

Acts 27:1-44

“And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto *one* named Julius, a centurion of Augustus’ band. 2 And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; *one* Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. 3 And the next *day* we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave *him* liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. 4 And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. 5 And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. 6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein. 7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone; 8 and, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lysea. 9 Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast [Day of Atonement] was now already past, Paul admonished *them*, 10 and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. 11 Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. 12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, *and there* to winter; *which is* an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west. 13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* purpose, loosing *thence*, they sailed close by Crete. 14 But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. 15 And when the ship was caught, and could not bear us into the wind, we let *her* drive. 16 And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat: 17 which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. 18 And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they

lightened the ship; 19 and the third *day* we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship. 20 And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. 21 But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. 22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. 26 Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. 27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; 28 And sounded, and found *it* twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found *it* fifteen fathoms. 29 Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern [probably "sea anchors"], and wished for the day. 30 And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, 31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. 32 Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. 33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. 34 Wherefore I pray you to take *some* meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. 35 And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken *it*, he began to eat. 36 Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat. 37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls [276 people]. 38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. 39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship. 40 And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed

themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. 41 And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. 42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. 43 But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first *into the sea*, and get to land: 44 and the rest, some on boards, and some on *broken pieces* of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

Audio version:

<https://resources.ccp Philly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=44>

Introduction

"Now as we come to chapter 27, Paul will finally get on his way, Matt if we have the map of that, put that up [see https://www.bible-history.com/maps/images/acts_pauls_third_journey_and_rome.jpg, and the green line marks the border between the Parthian Empire and the Roman Empire, interestingly enough, as Rome was never able to defeat the Parthian Empire in any major battle. This map depicts one very hairy voyage by the apostle Paul in a Roman grain carrying cargo ship]. OK, so you can see now Paul's journey to Rome, there is where Paul will start out, Caesarea, (you guys watching?) they're going to sail about 67 miles to Sidon, then they're going to go up here to Cyprus, as they come around here to Myra to port, a couple hundred miles, then 130 miles over to here. They would have loved to have sailed directly across here and then up to Puteoli which is the port in Italy they're finally going to reach, but because when they get out to sea they end up in a storm, then they come to southern side of Crete where they find some repose from the wind, they have the opportunity to spend the winter there in a port called Fair Havens, that's where I want to be somewhere called Fair Havens, but the captain says **'No, no, we're gonna make it, we have this nice southerly wind, and we're gonna head out,'** Paul says, **'You know, I don't think it's a good idea, I perceive there's**

gonna be trouble.' Of course they don't listen to Paul, we have all kinds of problems in our country today because we don't listen to Paul. And so they head out this way, they get caught in this storm, they take down the sails, they have to put frappings around the ship so it doesn't break apart, and they let the wind drive them, and they're driven in a straight line almost 500 miles over here to Malta, so they're driven back and forth for about 14 days, without seeing any stars, any sun, any moon, the winds certainly drive them at least 36 miles a day, for 14 days, that'll take you about 500 miles and then end up there at Malta. And today, the bay, the inlet they entered in, the beach they landed on is well known, archaeologists, researchers have been pretty precise in finding that, and they will finally get their way to Italy. I'm really sorry, I forgot about all you guys...starting here at Caesarea here 67 miles up to Sidon, the Centurion was running the whole deal here, finds a ship that's going to Adramyttium, which is up here, knowing that when he hits one of these other ports, they can change ships. So as they make their way around, they finally found a grain ship which is coming from Egypt, Egypt provided all the grain for Italy, for Rome, so that's a much larger ship, they get on there. Again, they would want to go, this route, around the north side of Crete, but because the weather's bad they take the southern route, and then here at Fair Haven, where Paul wanted to stay the winter, they decided to press onward. It says a nice southerly wind was blowing, but when they get out here they get caught in Euroclydon, and finally end up driven by the wind, not knowing where they are, over 500 miles to this small island here, and basically where we're going to get them to tonight. So, there, there's our big audio-visual moment. [*Euroclydon: Gregale*, also called **euroclydon**, or **euraquilo**, strong and cold wind that blows from the northeast in the western and central Mediterranean region, mainly in winter. Most pronounced on the island of Malta, the gregale sometimes approaches hurricane force and endangers shipping there; in 1555 it is reported to have caused waves that drowned 600 persons in the city of Valletta. A gregale that lasts four or five days is usually the result of a flow of air from central or southern Europe toward Libya. One that lasts only one or two days is caused by the passage of a low-pressure centre over the southern Mediterranean.]

Paul & Luke Set Out For Rome

Chapter 27 begins to take us into this journey. It says **“And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus’ band.” (verse 1)** “we” now we have Luke back in the scene here the entire time, and it seems that Luke is with Paul now until he dies. Nero has come to power, he hasn’t demonstrated his insanity up to this point, Paul will appear before him, it seems, this is around, right at the end of 59, going into 60AD, Paul will appear before him in 62AD, and Nero will turn from that testimony, and it seems he goes mad after that. Paul is set free, Paul will then be brought back, and I think it’s about 66AD, Nero commits suicide, but right before he does he has Paul martyred, he has Paul killed. So Nero is in Rome at this point in time, as Paul begins this journey. Luke is with him. It says **“when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners,”** which are probably headed to the Arena in Rome, to fight with gladiators and beasts, other prisoners, they delivered them **“unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus’ band.” (verse 1)** of the Augustus’ band, of Nero’s private elite group, most scholars, Ramsey says that those of the Augustus’ band were a particularly elite group of soldiers that did business back and forth from Italy to the rest of the Mediterranean world. So, learn this guy’s name, Julius, because I think we’re going to see him in heaven [the kingdom of heaven], you’ll see as we move on here. So this Centurion named Julius, these prisoners and Paul are entrusted to his keeping as they begin this journey from Caesarea on the coast of Israel up to Italy. **“And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia;”** which is up in southern Turkey **“one Aristarchus,”** now he’s been with Paul, through the prison term, Colossians 4:10, Philemon speaks of Aristarchus, he’s from Thessalonica, **“one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us.” (verse 2)** **“And the next day we touched at Sidon.”** About 67 miles, **“And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.” (verse 3)** “entreated” it’s the only time that word’s used in the New Testament, we get “philanthropy” from it, he was kind to Paul, and gave him liberty, look at that, this man Julius, we don’t know how long he had been around Caesarea, but he respects Paul’s character, he trusts him, **‘he gave Paul liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.’** So there’s a church there, in Sidon, and Paul goes to meet the believers there to refresh

himself, no doubt they provided him with some food, with some necessary things as he went on his journey. And it says **“And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary.” (verse 4)** so they sailed around Cyprus there, they’re under [to the south of] Cyprus, no doubt, again, they wanted to go right from Sidon, north of Cyprus, and north of Crete, the fastest route to Italy. But because the winds were bad they went inside the coast there, it says “under Cyprus” it means under the cover of Cyprus, so inland waters. [i.e. they sailed north of Cyprus, in these inland waters, but later they end up under or to the south of Crete.] **‘We launched, we sailed from there, we went under the cover of Cyprus [on its north side], because the winds were contrary,’** **“And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia.” (verse 5)** which is a port there where you can see where they pulled into port [see https://www.bible-history.com/maps/images/acts_pauls_third_journey_and_rome.jpg].

Julius The Centurion Has Everybody Transferred Onto A Large Egyptian Grain Ship Headed To Rome

“And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy; and he put us therein.” (verse 6) Now, sailing from Myra, you see at the bottom there of Turkey, he finds another ship in that port, coming from Egypt, a grain ship, these grain ships were over 200-foot long, and the displacement on them was over 1,200 tons, these were big ships, if any of you guys know what I’m talking about can you appreciate that, these were large ships, they carried a lot of grain. And Julius gets Paul and the prisoners, the others with them onboard this ship. We’re going to find out in verse 37 there’s 276 people onboard this ship, this is a big ship, that’s a lot of displacement, over 200-foot long, it’s a big ship, it’s sailing to Italy. They were slow, but they were tough, they were big, and it seemed a certain thing then for this Centurion to bring them onboard, to get them there. We’ll find out they leave Caesarea in August, they don’t get to Rome till March, so this is a 7-month journey, if you can imagine, it’s a long journey that they’re taking. And this Centurion got them on this ship from Alexandria, a grain ship sailing to Italy, **“and put us therein.” “And when we had sailed slowly many**

days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, [on the south side of Crete] over against Salmone;” (verse 7) So under Crete this time means they come on the south side of the island over cover of Crete, because the wind was blowing in that direction, and they get to the south side, which broke the weather for them. And it says **“And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.” (verse 8)** that’s a port there on the southern side of Crete.

*Paul Gives Julius A Serious Warning About Sailing After
The Fast*

“Now when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them,” (verse 9) now “the fast,” there was only one “fast” recognized, Luke would be referring to the Fast or the Day of Atonement, so we are now around the 1st of October. From mid-September to mid-November sailing still took place in these Mediterranean waters, but it was considered dangerous. From mid-November to mid-March, basically sailing stopped altogether, because of the winter seas were too dangerous for the ships in those days. So, it was always chancy to sail between mid-September and mid-November, and that’s where they’re falling now. It says sailing was now dangerous, it tells us that. And *The Fast*, it was the time right at the end of September, beginning of October, *Day of Atonement* was now already past, **“Paul admonished them, and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives.” (verse 10)** Now I don’t know whether Paul’s had a word of knowledge or he’s just saying to the guys **‘I got a BAD feeling about this.’** He had already written 1st and 2nd Corinthians, and he tells us there in 2nd Corinthians, he says **‘Of the Jews five times I received forty stripes save one, thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, and a night and a day have I spent in the deep,’** he said **‘Before this, this incident, I’ve been shipwrecked three times, in fact, one of those times I floated in the ocean for a day and a half.’** That is a nightmare idea to me. I know as soon as I got in the water a fin would go by, I would just die of a heart-attack. The ocean to me is

awesome, I'm happy on the land, I'm a shepherd, and I'm happier on the land than I am flying, and I'm happier on the land than I am out on the ocean somewhere, I'm a mountain person. I'm very happy on terra firma. So Paul's saying **'You know what, I've sailed a lot guys, I've been through this, I've been in these waters at this time of the year, I've already been shipwrecked three times, I'm not into doing this again, Fair Havens, listen to the place we're at, Fair Havens, any hidden message there? You want to stay at a place called Fair Havens.'** So I don't know if he's just saying *'I've got a bad feeling about this,'* or *'Look guys, I've got enough experience, I think the Lord is speaking to me, we should stay here.'* **"Nevertheless"** that's a bad word in this circumstance, his name is Julius, **"the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul."** (verse 11) Now the Centurion is saying *'Now do I believe a tentmaker or a sailor, in this circumstance?'* [the two sailors the Centurion was listening to were seeing dollar signs.] That's gonna change as the chapter goes on. Julius becomes a much smarter Centurion as we follow him. **"And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter; which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west."** (verse 12) so they're saying **'If we could get out of Fair Havens, get around to Crete,'** they don't want to be at Fair Havens, not commodious, is what the sailors are saying **'It's a bummer, we'll die of boredom there, there's no taverns, nothing going on there, it's not commodious, we don't want to spend three months,'** which would have been their winter in Fair Havens, **'let's push on and see if we can get to Phenice or other ports on the southern side of Crete, that lieth from the south to the northwest.'** [and in sailor language, it's not a sailortown, with lots of wine, women and song, like Corinth, in Greece or later on, Napoli, Naples, Italy.]

*Watch Out For Those Gentle South Winds, A
Euroclydon Might Be Hiding Behind It*

"And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* purpose, loosing *thence*, they sailed close by

Crete.” (verse 13) and Satan will always make sure he challenges any warning of God with a south wind blowing softly. The problem is when God warns us, it’s always relative to the future, and we learn by experience to take heed to that... *‘the south wind blew softly, challenging God’s warning,’* and then **“supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete.” (verse 13b)** So, they’re sailing around the bottom there, you see where that little dot is there, the wind changes when you get into that cove coming around [https://www.bible-history.com/maps/images/acts_pauls_third_journey_and_rome.jpg], as they’re coming around there it says there’s a south wind, it’s blowing softly, and they’re saying *‘Ah, this is great, the gods are with us, now we might be able to make it to a better harbour,’* ah, they decide to press onward from there. **“But”** that’s not the word any of us want to hear when we’re in the ocean, the south wind was blowing, they obtained their purpose, **“But not long after there arose against it [the ship] a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon.” (verse 14)** Now, depending, I have the pronunciation markers here, some call it Euroclidid, and when you’re out in the ocean you don’t care what it’s called, take my word for it, it’s a typhoon, it’s what happens, it’s this huge storm now, and it’s going to drive them about 500 miles, they have to take the sail down, it’s so fierce. They sail, not listening to Paul’s warning, there’s a nice south wind blowing softly, they think everything’s going to be fine, and as they get out into the ocean, the wind changes, the weather changes, and this storm comes up, and now they’re in October, it was probably cold too, that water blowing and so forth. [My submarine, a WWII Fleet submarine went into the Med for a Med Cruise. We learned that the Med could go from flat calm to 30-foot waves in just 24 hours. The North Atlantic took three days of high wind to generate 30-foot waves. The Med was far more dangerous. We also sailed through the Straits of Messina, where a perpetual fog and stormy condition stays there, described first in Homer’s Illiad, was freaky]

Batten Down The Hatches Boys, Here We Go!

“And when the ship was caught, and could not bear us into the wind, we let her drive.” (verse 15) and the terms here are amazing [not for a sailor, these are nautical terms] **“And running under a**

certain island which is called Claudia,” which is off the coast there, of Crete **“we had much work to come by the boat:” (verse 16)** now “to come by the boat” normally as they sailed with this ship, there would be a dingy, and they would tow it off the stern of the ship, and it would just be towed in normal seas. When storms came up they did everything they could to pull that in to save it so it wouldn’t be destroyed. And as they came by Claudia, there was some break in the wind there, they were able to bring in that dingy and get it up onboard of the ship. So, **“we had much work to come by the boat: which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.” (verse 17)** Now that’s a bad sign when you’re on a cruise. What they did at this point is they take the sail down, because these grain ships tended to have a main mast somewhere near the middle of the deck, and in a storm that would wrack back and forth and sometimes it would loosen up the boards of the ship itself, of the hull. So they take the sail down so that doesn’t take place. And then, these large boats, they’re not warships, they’re not interested in speed, so there would be small cables that would already be in place under the boat [hull], and if they get into a rough sea they pull larger ropes underneath the ship around the hull in several places, and then they put winches on that, and they would tighten them up, and that would keep the whole boat from loosening up in a storm. And it’s just a bad sign, when you’re a landlubber and you’re out there and they start putting the frappings around the boat, that’s not a happy day, *Frap-day*, trust me. I’d rather have a Frappuccino than one of these things. **“and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.” (verse 17b)** there were sandbars and so forth, they strake sail then and they were driven it says. **“And we”** Luke says **“being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened ship.” (verse 18)** they started throwing some things overboard, **“And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.” (verse 19)** three-day storm is bad [especially when I’ve witnessed 30-foot waves generated in the Med in just 24 hours], Luke says **“we,”** including himself, **“cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.”** one of the masts, probably all of the things that they didn’t need, it says Luke, everybody’s pitching in, ***‘we cast out with our own hands some of the tackling of the ship,’*** you can imagine everyone onboard, the ship’s being driven, they can’t put the sail up, they don’t know where they’re at, they can’t get their bearings, they can’t see the

stars, they can't see the moon, and they're throwing stuff overboard at this point in time to try to lighten the ship, they're thinking they're going to hit a sandbar, they're going to hit something, they want less displacement, they want to bring the ship up a bit in the water. **“And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.” (verse 20)** so you lose your bearings, you lose your perspective, and it says, I love the King James, **“and no small tempest lay on us”** it means it was only a big one, they wished it was a small one, **“no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.” (verse 20b)** I would have been hopeless days before this, after all of this time. Now, storms, they're in a storm now because of worldly wisdom, because of self-confidence, because of not heeding. We get ourselves into storms by not heeding the Lord's warning when he grants conviction to us about something, when we move ahead with self-assurance and natural wisdom and things, thinking we know how to handle something, that's how we get ourselves into storms. So, no doubt there are some things we have to learn here. Now I want to learn those things relative to the storms of my life, I don't want to learn them out on the ocean, I don't want this chapter to be here for me to take courage when I'm out in the middle of the ocean and everybody thinks the ship is gonna sink. [You're not a submarine sailor, Joe! Our boats are meant to sink, just so we have just as many surfaces as submergences. For some pics of my boat in heavy weather, see <https://unityinchrist.com/author.htm>, when that Puff Mount on the bow goes underwater in a big wave, such as it's doing, the bridge, 30 feet above the waterline, gets doused in the wave.] I don't want to learn that lesson. I already have my storm story from when I was 14 or 15 being out on the Atlantic, bad storm, I don't want another storm [I love those kinds of storms], I have my story, I'll use it from time to time, I don't want a new one, I don't want a new one. ***‘They cast out with their own hands, the ship is driven, they didn't see the sun, the moon, the stars for many days, and as that went on all hope was then taken away from them.’***

*An Angel Of God Pays Paul A Nocturnal Visit, Tells Him
Everyone's Going To Be OK*

“But after long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss.” (verse 21) I don't like this guy when I'm under pressure, OK? Those of you that are married you know this experience, when your husband or your wife's saying *'I told you,'* and when I'm under the pressure I don't want that person next to me telling me that, *'I know, you're right, I know, you're happy, you're right, ok? We're all gonna drown, you're right, what does it matter now? Don't tell me that again!'* Paul, the first thing he says to them, ***'You should have listened to me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss...'*** **“And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.”** (verse 22) Now that's not consolation to me when I'm out in the middle of the ocean, and I can't see anything, ***'We're not gonna lose any man, just the boat's going down.'*** That's not consolation to me. And it says this is after many days of abstinence, they're all seasick. You've heard what goes up must come down. Well in this situation what goes down must come up, that's the rule, and they haven't eaten for days, they're all seasick, and Paul finally says ***'Look, I told you, if you'd have listened to me this wouldn't have happened, but right now I want to exhort you to be of good cheer.'*** And he's going to tell them why, **“for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.”** (verse 22b) He has his bearings, because he's getting them not from the sun and stars and the moon, but the Lord. He says **“For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,”** (verse 23) now the King James says “the angel of God” and the Greek says ***“there stood by this night an angel of the God, whose I am, and whom I serve”*** Paul says ***'This night an angel sent from the God, whom I serve, and whose I am, saying,'*** **“fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar:”** reminding him that the Lord had already said that to him, **“an lo”** consider this, **“God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.”** (verse 24) notice that, almost as a gift, **“God hath given thee, Paul, all them that sail with thee.”** Why? because it was an answer to his prayer. There is no doubt these many days Paul has a sense in his own heart, ***'Lord, you said that I was going to go to Rome, but I see the fear in the eyes of the prisoners that are down chained in the bottom of the ship, I see the sailors who are experienced, Lord, I see the fear in their eyes, they're terrified, the captain, I see the soldiers that are here***

with the Centurion who are used to being on land, and they're trying to keep their chin up, these are tough guys, but I see the fear. Lord, be merciful, save this crew, save these men, save these prisoners.' No doubt Paul had prayed, and prayed, and prayed, and when this angel came and told Paul **'You're gonna get to stand before Caesar, not only that, all of them on the ship are going to be spared,'** he says **"God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."** (verse 24b) What a remarkable answer to prayer that must have been. Paul says **"Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."** (verse 25) He had already been told back in Acts 23:11 he would see Rome, now the angel comes, the Word of God is solid ground to him. Again, he looks around at circumstances, but he believes what the angel has said, he says **'Be of good cheer, the reason, because I believe in God,'** he said, **"it shall be even as it was told me."** **"Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island."** (verse 26) **'This is something you have to understand, we must'** notice there's no option here, the angel must have told him, **"we must be cast upon a certain island."** **'We have to be shipwrecked in the process, and we have to be shipwrecked at a specific place,'** it's gonna be Melita, Malta there. You see that small island south of Sicily. He said, **'we must, the angel told me it's necessary, we must be cast upon a certain island.'** Now we're going to find out the reason that has to happen, at least some of the reason, I think part of the reason, Julius and some of these Roman soldiers are going to come to faith when this is all over. We're going to find out that certain locals on the island help them, are very gracious to them, and as they're warming themselves by the fire, a venomous snake, a very poisonous snake attaches himself to Paul's hand and bites him. And Paul, one of the reasons I love Paul, has that tenacious side, he shakes the snake off in the fire. He's not green, ok. He shakes the snake off into the fire. He doesn't say *'Awh, God did make this beautiful poisonous snake,'* no, he shakes it off into the fire, and then it says all the natives, the locals watch him, because they think now he's gonna keel over and die. And as time goes by and there's no symptoms, then they say *'He must be a god!'* First they say *'God's gonna kill him, he must be sinful, snake bit him,'* and then they change their minds in a minute and say *'he must be a god.'* And then as they get to the governor of the island, his name is Publius, remember that name, because I think you're going to see Publius in heaven [the kingdom of heaven, which ends up on earth, cf. Revelation 21:1-23]. He'll have a new name then, don't worry,

that's what the Bible says. But Publius' father is near death with a severe fever. And he's bleeding, passing blood, he has diarrhea, he's infected with something. And Paul prays for him and God heals him. Publius and the locals are so amazed they started to bring everybody sick, and all of the sick people on the island of Malta are healed. You know, Paul's on his way to Rome. The Lord says, **'Paul, you're gonna stand before Caesar in Rome,'** comes and appears in his cell and tells him that [back in Caesarea]. I would think the journey, I would have preconceived ideas then, if the Lord comes and appears in my bedroom, and I'm in Caesarea and says *'You're going to Rome,'* I'm thinking *'Nice cruise, southern wind blowing softly,'* I'm not thinking Euroclydon, you know, storm, everybody's hurling for days on end, the ship breaks apart, cast onto an island, bit by a poisonous snake, I'm not thinking that's the journey, *'Lord, are you taking me or not?'* So, here's this remarkable scene, Paul says **'So I want you to be of good cheer, because I believe God,'** he says. **"Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island."** (verse 26) "we must" God's sovereignty.

The Sailors Sense A Change In The Seas, Like They Might Be Close To Land

"But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;" (verse 27) now that's a bad phrase to put with "bad storm," fourteenth night, **"about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country;"** no doubt, hearing the difference in the sea, they were hearing breakers, they couldn't see anything, it's dark, 14 nights, imagine that, driven, not knowing where they were, over 500 miles, driven from Crete, ending up at Malta. [now in 2020, with the worldwide pandemic of corona virus keeping much of the world's population on lockdown, people not being able to congregate even in churches, national economies failing and then the bursting forth of the Civil Rights movement, after a 52-year-long lid being kept on it, it feels like we all have been driven in this three-pronged storm, where the world population doesn't know where it's going, can't see the stars, the moon or sun to navigate our lives in a normal way, with no end in sight until a vaccine is developed. We right now, as I transcribe this in late July of 2020, we are all caught up in this storm, one not of

our own choosing. About the Civil Rights movement starting up again, see

[https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-](https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans3.htm)

[ModernRomans3.htm](https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans3.htm) to help see the causes of all of this.] They sense they're close to land, no doubt they're seamen, they can hear breakers, they know there's a different sound, and it says **“And they sounded, and found it twenty fathoms [120 feet deep]: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms [90 feet deep].” (verse 28)** they drop down a weighted line, nots in every fathom which is about 6-foot, they sounded, they found it was 20 fathoms, about 120 foot deep, and when they had gone a little further they sounded again, dropped down the line, found out it was 15 fathoms (90 feet deep), so it's getting shallower quickly, they know we're approaching land, there's no moon, no stars, no way for them to see, it says **“Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for day.” (verse 29)** they didn't know whether the shore was sandy or was crags, rocky crags, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished, I bet they did, for day. Now in the normal sea they throw the anchor out of the bow, out of the front of the ship. [These four anchors could also have been what's called “sea-anchors,” which are made of canvas, sort of like a parachute, which would slow a ships movement, slowing a ships forward movement. Or they might have been actual anchors.] But in this situation, being driven towards the land, what they do is they put four anchors out of the stern, so as the light comes in the morning, the ship is pointed then towards the land, where it's being held from breaking apart on the rocks, and they can see what they're up against, and then when they cut those ropes they'll run into the land, evidently that's what they're hoping to do. Now there are some who believe they have found some of these anchors, it's always kind of the *Ripley's Believe It Or Not of Christianity*, I never know whether it's the real deal or not, but there are those who claim they have found the anchors of Paul, that's great. They put out these four anchors out of the stern, and they wished for day. **“And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under the colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.” (verses 30-31)** “under colour” is the King James way of saying “it was under a pretense,” they were being deceptive. What they're doing here is, they let down the boat (this

smaller boat we saw in verse 16) into the sea **“under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,”** the bow. So what they’re saying is, these guys talked alone, they said **‘we gotta get out of here, we’re all gonna die, I’m not staying aboard, me neither.’** So they said to themselves, **‘if we can get the boat, we can get outa here.’** So they get the boat, the other guys say **‘What are you doing?’** and they said, **‘We’re going to go out in front of the bow, we’re gonna put some anchors out that way, we’re going to hold it straight, so we can have some anchors on the bow, some anchors on the stern.’** And Paul’s been out at sea enough, and he’s a smart cookie, he’s learned much about seamanship, and he says to the Centurion, **‘These guys are lying, and if you let them go, we’re all gonna die.’** What he says is **‘We need the sailors on board to finish this and get us to land, and if you let these guys go, all of us are gonna die. These guys are putting on this charade, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship,’** Paul said to the Centurion, remember Julius our friend, and to the soldiers, **“Except these [men] abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.” (verse 31b) ‘you’re gonna die if you don’t keep these guys on board.’ “Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off.” (verse 32)** Notice, it’s now Captain Paul, he’s in charge now. Julius says *‘No more of this, I’m listening to Paul, I should have listened to him back at Fair Havens, and everything he’s said so far is happening,’* so he says *‘Whatever you say, Paul,’* so Paul says **‘you let those guys get away, we’re all dead. I just heard from an angel, God spoke to me, if we keep everybody onboard we’re gonna be fine, trust me. It’s my God that I serve, it’s his ocean, it’s his storm, and it’s his boat.’** And when he gives me the directions, that’s a good theology for me, so he says **‘if you let those guys get away, we’re all gonna drown.’** The Centurion sends the guys to just cut the boat away, and they leave it go. And then it’ll tell us, are the guys griping, the sailors, are they all yelling? Not at Roman soldiers they’re not. **“And while the day was coming on,”** it was beginning to get light **“Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing.” (verse 33)** you know, you’ve all been seasick, there may have been some stability with the four anchors on the stern, they’re pointing towards the land, it’s starting to get light, Paul says **‘it’s time to eat, you need to eat, you need to take something to eat.’** **“Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your**

health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.” (verse 34) all of the loose ones are already gone for these fourteen days, I guarantee it. So he says ***‘there’s not another hair that’s going to perish from any of your heads,’***

No Atheists On A Life-Raft

“And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.” (verse 35) Notice this, he did this “in the presence of them all.” **“Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.” (verse 36)** Just imagine, Paul is not ashamed, he says grace now in front of the captain who gave him bad advice, in front of Julius, in front of all of the soldiers, the prisoners, he’s telling them all to eat, he’s not ashamed, he bows his head and says grace. I think, how remarkable, what an encouragement that must have been to the Centurion, to the sailors, to everybody onboard, they must have quieted themselves as this man is thanking God. Isn’t it interesting when you’re in a storm, wherever you work, you’re out somewhere, and you go to talk about Jesus *‘Don’t give me that, you’re a Bible-thumper!’* and then they come to you and say *‘My mom just found out she’s got cancer, would you pray?’* they’re in that storm, and their attitude is completely different at that point in time. [I’m waiting for attitudes in general to change and turn about for some we see in the world, society, maybe many, in the present storm we’re in, but I don’t see it happening yet. It may yet happen, we may have one last revival, as God promised us (see <https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.htm> **1**)] And I’m sure as this man Paul stood in the presence of the Lord in that prayer, everybody settled their hearts, their hearts must have been encouraged at this point in time, and he was not ashamed, he was not ashamed. Neither should we be. We say grace, you know, we say grace when we’re out, I have a great time, I remember when the kids were little, we’d say grace, and they’d say *‘Ya, and that one had, she had her eyes open,’ ‘Well how’d you know if your eyes weren’t open?’* and then they all watch each other and tattle on each other, it’s great now because I have grandkids, so I can make them crazy, we’re saying grace and I’m always doing stuff to them, and then they get mad at me, I’m the trouble-maker now. But I’ve done my duty, I have my kids, and I’m getting even now. I’ve a friend of

mine who was, he teaches at a Bible college, is a Greek scholar, he was at a restaurant and there was a bunch of kids from the Bible college there, and they were getting ready to eat, and he said *'Wait a minute, isn't somebody gonna say grace?'* so one of them says alright, and he started to pray, and he said *'I can't hear you,' 'You know, I don't want to offend people,'* He said *'What!?'* and he stood up and said *'Ladies and gentlemen, excuse me,'* right in the restaurant, he said *'These kids here are from a Bible college, and I just told them I think they need to say grace before we eat, so would all of you would please bow your heads while we say grace,'* and he made one of the kids pray, and when he finished everybody gave him an ovation, they're all clapping in the whole restaurant. That won't always happen, in these days it would probably be worse, that was awhile ago. And so Paul says grace in front of everyone, we can see them all with their heads bowed, the ship is rocking back and forth, and he says **"And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls." (verse 37)** 276 people, Paul now encouraging them in prayer as they say grace, they thank God.

They Make Their Run For Shore

"And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea." (verse 38) they started throwing the cargo overboard, because they know they're going to run on the beach as best they can, and the higher the ship sits in the water, the further in they're able to get [up onto] the shore, so they're throwing all of the cargo overboard. **"And when it was day,"** they began to see land, **"they knew not the land: but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship." (verse 39)** It's kind of an inlet, the Greek word is very interesting, it means "a bosom" the idea is there was a beach, it was a soft place. The southern part of Malta is all rocky, it's very dangerous, it says as they looked at the shore before them they saw this one big section of beach there, and they knew they could put the bow of the ship there if they could get it there. So, the ship is riding higher, they've dumped all the wheat overboard. **"And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward the shore." (verse 40)** Now what had happened, is you tied the

rudders when you were letting the ship be driven so the rudders wouldn't flop around. It says now they loosed them so they could use them again to steer the ship, and they hoisted up the mainsail, which is one of the front sails now, not what we would call the mainsail, enough to pull them toward the shore and use the rudders, **"and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward the shore. And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves."** (verses 40c-41) Now the place where two seas met, is they're talking about a sandbar. If any of you have lived down on the shore, you see those places, sometimes they're a good way offshore, and you see the waves breaking there and the waves look like they're breaking on the other side, and you think '*Why are the waves breaking on the other side?*' well there's a sandbar there. So he calls it a place where two seas met, it was no doubt a sandbar, they drove the ship into the sandbar, and ran the ship aground, **"and the forepart stuck fast,"** you know, nice and tight, stuck into the sandbar **"and remained unmoveable,"** that's good, but what's not good is, **"the hinder part of the ship"** the transom **"was broken [up] with the violence of the waves."** it begins to beat against the back of the ship, it begins to break the ship apart, just as their hopes were getting up. **"And the soldiers' counsel"** no doubt to the Centurion **"was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape."** (verse 42) It's like the old west, dead or alive, you bring back the prisoner, dead or alive. In Rome, if you were to deliver 50 prisoners, and you showed up with 43, seven of the soldiers were put to death to make up the difference. When you got to Rome, and you were supposed to bring 50 prisoners, if you brought 40 dead ones and 10 live ones, that was just as good as 50 live ones, you just had to deliver the guys you were supposed to deliver. So, these soldiers knowing, if we lose any of these prisoners now, it's going to be our scalp, they say **'Look, let's kill the prisoners, their bodies will wash up, lest any of them should swim out and escape.'** **"But the centurion,"** I think we're talking about "brother" Julius now by the way, I think he's a new convert, **"But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land:"** (verse 43) now it's a smart move, every Roman soldier, before you were admitted into the Roman army, you had to be able to swim, you were taught to swim, it was one of the qualifying necessities of being part

of the Roman army. So he says to them, ***'All of you that can swim,'*** which would be soldiers at least, ***'you guys cast yourselves into the sea and get to land,'*** so that would cool down the situation on deck, getting everybody who could swim, they were unlocking the prisoners that were down rowing, getting them overboard, all that could swim, ***"and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."*** (verse 44) some riding in on boards, pieces of the ship, some swimming, no doubt the stronger ones, as they got to shore, they've been beaten about with the waves, they started to feel the sand under their feet, encouraged, getting to the shore, and coming out, helping the weaker ones in, no doubt, and by the time this morning is getting underway, all 276 of them are standing on the beach at Malta, just as Paul told them God had spoken to his heart.

The Storms of Life, What Are They For?

Storms, why are they in the Scripture, what are we supposed to learn? You know, there are different kinds of storms in the Bible. There are storms of correction, Jonah was in a storm of correction, God told him to go somewhere, he rebelled, the storm came, and that was a storm of correction. You know the story, the whale and so forth. There are storms of instruction, Mark 4, the places in the Gospel where the Lord told the disciples to go to the other side, he didn't say go under, he said go over to the other side [I'm a submarine sailor, I'd much preferred going under, where it's calmer], and they end up in a storm, but that's a storm of instruction. They were not out of God's will. And again, here's one of the problems, Christians so often becomes *Job's Counselors*, and they'll look at your life, and if you're in a difficult situation, they immediately draw the conclusion *'Wow, that guy must be sinning, or that guy, look what God's doing to him.'* You can't do that by observing the circumstances. You can do this, you can warn a person whose in sin and compromise, *'If you continue on your present course, God will chasten you.'* But you can't look at a person, whose in the middle of a difficult situation, and say *'You're here because you sinned,'* because that's not always the reason. The disciples were in the middle of a storm because they were in the middle of God's will, that's exactly where he wanted them. They weren't there because

they were being chastened, they weren't there for any other reason, they were there because that was a storm of instruction. When that storm is over, when Jesus rebukes the wind and the sea, the question then is, **'Who IS this man, then, that even the winds and the sea obey him?'** They saw him open the eyes of the blind and heal the lepers, now they're saying **'The elements are subject this this one, who is this man then? Even the winds and the sea obey him.'** That's a storm of instruction. There are storms that are corrective, storms that are instructive, there are storms that are directive. These guys end up in this, it's directing them to a certain island, at a certain time, **'you must end up at a certain island, this is necessary in the process,'** and this storm was moving them. And there are storms of judgment, we see that in Genesis chapter 6, we see the storm there as Noah built the ark, you see there are times when God brings a storm in judgment. But as we look at these things, certainly in our own lives, we're to take note of those things. There are storms that come in our lives, and we examine ourselves, and we say *'Lord, I'm not in rebellion here, I'm not backslidden, I'm not, this is not chastening, I don't know why this is happening, but Lord I trust you.'* It's hard, it's not easy. You know, I've taken storm 101, I don't want storm 102, I want to take the correspondence course. Lord, this is for the guys, great chapter. Again, the guys, when they were in the storm, didn't say this was a great chapter. They had never read Mark 4, they didn't say *'Wait till you see this, you're gonna love this chapter, this is great.'* No, they're out there crying, *'You're gonna let us die, don't you care!?'* You and I never do that when we're in a storm, of course, *'you're gonna let us die, you don't care.'* But that lesson is there for us, that lesson is there for us, because storms come. And look, to all of us, the ultimate storm comes, doesn't it? If the Lord tarries, and we continue to age, there is that ultimate storm, that we trust in him, death as it comes. He is there to sustain us, to lift us up, to carry us to the other side. And he walks above the waves, and he's there to take us by the hand and to lead us onward. So, storms, we know that the hope we have, it tells us in Hebrews chapter 6, is an anchor to our souls, it's a good thing to have that in any storm, Paul had that. I encourage you to read ahead, we're going to follow now, there's 276 people dropped onto the island, Malta, we're going to see what takes place there, as God is leading. And finally, you know, we're going to follow them up by Sicily and on to Puteoli and then overland to Rome, a remarkable, remarkable journey, it takes seven months overall, and over a thousand miles by sea, quite a journey.

So, read ahead, if the Lord tarries we will continue, and see what we have left here, maybe we'll get through, we'll finish the Book of Acts Sunday night, so read ahead and get familiar with that last chapter. Let's stand, let's pray, let's have the musicians come...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 27:1-44, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

1. Just recently, starting in early March 2020 the whole world, along with the United States of America, has been going through a triple-force storm, first where the corona virus, COVID-19 as of right now in the end of July 2020 has killed over 150,000 Americans, it has shut down and crippled the world's as well as the American economies, and right after Memorial Day in the U.S. a cell-phone video was taken and aired publicly showing in Realtime a Minneapolis police officer put his knee on the neck of an innocent Black man named George Floyd, and over the slow agonizing period of 8 minutes and 46 seconds, choked him to death. The video was seen around the world, not just in America. Suddenly a nation which had been in a sort of quarantine lockdown for three months, burst into a series of spontaneous protest marches across the nation, some of which continue to this day. After 52 years of apparent inactivity, the Civil Rights Movement, now under the moniker Black Lives Matter, has revived. This is a spiritual storm the nation and world has been brought into. To understand what caused these events within the United States to boil over in the midst of a worldwide pandemic one must look at the origin, the history behind it. The famous historian Santayana said "*He who ignores history is doomed to relive it.*" Where this storm is leading us only God knows, and in a symbolic but very real way, no one has been able to see the stars, moon or sun in this storm for these past five months, the only thing we can know for sure, is God knows where we are, just as he knew where the ship was the apostle Paul and Luke were riding onboard. God knows our destination and the purpose of the storm he's allowed us to sail into. To understand historically what caused all these protests and a few riots (most have been fairly peaceful protests), log onto and read this history article.

See <https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans3.htm>

2. To understand how Christians should respond, say, in the upcoming presidential elections, read on through the next linked history article at:
<https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans4.htm>

3. We may be headed into a massive Christian revival, one which the Lord has promised to bring about in an Old Testament prophecy found in Joel. For more on this, see <https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.htm>
1

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