

Acts of the Apostles – 27

I. The Inspired History

- A. Paul Sailed from Caesarea (1-6).
- B. Paul Warned of Trouble (7-13).
- C. Paul Encountered a Great Storm (14-20).
- D. Paul Prophesied of a Safe Shipwreck (21-38).
- E. Paul Was Shipwrecked but Safe (39-44).

II. The Sense and Meaning

- A. Because Paul had appealed to Caesar, Agrippa and Festus sent Paul by ship to Rome (1-6).
 - 1. Observe that Luke is back with Paul, as he writes that “we” should sail into Italy.
 - a. Luke had arrived in Jerusalem with Paul two years earlier (21:17-18).
 - b. Since “Paul and certain other prisoners” were delivered, Luke was not one.
 - c. And Aristarchus was with them also (19:29; 20:4; Col 4:10; Philemon 1:24).
 - 2. Cornelius was of the Italian band (10:1), and Julius was of the emperor’s own troops.
 - 3. They were put on a ship with a home base of Adramyttium (port in the Aegean Sea).
 - 4. The intent was to sail by the coast of Asia (modern Turkey) for other business.
 - 5. They stopped the second day at Sidon, where Elisha had once lived (Luke 4:26; 6:17).
 - a. Julius, the Roman centurion, “courteously entreated” Paul to visit his friends.
 - b. This sounds more like a “cruise” than the transportation of a capital offender.
 - c. The Lord takes care of Paul with pagans, just as He did Joseph and Daniel.
 - 6. Due to the nature of sailing, the wind was favorable to the longer, circuitous route.
 - 7. Though it was the Mediterranean Sea, it also had the names of adjacent provinces.
 - 8. Their next stop after Sidon was Myra of Lycia, a port on the south of Asia Minor.
 - 9. Here Julius transfers Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus to a ship out of Alexandria, Egypt.
- B. Sailing from Myra on the second ship, Paul prophesies danger for ship and occupants (7-13).
 - 1. With unfavorable winds, they progressed only to Cnidus after many days of sailing.
 - a. “Over against” is an expression meaning near or opposite of but not truly at.
 - b. Cnidus was a city and promontory off the coast of Asia Minor.
 - 2. Turning south, they sailed under the island of Crete to the fair havens and Lasea.
 - a. Salmone is the eastern tip of Crete, a very visible promontory when at sea.
 - b. A promontory is a high piece of land jutting into the sea beyond the coastline.
 - c. They sailed south of Crete passing near the eastern end called Salmone.
 - d. The fair havens was a safe place to stop, and it was a few miles from Lasea.
 - 3. Due to the contrary winds, many days had been lost and it was now dangerous sailing.
 - a. They have had a difficult time at several points with poor wind (4,7).
 - b. The fast was the Day of Atonement, in our October (Lev 16:29-31; 23:27-28).
 - c. It was after the autumnal equinox, when the Mediterranean was dangerous.
 - 4. Paul warns them to stay put with a spirit of prophecy of the danger to sail at this time.
 - a. He warns with spiritual perception that there will be hurt and much damage.
 - b. He warns the cargo and ship will be greatly damaged and lives endangered.
 - 5. Paul is overridden by the ship’s owner, the centurion, and a majority of the crew.
 - a. Like the owners of the Titanic, the ship owner was too confident of his vessel.
 - b. And a majority of the sailors agreed, for the fair havens was not a winter port.
 - c. The goal was to sail to Phenice, a port on Crete’s south coast, for the winter.
 - d. It was a very safe harbor, as it contained a right angle to protect from storms.

- e. When a gentle wind came in their favor, they presumed they had their choice.
 - f. But confident leaders, majority votes, and positive circumstances can lie.
 - g. Showing all due precaution to increase their odds, they sailed close to shore.
- C. Paul and his company encounter an incredible storm in the Mediterranean Sea (14-20).
- 1. The Lord sent a great tempestuous and contrary wind that beat against Crete.
 - a. Euroclydon was a great storm we would call hurricane, typhoon, or cyclone.
 - b. The wind caught the ship so they couldn't tack into it, so they let it run free.
 - c. Clauda was a small island southwest of Crete, which they passed on the south.
 - d. Their lifeboat, used for going to shore, was with great difficulty taken on deck.
 - e. They tried to strengthen the ship with cables to hold the wooden ship together.
 - f. Fearing "quicksands" (great sand reefs) near Africa, they dropped all sails.
 - g. So the ship was driven by the wind against her mast and poles without sails.
 - 2. Being exceedingly tossed with this storm, on the second day they dumped some cargo.
 - 3. Being exceedingly tossed with this storm, on the third day they cast out the tackling.
 - 4. The sun and stars (a clear day or night) were not seen for many days, causing despair.
 - 5. But in the midst of such despair and fear, Paul finds comfort from the Lord he served.
- D. Paul prophesied they should be cast upon an island with the deliverance of all hands (21-38).
- 1. He first reminds them that he had warned them of this calamity at fair havens (9-10).
 - 2. Paul fasted long unto the Lord and then was granted a comforting vision by an angel.
 - a. He exhorted them to good cheer, for they would all be saved, but for the ship.
 - b. He identifies Himself with the God able to send angels and give such visions.
 - c. He identifies Himself as the most important passenger and the others as extras.
 - d. The conclusion of such promises is this: be of good cheer, for I believe God!
 - 3. On the fourteenth night, the sailors could tell that they were approaching land.
 - a. Adria is the Adriatic Sea, for then it continued from Italy and Greece to Africa.
 - b. They were not in the Adriatic Sea as we limit it, for they were very near Malta.
 - c. They sounded in those days without radar or sonar, but by lines and weights.
 - d. A fathom is from the middle finger of each hand with arms stretched out wide, or approximate six feet on the average man.
 - e. With only crucial tackling left, they used four anchors to keep from wrecking.
 - 4. The sailors try to escape by using the lifeboat under guise of casting more anchors.
 - a. Paul informs the centurion that all must be kept in the ship for total salvation.
 - b. God is going to vindicate and magnify Paul without the use of natural means.
 - c. With Julius now trusting Paul, the soldiers cut the ropes and let the lifeboat go.
 - d. Consider wisely (1) conditions for God's promises and (2) salvation by grace.
 - 5. Paul exhorts the entire company of men to eat and trust God for a safe deliverance.
 - a. They would need strength to swim to shore, so Paul urged food on them.
 - b. We have a godly hyperbole that not a hair from any head would perish.
 - c. Paul gave a wonderful example by taking bread, thanking God, and eating!
 - d. And look at the effect he had on the rest of the men. They took cheer and ate.
 - e. There were 276 on board, and when they had eaten, they cast out the food.
- E. They are shipwrecked on the island of Malta, but all 276 arrive safely on shore (39-44).
- 1. With the light of day, they are able to see the land, but they do not recognize it yet.
 - 2. They aim for a creek with the remaining rudder and mainsail to avoid wrecking.
 - 3. They ran aground, which allowed the sea to smash the ship from the rear and break it.
 - 4. The soldiers determine to kill the prisoners to fulfill their duty of not losing a prisoner.
 - 5. But Julius the centurion has come to trust Paul by the grace of God and he is saved.
 - 6. The swimmers were urged to dive in and swim, and the rest came on parts of the ship.
 - 7. All men – all 276 – escaped this violent storm and shipwreck and made it safe to land.