

## Acts 27:1-44 **Shipwreck on the way to Rome**

### Paul and company set sail from Caesarea heading for Rome

<sup>1</sup> 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.

### Caesarea to Sidon

<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.

### Sidon to Myra

<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.

### Myra to Fair Havens

<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 warned of pending danger

<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.

### Caught in Euroclydon (tempestuous wind) – All hope lost

<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.

### God encouraged Paul in the night – Paul encouraged the others

<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."

### Anchored in the Adriatic (Mediterranean) Sea

<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.

### Sailors attempt to escape – Paul warned the Centurion

<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.

### Paul led the people to take food and break their fast

<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.

### Ship run aground and broken up

<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.

### All escaped to land safely

<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. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

### Paul and company set sail from Caesarea heading for Rome

- ✚ Paul and other prisoners were delivered to the charge of Julius of the Augustan Regiment.
- ✧ After consulting with King Agrippa, Festus decided it was time to send Paul to Rome since he had appealed to Caesar. [Acts 25:10-12, 21, 26:32, 27:1]
- ✧ There is still no indication of a formal charge against Paul, sent to Caesar.
- ✧ Julius a centurion of the Augustan Regiment was the commander over 100 soldiers called a cohort.
- ✧ The Augustan Regiment consisted of 5 cohorts assigned to the Governors palace in Caesarea.

- ✧ Luke the writer of the book of Acts uses the word, we, indicating that he was a part of Paul's company and accompanying him on the way to Rome. Luke was the faithful physician that was with Paul on most of his travels. [Colossians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 1:24]

### Caesarea to Sidon

- ✧ 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. [Acts 27:2]
- ✧ 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. [Acts 27:3]
- ✧ The Adramyttium ship appears to be heading toward its home port in Mysia of Asia, since their intended route was along the coastline from Caesarea to Sidon where they stopped the next day before sailing on around the south coastline of Asia.
- ✧ Aristarchus had been traveling with Paul on his third missionary journey first mentioned in Ephesus from which they traveled to Macedonia, Greece, and had gone ahead of him to Troas where Paul joined them after going through Macedonia on his way to Jerusalem with the gifts for the Jews from the Gentile Churches. [Acts 19:29—20:5]
- ✧ It appears that Aristarchus was part of the company that carried the Gentile gifts to Jerusalem. He later is mentioned as a prisoner with Paul. [Colossians 4:10, Philemon 1:24]
- ✧ At Sidon, Paul was allowed liberty to go to his friends and receive care.

### Sidon to Myra

- ✧ When we had put to sea from there, we sailed under the shelter of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. And when we had sailed over the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. [Acts 27:4-5]
- ✧ Their route took them North of Cyprus as they sailed over the sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, both being the mainland north of Cyprus.
- ✧ Myra of Lycia is a seaport on the southernmost extension of Asia as the coastline turns northward from there along the Aegean Sea.

### Myra to Fair Havens

- ✧ While docked at Myra, the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing to Italy, and put his charge on board. [Acts 27:6]
- ✧ 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. Passing it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea. [Acts 27:7-8]
- ✧ It took many days to sail the short distance from Myra to Cnidus along the southern coast of Asia where the wind would not allow them to travel north or west across the Aegean Sea toward Greece and Italy, so they turned south toward Crete.
- ✧ Passing around the east end of Crete and along the southern coast of Crete they came to the sea port of Fair Havens near the city of Lasea, a point about midway of the south coast of Crete.
- ✧ From Crete to Italy is open sea in the Mediterranean.

### Paul warned of pending danger

- ✧ Now when much time had been spent, and sailing was now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, 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 27:9-10]
- ✧ Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the **helmsman and the owner of the ship** than by the things spoken by Paul. 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. [Acts 27:11-12]

- ✧ The Fast mentioned here would be the Fast of the Day of Atonement in the fall season the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar sometime in September to October depending on the year and calendar, a time when winter storms are common, make sailing the open sea dangerous.
- ✧ Paul warned of the danger ahead for the voyage, but the professional seamen out voted him because they considered the Fair Havens port to be unsuitable to winter in.
- ✧ They wanted to attempt to reach Phoenix a harbor on the west coast of Crete more suitable for wintering, opening both Southwest and Northwest which was only a short distance from Fair Havens.

### Caught in Euroclydon (tempestuous wind) – All hope lost

- ✧ When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. [\[Acts 27:13\]](#)
- ✧ But not long after, a tempestuous head wind arose, called Euroclydon. So when the ship was caught, and could not head into the wind, we let her drive. And running under the shelter of an island called Clauda, we secured the skiff with difficulty. 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. And because we were exceedingly tempest-tossed, the **next day they lightened the ship. On the third day we threw the ship's tackle overboard with our own hands.** 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.** [\[Acts 27:14-20\]](#)
  - ✧ Euroclydon is a circular wind like a typhoon, cyclone, or hurricane.
  - ✧ Clauda is a small island 50 miles southwest of Crete.
  - ✧ Syrtis Sands are the sandbanks off the North coast of Africa.

### God encouraged Paul in the night – Paul encouraged the others

- ✧ 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. And **now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.** For there stood by me this night an **angel of the God** to whom I belong and whom I serve, saying, '**Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.**' "Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. **However, we must run aground on a certain island.**" [\[Acts 27:21-26\]](#)
  - ✧ The abstinence from food was a typical practice of seamen when in peril on the sea, praying to their pagan gods for deliverance. [\[Jonah 1:4-6\]](#)
  - ✧ All things are under the control of Almighty God.
  - ✧ The Angel of God came to Paul in the night and informed him of what was ahead for them.
  - ✧ The ship would be destroyed, but no lives would be lost.
  - ✧ They would run aground on an Island.
  - ✧ Because Paul must be brought before Caesar, and God had granted all on board the ship to Paul.
  - ✧ God takes action when all human hope is gone.

### Anchored in the Adriatic (Mediterranean) Sea

- ✧ Now when the fourteenth night had come, **as we were driven up and down** in the Adriatic (Mediterranean) Sea, about midnight the sailors sensed that they were drawing near some land. 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. **Then, fearing lest**

**we should run aground on the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern, and prayed for day to come.** [Acts 27:27-29]

### Sailors attempt to escape – Paul warned the Centurion

✚ 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, Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "**Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.**" Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the skiff and let it fall off. [Acts 27:30-32]

✧ By this time the evidence of experience has convinced Julius the centurion that Paul has information from a source greater than the professional sailors, and at Paul's word, they cut the ropes and let the skiff fall away.

✧ The God of Paul has proven to be the real God of revelation.

### Paul led the people to take food and break their fast

✚ 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. 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.**" [Acts 27:33-34]

✚ 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. Then they were all encouraged, and also took food themselves. And in all **we were two hundred and seventy-six persons on the ship.** So when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship and threw out the wheat into the sea. [Acts 27:35-38]

✧ Paul set the example and gave thanks publicly to the God of creation, assuring everyone that not a hair of anyone's head would fall.

✧ Everyone on the ship realized that Paul's word was reliable and with the encouragement from God they followed Paul's example and broke their 14 day fast.

✧ The ship would be wrecked that day, so after they had eaten, they threw the cargo of wheat overboard to lighten the ship.

### Ship run aground and broken up

✚ 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.** 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. 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. [Acts 27:39-41]

### All escaped to land safely

✚ And the soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away and escape. [Acts 27:42]

✚ 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, and the rest, some on boards and some on parts of the ship. And so it was that **they all escaped safely to land.**

[Acts 27:43-44]

✧ The more Julius the Centurion saw of Paul and witnessed the results of his faith, the more Julius learned to respect Paul as a valuable person, and one to be trusted.

✧ To save Paul's life, Julius spared all the prisoners so as not to show partiality.

✧ Everyone escaped safely to the shore.

✧ God kept His word as He had said, that He had granted to Paul all who were on the ship.

[Acts 27:24]