

(Acts 27:1) And when it was decided that **we** should sail to Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to *one* named Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment.

One note: the personal pronoun switches from 'they' to 'we'. Luke was evidently with Paul at this time.

(Acts 27:2) So, entering a ship of Adramyttium, we put to sea, meaning to sail along the coasts of Asia. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, was with us.

Aristarchus was one of Paul's traveling companions mentioned in Chapter 19 and 20 as well as Colossians 4 and Philemon 1.

(Acts 27:3) And the next *day* we landed at Sidon. And **Julius** treated Paul kindly and **gave him liberty** to go to his friends and receive care.

The centurion Julius has taken a liking to Paul; there's some conjecture that perhaps he was at the hearing when Paul testified to King Agrippa. Whether he believed on Jesus is not known nor should we assume so.

(Acts 27:4) When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under *the shelter of Cyprus*, because the winds were **contrary**.

(Acts 27:5) And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to **Myra, a city of Lycia**.

(Acts 27:6) There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board.

(Acts 27:7) When we had **sailed slowly many days**, and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, the wind not permitting us to proceed, we sailed under *the shelter of Crete* off Salmone.

The ship had to turn southward to get some protection from the island of Crete.

(Acts 27:8) **Passing it with difficulty**, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city *of Lasea*.

(Acts 27:9) Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,

The Fast is the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur); it occurs in mid-to-late September but can occur in the first couple of weeks in October. The point here is a 'time-marker' – winter is coming and the winds and weather are beginning to get worse.

(Acts 27:10) saying, "Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much

loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives."

(Acts 27:10 NLT) "Men," he said, "I believe there is trouble ahead if we go on—shipwreck, loss of cargo, and danger to our lives as well."

(Acts 27:10 KJV) 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.

The point is, Paul was not predicting death but rather harm and injury.

Was this a prophetic utterance? It doesn't say so perhaps Paul, being used to travelling by ship understood the dangers of traveling at this time.

(Acts 27:11) Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul.

He didn't know or care what Paul said...he was a prisoner...what did he know?

(Acts 27:12) And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach **Phoenix**, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, *and* winter *there*.

The "majority" here refers to the sailors on board the ship...passengers didn't have a say...

Phoenix was farther west and known to be a good and safe harbor.

(Acts 27:13) When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete.

So far, so good...

(Acts 27:14) But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon.

is a cyclonic tempestuous northeast wind which blows in the Mediterranean, mostly in autumn and winter. "northeaster"

The Greek word for tempestuous is the root word from which we get our word: *typhoon*.

(Acts 27:15) So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let *her* drive.

To be tossed about rather than fighting against the wind.

(Acts 27:16) And running under *the shelter of* an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty.

Clauda was a tiny island off the southern coast of Crete.

The skiff was normally towed behind the boat so they brought it aboard to secure it.

(Acts 27:17) When they had taken it on board, they used cables to undergird the ship; and fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis *Sands*, they struck sail and so were driven.

Somehow they managed to get cables wrapped around the underside and up the sides of the ship...

and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands: which were on the African coast, here called "Syrtes"; these were areas of the sea that had large sand and slime areas hidden from view by the sea; it was believed that these areas could draw vessels into them, which then are sunk;

(Acts 27:18) And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next *day* they lightened the ship.

The ship was probably taking on water so they needed to lighten it's load. The first to go were the merchandize and other goods.

You might recall as the mariners did in the ship in which Jonah was:

Jonah 1:4-5 But the LORD sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was about to be broken up. (5) Then the mariners were afraid; and every man cried out to his god, and threw the cargo that *was* in the ship into the sea, to lighten the load. But Jonah had gone down into the lowest parts of the ship, had lain down, and was fast asleep.

(Acts 27:19) On the third *day* we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands.

Things are going from bad to worse. Now they start throwing things needed for the ship itself like sails, ropes, cables and furniture; Some versions of the text specify "armament" used by the soldiers.

(Acts 27:20) Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat on *us*, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.

Remember, this is Luke's account. But the larger point begin made is, without the sun and stars, it was impossible for them to accurately navigate.

(Acts 27:21) But after long abstinence from food, then Paul stood in the midst of them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me, and not have sailed from Crete and incurred this disaster and loss.

But after long abstinence,.... From food, not for want of it, as appears from

what follows nor in a religious way, in order to obtain the favour of God; but most likely from sea-sickness and a lot of fear!.

it would have been better for them to have taken his advice, and stayed at the Fair Havens... why Paul had an "I told you so" moment might have been for his advantage in what he said next:

(Acts 27:22) And now I urge you to take heart, **for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. (23) For there stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve,**

This was either in a vision or a dream, or the angel stood by him while he was awake (and most assuredly, praying!)

(Acts 27:24) saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; **you must be brought before Caesar;** and indeed God has **granted you** all those who sail with you.'

The angel reiterates what Jesus told him...

(Acts 23:11) But the following night the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul; for as you have testified for Me in Jerusalem, **so you must also bear witness at Rome.**"

And, I can't help but to think that Paul was in prayer for the entire crew and passengers and therefore was told "God has **granted you** all those who sail with you."

(Acts 27:25) Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

We will survive this storm, but...

(Acts 27:26) **However, we must run aground on a certain island."**

Strange that he says this. It's obviously prophetic given what happens at the end of the chapter...but...well, we'll have to wait and see.

(Acts 27:27) Now when the fourteenth night had come, as we were driven up and down in the Adriatic *Sea*, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land.

If you look on a modern map, the Adriatic Sea extends down the eastern side of Italy. Given where they were, something's amiss here...problem solved...In the time of Paul, the Ionian Sea which is south of the Adriatic sea and extending into the Mediterranean Sea was known also as the Adriatic sea.

(Acts 27:28) And they took soundings and found *it* to be twenty fathoms; and when

they had gone a little farther, they took soundings again and found *it* to be fifteen fathoms.

(Acts 27:29) Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come.

They dropped 4 anchors from the back of the ship to either stop it or slow it down to a crawl.

Don't know to what 'gods' they prayed...Thank God Paul and his companions were praying to the True God who listens and responds!

(Acts 27:30) And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, when they had let down the skiff into the sea, under pretense of putting out anchors from the prow,

Many sailors tried to jump ship...

(Acts 27:31) Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."

Paul speaks out to have the centurion keep the men on board. I thought it interesting that Paul said "you cannot be saved"...

(Acts 27:32) Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off.

The skiff is cut away from the boat.

(Acts 27:33) And as day was about to dawn, Paul implored *them* all to take food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day you have waited and continued without food, and eaten nothing. (34) Therefore I urge you to take nourishment, for this is for your survival, since not a hair will fall from the head of any of you."

Always the shepherd (or like a Jewish momma), Paul urges them to eat so that they can be nourished...he once again tells them that they WILL survive.

(Acts 27:35) And when he had said these things, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all; and when he had broken *it* he began to eat.

Paul, like all Jews, blesses **God** for providing the bread.

(Acts 27:36) Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves.

Seeing Paul eat, they also ate.

(Acts 27:37) And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship.

This had to be a very large ship. Not only to carry 276 people but initially it was

full of grain for Italy (and most likely other goods as well).

(Acts 27:38) So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea.

Evidently they wisely kept much of the wheat on board. But now that they were full....off it goes!

(Acts 27:39) When it was day, they did not recognize the land; but they observed a bay with a beach, onto which they planned to run the ship if possible. (40) And they let go the anchors and left *them* in the sea, meanwhile loosing the rudder ropes; and they hoisted the mainsail to the wind and made for shore.

Now, the ship's captain and crew spied a place to land: a bay in front of a beach. So, that's where they headed.

(Acts 27:41) But striking a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; and the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was being broken up by the violence of the waves.

But they hit some sort of sand-bar off-shore from the beach.

(Acts 27:42) And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. (43) But the centurion, wanting to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose, and commanded that those who could swim should jump *overboard* first and get to land, (44) and the rest, some on boards and some on *parts* of the ship. **And so it was that they all escaped safely to land.**

Certainly, Julian is a good man. Perhaps he saw their salvation from the storm because of Paul's relationship with God.

These events are particularly applicable for our time.

But instead of looking at why bad things happen to good people, I want to look at how a follower of Christ reacts to the uncertainties and trials and tribulations of life – versus how an unbeliever reacts.

The most obvious thing is that the Christian relies upon God and not in his own strength. The Holy Spirit, by the pen of David, said it best:

Psalms 20:7-9 Some *trust* in chariots, and some in horses; But we will remember the name of the LORD our God. (8) They have bowed down and fallen; But we have risen and stand upright. (9) Save, LORD! May the King answer us when we call.

The Christian relies upon the promises of God that are made to him/her. The problem is, we sometimes look at all the promises in the Bible, pick one or two and "claim" them for our own. But unless the Holy Spirit tells you that the promise is for you also, then you are setting yourself up for disappointment. In other words, don't make your wishful thinking into a promise of God.

Paul knew the promise made to him that he would be a witness in Rome. And he stood on that promise because of the faith he had in the Giver of the promise.

Unbelievers can't live with assurances because they don't live with God. There's a lot of talk today about this non-God called "the universe". "Oh, thank the universe that such and such happened", or, "Oh, the universe will take care of that". How can anyone with any sense of reality in themselves believe that an inanimate object can't make promises or keep them safe? That is a good definition of "delusion".

Many of the unbelievers on the boat were pagans who had their myriad of 'gods'. But unlike the True and Living God, these could not speak. They could not get any reassurances from dumb idols or marble statues.

Now, in this chapter we see a long voyage that is difficult and potentially life-threatening. And while the captain and crew find it hard to sail against the winds, they do make slow progress. They finally, after a very hard struggle with the prevailing winds, they make to the Island of Crete. Given the time of year (we learned that it was in the Fall), Paul, the tent-maker, Paul the prisoner, Paul the evangelist tells the captain and crew, and the centurion as well"

"Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives." ([Acts 27:10](#))

Was Paul being presumptuous? Possibly. But Paul relied on the wisdom of God. He also knew that he had to speak up! Paul was never timid because his strength and courage were because of his relationship with Jesus. Perhaps he remembered the LORD's advice:

[Psalm 56:11](#) In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?

[Psalm 118:8](#) *It is* better to trust in the LORD Than to put confidence in man.

Obviously, the captain, crew, owner and centurion knew best so they sailed on! I can imagine them starting out and singing a well known sailing song:

Well, it's not far down to paradise, at least it's not for me
And if the wind is right you can sail away and find tranquility
Oh, the canvas can do miracles, just you wait and see.

Believe me.

It's not far to never-never land, no reason to pretend
And if the wind is right you can find the joy of innocence again
Oh, the canvas can do miracles, just you wait and see.
Believe me.

Sailing takes me away to where I've always heard it could be
Just a dream and the wind to carry me
And soon I will be free
Sailing takes me away to where I've always heard it could be
Just a dream and the wind to carry me
And soon I will be free

So, as it happened Paul was right! There was an insane storm and tossed this large ship up and down and sideways in the Mediterranean.

The crew and the passengers have to do what needs to be done to keep the ship afloat – they toss goods and tackle overboard; even furniture went over along with armaments of the Roman guards!

Good idea accept that it is not working well. The passengers are sick, tired, weary and scared out of their minds.

But Paul has another visitor: An angel to reassure him that there would be no loss of life and Paul, “here’s your sign” – the ship will run aground and be lost.

And what were the gods of the unbelievers telling them: nothing!

Paul the believer knew Jesus. Paul trusted Jesus. Paul had faith that what Jesus began, he would finish because Paul’s faith wasn’t in the promises but the Promise Giver!

Unbelievers and unfortunately some believers as well don’t see God as ALL-POWERFUL, ALL-KNOWING, ALL-LIGHT, ALL-LOVE, AND WHOLLY OUT OF TIME AND SPACE. Their god is puny and unable to affect the creation He spoke into existence. Their god is weak and just allows the chips fall where they may. Their god just does not care about people.

You need to know our God who will walk thru any and all storm with you to give you peace and comfort. He knew full well what the consequences were going to be from that one act in the Garden! That one act started in the heart of Adam and it was repaired by a broken heart on the Cross. While we might suffer from our own actions, from the

actions of others, or a world gone mad, we do not suffer alone – ever! Paul knew it! We need to know it as well! We need to know that He is for us and not against us because the days in which we live are growing darker;

Habakkuk 3:17-19 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls— (18) Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. (19) The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's *feet*, And He will make me walk on my high hills. To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.

Amen!