

Acts

Part 61 – “Certainty in the Storm”

Glossary of terms in Acts 27

Lee - shelter from wind or weather given by a neighboring object, especially nearby land.

The Fast - the Day of Atonement in the fall, when Mediterranean voyages become too dangerous for sailing vessels

Weighed anchor - raising the anchor of the vessel from the sea floor and hoisting it up to be stowed on board the vessel.

The ship's boat - a smaller vessel used to transport people from the ship to land.

"Lowered the gear" - brought down the sails

"Jettison the cargo" - throwing the cargo overboard

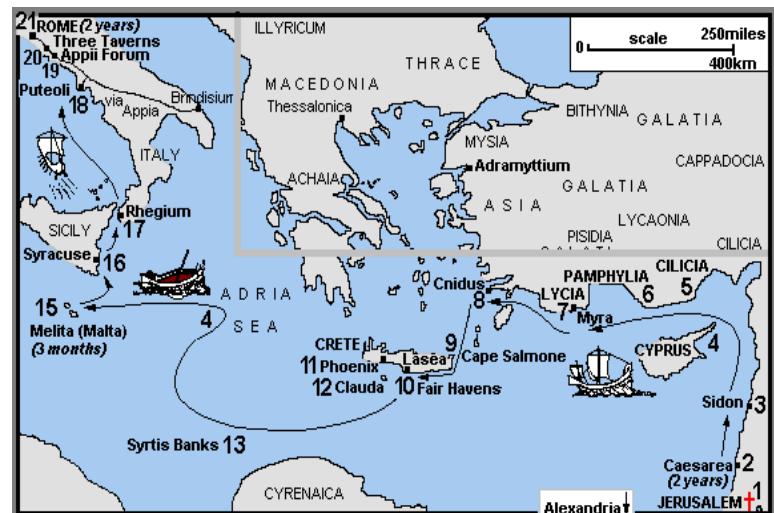
Ship's tackle - fishing gear

Fathom - a unit of length equal to six feet (approximately 1.8 m), chiefly used in reference to the depth of water.

Stern - the back part of a ship or boat

Bow - the front part of a ship or boat

Foresail - the lowest and usually largest sail set on the foremast of a sailing vessel.



Acts 27:1-44

Main Idea: In the midst of great trials, we must trust the Word of God.

In the midst of great trials, we grow in our understanding of God's sovereignty and our responsibility. (vv. 1, 24-25, 30-32, 42-44)

- God's sovereignty – the certainty of God's power to accomplish His plans
- Man's responsibility – man's power to execute a task
- "This is among the clearest examples in Scripture of the interplay and harmony between God's sovereignty and our responsibility. Paul was no passive fatalist. He knew beyond the shadow of a doubt that he and all those travelling with him would be preserved from drowning, for God had said so and God's purpose could not fail (27:24-26). On the other hand, the decisions of the sailors, the centurion, and his soldiers were integral parts of that divine purpose. Julius and his men had to stop the sailors from abandoning ship. Their action was an indispensable means to the achievement of God's saving plan." – *Let's Study Acts*, Dennis E. Johnson
- "These are real people, making real decisions with real outcomes. Yet through them all – and all the contingencies of our lives, too – our sovereign God quietly, inexorably works everything together for good for those who love him, who are called according to his purpose, to be conformed to the likeness of his Son (Rom. 8:28-29)." – *Let's Study Acts*, Dennis E. Johnson

In the midst of great trials, we trust God. (vv. 7, 13-15, 18-20, 24-25, 41-44)

- The road to Rome wasn't easy. Even though Paul knew that God had promised him that he would get there. (Acts 23:11)
 - It took four trials, a great storm, a slow boat and a shipwreck for him to get closer to the destination God intended for him.
 - Hardship, troubles, trials and suffering are part of the "normal" Christian life. The whole of Scripture points to this. The Bible doesn't promise health or wealth. It promises tribulation and trials in this life with the hope of Christ's return to make all things right.
 - "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33; see also 1 Peter 4:12)
 - "Paul's calm ability to encourage others sprang from his faith in God, his calm confidence that the divine Word would never fail. The depth of your trust in God's promises is shown not when you enjoy smooth sailing on calm seas, but when the hurricane howls, the breakers crash, and those around you lose all hope. Faith grows strong as you lean on God in tough times, and find him faithful." – *Let's Study Acts*, Dennis E. Johnson
- Trust in scary circumstances
 - "When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer." – Corrie Ten Boom
 - God is sovereign – He is powerful – over storms. He doesn't often stop them, but rather gives us the certainty of His salvation in the midst of them. This doesn't mean you won't die. It means that whatever happens, you are His. (Philippians 1:21, Joshua 1:9)
 - The scary circumstances (the storm) can lead us to think we're doing the wrong thing, but compare this story to Jonah's story.
 - Sometimes God leads you beside quiet waters other times through the valley of the shadow of death, in both situations He is with you and you are called to trust Him.
- Trust in hard circumstances often involves lament. (Psalm 13, 22, 130)
 - Pour out your complaint to God and trust that in doing so he will turn your heart towards Him.

In the midst of great trial, we must speak the Word of God. (vv. 9-11, 21-26, 33-36)

- Your faith as an individual blesses the people in your community. (Genesis 12:2-3)
 - Because Paul was bold enough to speak the words that God told him, those who did not know Christ were physically saved from the storm and shipwreck.
- The credibility of Paul
 - He has a relationship with the people with whom he is speaking.
 - He speaks wisdom to them and is still with them even when they don't take his advice.
 - He is with them in the trial.
 - They got to see his character under stress. They saw how he endured and it made an impression.
- Gospel – Christ must be at the center of our speech. His glory must motivate our desire to bless those around us. If we are simply seeking to "be nice" without the gospel at the heart of it, then we are actually worshiping ourselves.
 - People need to know the truth in trials. The need to hear the gracious Word of God.