



ACCM

**Bible Study:** Thursday, May 4th 2017.

**Topic:** Acts 27

**INTRODUCTION:** Acts 27 tells the story of the voyage that should have started from Caesarea and ended in Rome but it ended at Malta instead. It was an eventful journey that took months instead of days. Without God, this journey would have been fatal but it was very tragic. There were loses but all the souls were preserved. One will wonder why Luke dedicated so much time discussing this treacherous trip. A notable thing in Acts of the Apostle which was also visible I this chapter is the effect of helpers in the ministry and the fame of Paul all over Asia. In almost every place that Paul went, there were people to receive him. Paul was accompanied on this trip by some of his companions and friends and certainly one of them was Luke himself and one Aristarchus was mentioned. This character actually shows in very many parts of Paul's Journey. It was however very remarkable at this time because he was the only one mentioned.

We hear so much about the ministry of Apostle Paul and how he wrote 14 of the 27 books of the New testament but without people, Paul might never have achieved any of these feats. Paul did not suffer tremendous loneliness because he was always surrounded by people.

Paul and his companions suffered a great ship wreck on this trip, but to the glory of God, all the souls who were with them were preserved. When they started the trip, Paul warned the soldiers as well as the sailors that the trip was going to be treacherous and he would have wished they stayed back at Crete for the storm to subside, but he was obviously ignored and the result was not good for the entire team. They were shipwrecked and they lost the cargo and the ship. But to the glory of God none of the lives of the 276 lives of bard was lost. After initially ignoring Paul, the crew began to heed the words of Paul having found that his counsel would have helped. As a matter of fact, he took control of the ship. God assured him that no life will be lost on the trip. Finally, the ship ran aground in Malta with the Bow stuck to the bed and the stern beaten by the waves. This situation tore the ship apart. When this was taking place, the soldiers thought of killing all the prisoners

but the Centurion denied them because he wanted to preserve the life of Paul. Everyone on board either swam or rode the broken portion of the ship to safety

## The Voyage to Rome Begins

**27** 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. <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under *the shelter* of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. <sup>5</sup>And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a city* of Lycia. <sup>6</sup>There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and he put us on board.

<sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city *of* Lasea.

Paul found favour in the site of the Centurion.

What is Favour and how useful is it in the life of a believer: Psalm 89:17, Gen 39:21, Prov 16:7.

Many people accompanied Paul on this trip. One of them was Aristarchus. Who was Aristarchus, and what is the function of people like Aristarchus in ministry? Acts 19:29, 20:4, Col 4:10, Philemon 24, Ex 4:14-17, Gen 24:1-4.

In your work with God seek not to work alone. A number of persons followed Paul around on His missionary visits. One of the first thing a missionary should seek after is trustworthy companions. The mission field could be very lonely and lots of hands are needed. II Tim 2:2. Discuss the importance of spouses in ministries. Ecc 4:9, Gen 2:18.

## Paul's Warning Ignored

<sup>9</sup>Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, <sup>10</sup>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." <sup>11</sup>Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. <sup>12</sup>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.*

Paul said Men, I perceive that this voyage will end with disaster and much loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also our lives." What is the difference between this comment and that in verses 23 and 24. That a man of God says I perceive, should we dismiss the comment as not coming from God?

What is the difference between a perceived statement and a definitive statement in spiritual context? II Kings 7:1, 4:16.

## In the Tempest

<sup>13</sup>When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained *their* desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. <sup>14</sup>But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon. <sup>15</sup>So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let *her* drive. <sup>16</sup>And running under *the shelter of* an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the next *day* they lightened the ship. <sup>19</sup>On the third *day* we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands. <sup>20</sup>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.

<sup>21</sup>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. <sup>22</sup>And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. <sup>23</sup>For there

stood by me this night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve, <sup>24</sup>saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.' <sup>25</sup>Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. <sup>26</sup> However, we must run aground on a certain island."

The difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is the ability to believe that God will bring a solution in a seemingly impossible situation. When all hope was gone that they will be saved, Paul stands up to give this message of hope. The Believer is the character that hopes when there is no reason to hope.

What is the function of hope in our belief? Is the ability to hope on God is true test of our faith? Rom 4:18-19, Rom 8:24

In spite of this sustained and confirmed Shipwreck, Paul was confident that he was not going to die. What was the reason for his confidence.

Acts 27:23-26, Acts 23:11, Hab 3:17-18 What has God told you about your life that gives you confidence.

Considering Abraham and Paul in this situation, what is the reason for your hope? Faith, confidence in His word, miracles, the man or woman of God, etc

What have you believed God for and it appears it will never happen?

<sup>27</sup>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. <sup>28</sup>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. <sup>29</sup>Then, fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come. <sup>30</sup>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, <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 skiff and let it fall off.

In verse 31 Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." How do you interpret this statement?

Paul appears to have taken over the control of the boat as the Centurion was now obeying his instructions. What made them to start to obey him? What will make the world to begin to listen to the church? II Cor 12:12, John 4:48, 20:29.

<sup>33</sup>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. <sup>34</sup>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." <sup>35</sup>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. <sup>36</sup>Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. <sup>37</sup>And in all we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship. <sup>38</sup>So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea.

There is a time for everything. The situation aboard the ship generated an automatic fast. Now that Paul has assured them that they will all be saved, it was not bad if they could eat some food. Now think for once in that tensed situation if a person was able to focus on food, how will you view such a person? Job 30:25, Jonah 1:5-6

## Shipwrecked on Malta

<sup>39</sup>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. <sup>40</sup>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. <sup>41</sup>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.

<sup>42</sup>And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. <sup>43</sup>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, <sup>44</sup>and the rest, some on boards and some on *parts* of the ship. And so it was that they all escaped safely to land.

Killing the prisoners including Paul, will negate what the Lord told Paul through an Angel. The prisoners were eventually saved because the Centurion wanted to preserve Paul.

The Centurion put his work on the Line because he wanted to favor Paul. That is an extra ordinary favour. Acts 12:19, 16:7. What was in Paul that made the Centurion have so much confidence on him? Prov 16:7, Rom 8:31, I John 3:22.