

# ACTS 27:1-32

FOLLOWING AND  
SHARING THE LORD'S  
DIRECTION



## PAUL'S PROMISED MINISTRY IN ROME BEGINS WITH A VOYAGE ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN (27:1-8)

- Agrippa apparently gave Festus the advice he needed for a letter to send to Caesar explaining Paul's appeal to Rome

*<sup>1</sup> And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named Julius.*

- Paul is handed over to a Roman centurion named Julius, who was part of the Augustan Cohort

- There were other prisoners with Paul that are being sent to Rome as well

*<sup>2</sup> And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica.*

- Luke and Aristarchus, a fellow minister along with Paul whose home church was in Thessalonica, also accompanied Paul on this journey
  - That these men are permitted to accompany Paul indicates the favor Paul had with Festus and Julius
  - The Scripture is filled with examples of God giving his people favor with people in positions of authority
  - We should pray for ourselves and other Christians to have favor with those in authority and unbelievers

## PAUL'S PROMISED MINISTRY IN ROME BEGINS WITH A VOYAGE ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN (27:1-8)

<sup>3</sup> *The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for.*

- In another display of favor, the centurion Julius allows Paul to spend time with friends of his while they are in Sidon





## PAUL'S PROMISED MINISTRY IN ROME BEGINS WITH A VOYAGE ACROSS THE MEDITERRANEAN (27:1-8)

<sup>3</sup> *The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for.*

- In another display of favor, the centurion Julius allows Paul to spend time with friends of his while they are in Sidon
- In another display of favor, the centurion Julius allows Paul to spend time with friends of his while they are in Sidon

<sup>4</sup> *And putting out to sea from there we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us.* <sup>5</sup> *And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia.* <sup>6</sup> *There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board.*

- The first ship was able to dock at a port in Myra
- Julius located a Roman grain ship in the port and had his passengers board that ship

<sup>7</sup> *We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone.* <sup>8</sup> *Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea.*

- Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus know the Lord of the weather and the promise that Paul will make it to Rome
- One can only imagine how this may have challenged their faith
- God has given us many great and precious promises, yet there are times our faith wavers
  - 2 Peter 1:3–4



## PAUL'S EXPERIENCE INSPIRES HIS WARNING AGAINST CONTINUING THE VOYAGE (27:9-12)

<sup>9</sup> *Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul advised them,*

- Fighting the wind and the waves has put them behind schedule and put them on the Mediterranean Sea during the season when it is dangerous to sail
- It was impossible to sail the Sea during the winter and very dangerous to sail in the months preceding winter

<sup>10</sup> *saying, "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives."*

- Paul sailed on ships over the Mediterranean Sea repeatedly
- Based on his experience, he warns them, encouraging them to sail no further
- Paul's experience makes him firm in his opinion
- If you have good reason to believe people's lives are in danger, should you warn them?

## PAUL'S EXPERIENCE INSPIRES HIS WARNING AGAINST CONTINUING THE VOYAGE (27:9-12)

*<sup>11</sup> But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. <sup>12</sup> And because the harbor was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.*

- It is not hard to imagine why the centurion gives more credence to the helmsman and the owner of the ship than to Paul
- God moves in a mysterious way to establish the credibility of His servants

## A STORM-TOSSED SHIP PRODUCES A HOPELESS CREW (27:13-20)

*<sup>13</sup> Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore.*

- Who controls the weather?

- A breeze from the south came, and they decided to head for Phoenix

*<sup>14</sup> But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land. <sup>15</sup> And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along.*

- Not long into this next leg of the journey, a strong wind from the north came down the slopes of the mountains on the island



## A STORM-TOSSED SHIP PRODUCES A HOPELESS CREW (27:13-20)

*<sup>16</sup> Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat. <sup>17</sup> After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. <sup>18</sup> Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. <sup>19</sup> And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.*

- The ship was pushed to the south side of the small island, Cauda
- The island blocked the wind enough for them to secure the rowboat that was tied to the ship

*<sup>20</sup> When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.*

- Human attempts to achieve safety have their limitations
- Luke vividly describes the hopelessness of the crew and passengers
  - God has enumerable ways of causing people to feel desperate
  - God can make desperate hearts teachable hearts

## GOD'S PROMISE TO PAUL BECOMES A SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR OTHERS (27:21-26)

*21 Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, “Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss.*

- Paul stands up among them as a man with God-given compassion and confidence
- Paul reminds them of the warning he gave them earlier

*22 Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship,*

*24 and he said, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.’*

- Paul shares words of encouragement with them
- What did God tell Paul?
  - Hopeless fear can be set aside
  - God promised Paul that he will appear before Caesar
  - God now confirms that all those on board will live
- When God gives a message of hope and security, it needs to be shared

## GOD'S PROMISE TO PAUL BECOMES A SOURCE OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR OTHERS (27:21-26)

*<sup>25</sup> So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. <sup>26</sup> But we must run aground on some island.”*

- Paul seeks to encourage all the men on the ship
- Paul knows what it is to trust God in hard times and he is encouraging them to have confidence in the promises of God
- It is a blessing to read about someone who has such great confidence in God that he cannot remain silent
- We know that island will be Malta, a small island where God will direct them

## GOD ESTABLISHES PAUL'S CREDIBILITY (27:27-32)

*<sup>27</sup> When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. <sup>28</sup> So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. <sup>29</sup> And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come.*

- After fourteen more days of being driven by a storm, the sailors probably hear water breaking on a shoreline in the distance
- Realizing they were approaching a shoreline, they dropped four anchors off the rear of the ship
- The ship now holds its position, and they pray for sunrise



## GOD ESTABLISHES PAUL'S CREDIBILITY (27:27-32)

*<sup>30</sup> And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretense of laying out anchors from the bow, <sup>31</sup> Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." <sup>32</sup> Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go.*

- Some of the terrified sailors said they were going to drop more anchors off the front of the ship
  - Deceptively they were trying to lower the rowboat from the ship and head for land
  - Their attempt to flee is discovered
- Paul tells the centurion and the soldiers that survival is dependent on all the people staying together
  - The soldiers' confidence in Paul's message is so strong that they immediately take their swords and cut the rowboat free
  - God has the ability to build the confidence of people in the message of truth coming from His people
- This is a story of God's power and control and how He is faithful to confirm His truths coming from the lips and hearts of His people

# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Why is it important to believe and pray that God will grant us favor with people for His gospel glory?
- How has your confidence in the promises of God been challenged and then strengthened?
- How does God build the credibility of Paul in this story and how is this encouraging to you?
- What kind of God uses catastrophic events to get people's attention?
- What are some of the practical lessons that build your faith in this story?

# ACTS 27:1-32

FOLLOWING AND  
SHARING THE LORD'S  
DIRECTION

