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them;"
- Act 27:8 and with difficulty sailing past it we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.
- Act 27:9 When considerable time had passed and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Paul {began} to admonish them,
- Act 27:10 and said to them, "Men, I perceive that the voyage will certainly be with damage and great loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."
- The ship reached Fair Havens. They spent considerable time there and the Fast of atonement was over. This would place the time approximately October.
 - "The dangerous season for sailing began about September 14 and lasted until November 11; after the latter date all navigation on the open sea came to an end until winter was over." (Bruce)
 - 2 Corinthians 11:25 (Already written) Paul tells us of his experience with sailing. "Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;"
 - Paul recommends staying in Fair Havens even though Fair Havens was not the best place to winter. It was out on the point of the island where winter storms could cause great harm to the ships in port there.
 - We find that we are often faced with two choices where neither is favorable. These are often very difficult decisions that we must in our lives.
- Act 27:11 But the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain of the ship than by what was being said by Paul.
- Act 27:12 Because the harbor was not suitable for wintering, the majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter {there.}
- The pilot and captain felt that going just a little further would provide a better shelter for winter.
 - How to get caught in the storms of life: 1) impatience 2) listening to worldly advise

Act 27:13 **2) Sailing from Fair Havens to Phoenix, NOT!** vs 13-20

When a moderate south wind came up, supposing that they had attained their purpose, they weighed anchor and {began} sailing along Crete, close {inshore.}

- As they were leaving a gentle favorable wind came and they thought this was a great opportunity.
- A south wind is a wind coming from the south. This is great for sailing along the coast of Crete.
- They were only going to travel 40 miles. Less than a day's travel.

Act 27:14 But before very long there rushed down from the land a violent wind, called Euraquilo;

Act 27:15 and when the ship was caught {in it} and could not face the wind, we gave way {to it} and let ourselves be driven along.

- The wind shifted and came from the north driving the ship away from land.
- Euraquilo was a violent (*tempestuous*) wind from the northeast. These are more commonly called a typhoon or a gail.
- It was impossible to tack into this wind and they gave way to it.

Act 27:16 Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were scarcely able to get the {ship's} boat under control.

Act 27:17 After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on {the shallows} of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along.

- As they were driven without sail they tried to get the ship's boat aboard. It seems Luke was involved with the ship's boat in trying to get it under control,.
- As they were being driven to protect the ship from breaking apart from the winds and waves they undergirded the ship with cables. This is called "frapping".
- Another danger awaited them off the coast of Africa (Libya). Sand Bars of Syrtis. This area was known for ship wrecks much like the outer banks of North Carolina.

Act 27:18 The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they began to jettison the cargo;

- Day two they threw over Cargo. Their life is more important than their stuff.

Act 27:19 and on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.

- Day Three they threw over the ship's tackle. Their life is more important than their work.

Act 27:20 Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing {us,} from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

- We will see that this storm will last 2 weeks. No bearings for 2 weeks. (Sometimes we lose our bearings)
- After many days they were giving up. Their life was all that mattered and it was lost.

Act 27:21 **3) Preaching Hope When All is Lost!** vs 21-26

When they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete and incurred this damage and loss.

- It sounds like an "I Told You So" Well it may be but really Paul is getting their attention and turning them from hopelessness to hope.
- Paul is saying I was right before, and I am right about our future.

- In the next verse Paul announces NO ONE WILL PERISH.
- The first part of Salvation - **God's Sovereignty.**

Act 27:22 "{Yet} now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but {only} of the ship.

Act 27:23 "For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me,

Act 27:24 saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'

- Why will no one perish? Because God Said it.
- I need to go to Rome. And you all are coming with me.
- Angel of God appears and speaks to Paul (God - To who Paul Belongs & Who Paul Serves)

- The angel also encouraged Paul to not be afraid. I believe Paul struggled with fear as any man. But the messenger comes to strengthen his courage.

Act 27:25 "Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.

- "I BELIEVE GOD" not I believe *IN* God,
- The storms are not letting up. The ship surely cannot take much more. In the middle of this tempestuous hurricane Paul stands up and declares "I BELIEVE GOD"
- Job 13:15 " *Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him*"
- "I would to God that all Christians were prepared to throw down the gauntlet and to come out straight; for if God be not true let us not pretend to trust him, and if the gospel be a lie let us be honest enough to confess it." (Spurgeon)

Act 27:26 "But we must run aground on a certain island."

- A Certain Island - God has something specific that he wants done. There are specific people that need to hear the Gospel.
- Our Tempestuous Storms are taking us to the certain place where we will find someone who needs to hear the gospel from a person who has been through the storm.

Act 27:27 **4) Getting All to Land Safely** vs 27-44

But when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors {began} to surmise that they were approaching some land.

Act 27:28 They took soundings and found {it to be} twenty fathoms; and a little farther on they took another sounding and found {it to be} fifteen fathoms.

Act 27:29 Fearing that we might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished for daybreak.

- Fourteen nights is a storm without any bearing except one man with a hope. The sailors either hear breakers or they just have a sense they are near land.
- They take soundings and discover they are indeed approaching land.
- They cast four anchors and hope daybreak come soon so they can navigate the rocks.

Act 27:30 But as the sailors were trying to escape from the ship and had let down the {ship's} boat into the sea, on the pretense of intending to lay out anchors from the bow,

Act 27:31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved."

Act 27:32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the {ship's} boat and let it fall away.

- Some of the sailors used the excuse of anchoring the bow to get in the ship's boat to escape on their own.
- The second part of Salvation **Man's Responsibility to God's Sovereignty**. These men must stay together. Paul possibly knew that the prisoners and others needed the sailors experience to get through,

Act 27:33 Until the day was about to dawn, Paul was encouraging them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been constantly watching and going without eating, having taken nothing.

Act 27:34 "Therefore I encourage you to take some food, for this is for your preservation, for not a hair from the head of any of you will perish."

- For 14 days they have been in this storm. Between the constant work to preserve the ship and being sea sick, these people haven't been eating.
- Paul encourages them to eat. Eating is for the living. Eating is to produce energy for the near future.
- Paul encourages them that they will not die.

Act 27:35 Having said this, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and he broke it and began to eat.

Act 27:36 All of them were encouraged and they themselves also took food.

Act 27:37 All of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six persons.

- What an incredible testimony. In the midst of a storm 14 days, when all others are weary and giving up, when others are cursing God, Paul GIVES THANKS to God.

- This shows us that Paul did not change his devotion when his circumstances changed. Circumstances do not dictate Paul's life. God does.

Act 27:38 When they had eaten enough, they {began} to lighten the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

Act 27:39 When day came, they could not recognize the land; but they did observe a bay with a beach, and they resolved to drive the ship onto it if they could.

- They had eaten and day has come.
- They now can see land. They make the decision to run the ship into the land.

Act 27:40 And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea while at the same time they were loosening the ropes of the rudders; and hoisting the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the beach.

Act 27:41 But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern {began} to be broken up by the force {of the waves.}

- It seemed so close. Of course it couldn't be easy. In coming to the land they hit the reef and they ran aground. Being stuck there the ship was now breaking up.

Act 27:42 The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, so that none {of them} would swim away and escape;

Act 27:43 but the centurion, wanting to bring Paul safely through, kept them from their intention,

- The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners because under Roman laws they would suffer fulfill the penalty of the prisoner that escaped. So the plan was to kill them. Then they would not escape.
- The centurion, for Paul's sake prohibited the soldiers from their plan.

and commanded that those who could swim should jump overboard first and get to land,

Act 27:44 and the rest {should follow,} some on planks, and others on various things from the ship. And so it happened that they all were brought safely to land.

- Some swam, some grabbed boards or anything that floated.
- It is sometimes how man comes to God. Storms come and we throw in parts of our lives. We give God a little bit. These sailors threw in the cargo, then after some time they threw in the tackle, then eventually the food. All these were important, but eventually we need to throw our whole life, all of ourselves into God's hands.
- It came to pass that all made it safely to land just as God told Paul through the angel. Verse 24 "*there will be no loss of life among you, but {only} of the ship*"
- The land they came to was Malta and the bay they arrived in is called, today "St. Paul's Bay"



Storms in our lives:

Corrective-Jonah, Directive-Paul,
 Instructive-Disciples, Judgment-Noah,
 Other Storms-we just don't know except that God is with us in our lives.

**Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible[®],
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,
1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation
Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)**