

Acts 27

Paul Sails for Rome

- Note all the geographical references, which is strong evidence for historicity.
- Also note the repeated descriptions of adverse sailing conditions which were ignored by those in authority and control – to the eventual detriment of the ship and crew.

... the winds were against us...made slow headway for many days and had difficulty...the wind did not allow us to hold our course... We moved along the coast with difficulty...Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them, 10"**Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also.**" 11But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. 12Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.

The Storm

...After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "**Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.**"

- ✦ Just as Paul had warned, the ship headed into a tumultuous storm. When godly advice is not heeded, hardship, damage, and loss is unavoidable. Yet the experience can still be beneficial.
- ✦ **How many times have we not listened to divine instructions and suffered damage and loss?**
- ✦ The One for whom Paul was being tried, assured Paul that all on the ship would be safe. The ship would be lost but lives would be spared for Paul's sake.
- ✦ Who is the One who walks on the seas, who sleeps during storms, who commands the sea, wind, and waves to cease? We need to be on His ship! What manner of Man is this who calms the seas?!!

The Shipwreck

- Vss. 27-32 God often uses those in authority to help preserve safe conditions for the Gospel to continue on.
- Vss. 33-38 God's messengers are always concerned about the welfare of those they are in contact with.
- **Cutting loose the anchors (the cares and worries of life) and hoisting the foresail to the wind (living according to the Spirit); in this way, everyone goes to land and safety.**

- **A shipwrecked journey was the outcome of Paul's faithfulness. Do we bear the marks of the cross, which is God's shipwreck? We must be broken in order to be free.**

Vss.42-44

- **As long as people stay with the Gospel's instructions, there is safety.**
- **What a witness this entire experience was, not only for Paul, but also the entire crew. Faith comes by hearing and hearing comes through the Word of God.**
- **As ministers, we must be with those we minister to, even (especially) through the storms of life. It is the presence of Christ and His Gospel which is the assurance of a safe, ultimate outcome. Going through the tough stuff and knowing God's perspective and purposes is key to effective ministry and evangelism.**

Acts 28

Ashore on Malta

1Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. 2The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. 3Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. 4When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live." 5But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. 6The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead, but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

7There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and for three days entertained us hospitably. 8His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. 9When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured. 10They honored us in many ways and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

- God had driven the ship to destruction so that the Gospel would reach those on Malta. What a gracious and faithful Savior! How untraceable and mysterious are His ways.
- Here, the ministry went to islanders, a very superstitious people. Not much is mentioned about witnessing to them. But rather Paul was led to the chief official, whose father

was sick. Through healing of the father, God strategically touched the leader of the islanders. Then through the connection that the leader had with the people, healing went forth.

Arrival at Rome

11After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island. It was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. 12We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. 13From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on the following day we reached Puteoli. 14There we found some brothers who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. 15The brothers there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. **At the sight of these men Paul thanked God and was encouraged.** 16When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

Paul Preaches at Rome Under Guard

17Three days later he called together the leaders of the Jews. When they had assembled, Paul said to them: "My brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or against the customs of our ancestors, I was arrested in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. 18They examined me and wanted to release me, because I was not guilty of any crime deserving death. 19But when the Jews objected, I was compelled to appeal to Caesar—not that I had any charge to bring against my own people. 20For this reason I have asked to see you and talk with you. **It is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain."**

- **What is the hope of Israel for which Paul was in chains?**

21They replied, "We have not received any letters from Judea concerning you, and none of the brothers who have come from there has reported or said anything bad about you. 22But we want to hear what your views are, for we know that people everywhere are talking against this sect."

23They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying. From morning till evening he explained and declared to them **the kingdom of God and tried to convince them about Jesus from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets.** 24Some were convinced by what he said, but others would not believe. 25They disagreed among themselves and began to leave after Paul had made this final statement: **"The Holy Spirit spoke the truth to your forefathers when he said through Isaiah the prophet:**

26" 'Go to this people and say,

**"You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving."**

**27For this people's heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,**

and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts
and turn, and I would heal them.'

28"Therefore I want you to know that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will listen!"

30For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all

who came to see him. **31 Boldly and without hindrance** he preached *the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- The Gospel has always and will continually go forth boldly without hindrance! The WORD of FREEDOM is not bound itself.
- What have we learned from Acts? The Word...The Acts of the Holy Spirit...the Spirit's fulfillment of the Word...

DISCUSSION:

- How do we get to the point where our hearts become calloused and our ears and eyes are closed?
- From vss.26-27, what should we desire?
- How do we get to the point of hearing God's whisper in our hearts, desiring His holiness and worshipping in spirit and in truth?

Segue into next unit of study – Survey of the Old Testament and daily reading of Proverbs.
--