

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Paul's Journey to Rome: The Winds
Acts 27:1-26

Last time...in Acts 26, Paul stood before King Agrippa II, Festus, and the Roman nobles.

A Tale of Two Hearts

1. the zealous hard heart of a raging antichrist
2. the zealous soft heart of a pleading servant of Christ

and Two Tragedies

1. "That's just crazy talk!"
2. "You almost persuaded me to be a Christian."

This time...in Acts 27, Paul's journey to Rome begins

- v1-26 The Winds, this morning
- v27-44 The Ship, on 7/16...we are in TN next Sunday
 Every "teacher" is different but have the same Spirit
 so come Rev 3:13

This journey is chronicled by Luke, who is travelling with Paul
The time of year is August

v1 Paul had appealed to Caesar; he is innocent of the charges leveled by his people but the Jews are steadfastly maintaining their pressure on the Roman governor to execute him

Festus had nothing to write to Nero to judge, even after Agrippa's offer to help

And...it had long been Paul's desire to go to Rome

Rom 1:9-11 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers; Making request, if by any means
 (if he had only known how God was going to give him the desire of his heart; it is good we do not know!)
 now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;

So now after 2 years + of being unjustly imprisoned and seemingly put on the shelf other than a few opportunities to witness of Jesus Christ to Gentile governors, Paul's journey to Rome begins

What is his "station" in life?

1. A servant of Jesus Christ
2. A prisoner of Rome...surrendered to Julius, a centurion assigned to protect Nero...an elite commander of elite forces

Those two stations are not contradictory
Freed from sin and death, a servant of God/child of God is often the prisoner of men on earth

Q: Is it possible for the faithful remnant of the Bride of Christ on earth to stand against the Woke agenda and the LGBTQ+/trans/drag queen delusion and go to jail as a result?

Absolutely, and time will tell in these Days of Noah and Days of Lot

v2 Julius got his men and his prisoners passage on a commercial ship registered in the seaport of Adramittium destined for Myra (v5)

[map]

The **intended** route was to hug the coastline of Asia, where there would be **calm seas**, i.e. **calm winds**, not a direct line, the shortest distance between 2 points, thru open seas, a far more treacherous route

Q: How many believers in Jesus Christ are onboard this vessel?

1. Paul
2. Luke

3. Aristarchus of Thessalonica

Acts 19:29	“arrested” by the angry mob in Ephesus
Acts 20:4	travelled with Paul from Corinth to Jerusalem
stayed with Paul during his imprisonment in Caesarea	
Col 4:10	“my fellow prisoner” (prison letter)
Philemon 23-24	“my fellow laborer”

A loyal friend, very much a part of Paul’s ministry

There is MUCH to be said for loyalty, which is tested in difficult circumstances (this journey being another one!) and revealed over an expanse of time

Loyalty is rare and precious, rooted in Greater Love (John 15:13), a choice to act for the benefit of another vs Self

v3 First stop: Sidon, not far away

Why such a quick first stop is not recorded

(“Are we there yet?” “I have to go to the bathroom.”)

Julius allowed Paul “shore leave” to hang out with his friends there

He treated Paul with respect, as if there was a soldier-to-soldier connection, the soldier of Rome and the soldier of Christ

We are soldiers in a battle, an intense spiritual battle...so we have been chosen

2 Tim 2:3-4 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life;
that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

v4 The plan was to hug the coast in calm seas/calm winds
However, the winds were **contrary**...antagonistic, opposite/opposing...
not allowing the ship near the coast but impeding progress and pushing it further
out to deeper and rougher seas

What is happening?

Bad luck?

Happenstance, coincidence, “karma”?

No such thing in a universe in the hands of the Almighty, Sovereign,
Omnipotent Creator

Demonic resistance and interference

The prince of the power of the air (Satan, Eph 2:2) does not want the
Holy Spirit-filled and Holy-Spirit-led Apostle Paul in his city
Satan is launching an attack to prevent Paul from getting to Rome

As you are following the Lord and are resisted/opposed, know who is behind it
and fight the battle accordingly

v5-6 The contrary winds pushed the ship away from the coastline,
past Cilicia (chief town = Tarsus) and Pamphylia to Lycia, Myra being its seaport

There, Julius gets a “transfer pass” onto an Egyptian ship, registered in Alexandria,
bound for Rome

The fertile Nile River Delta was a major “bread basket” for the Roman Empire so
this is a cargo ship filled with grain (v38)

v7-8 On board the ship bound for Rome, what happens to the winds?
They die down, there is **virtually no wind**
If anything, they were probably weak westerly winds

They are “in a holding pattern” out at sea

A **delaying** tactic of Satan to

- stall forward progress
- stir up impatience
- lull the unsuspecting into carelessness

Do you feel like your walk with Jesus is in a holding pattern?
Why might that be?

After many days of tortuously slow progress, the ship finally arrives at Cnidus
Under normal sailing conditions, a ship could cover the distance in a single day

From Cnidus the ship goes SW to Crete, barely making it to Salmone on the east coast of
Crete

After passing Salmone with great difficulty, the ship arrives at
Fair Havens/Good Harbors near a small town names Lasea

v9-10 By this time, a lot of precious and valuable time (“time is money”) has been “wasted”
Summer is over, Autumn may have passed, Winter has arrived or soon will

Note: the fast = Day of Atonement, in mid Oct

Sailing in the Med Sea...they must now enter the open seas to continue the journey...
is now a dangerous proposition

So, at this point, Paul

- who is NOT a sailor
- but has lots of experience on the Med Sea

2 Cor 11:25-26

thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have
been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of
waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own*
countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the
city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea,
in perils among false brethren;

steps up to give his assessment/perception of the situation at hand

He is able to “discern the face of the sky and the earth”...AND “the time” (Luke 12:56),
and spiritually discerning to sense what is going on behind the scenes in the
spiritual realm

He respectfully and humbly warns the centurion (charged to protect and deliver him)
and the captain of the ship that serious trouble lies ahead if the voyage continues

He advises them that harm and damage will come to the cargo, the ship, and the
passengers if the dangerous conditions are ignored and they press forward

ala Captain of the *Titanic* was warned

ala CEO and captain of *Titanic* tourist submarine *Titan* was warned

v11 But...like the captains of the *Titanic* and the *Titan*,
the centurion and the captain/owner of the ship (“time is money!”) decide to
ignore Paul’s warnings and to press on

(“He’s no sailor! What does he know?!

We are the experts and professionals here!”)

v12 In addition, the majority of the crew does not want to winter in this little town where entertainment options are negligible

“This is an inconvenient place for 3 months of shore leave!
Phoenix, a much bigger city, would be a far better place!
And it’s only a short distance further up this coast of Crete.
Danger? Ha, my middle name is Danger!” (Ben Ring’s son...)

v13 And when a **soft south wind**, a **gentle, favorable wind at their back** began to blow,
they all thought they made the right decision and they set sail
“We told you! Aren’t you glad we didn’t listen to Paul!”

What is happening?
A very inviting deception, a sneak attack is brewing

If “everything is coming up roses” in your walk with the Lord...heads up!

v14-15 Very soon after had they had self-confidently gotten under way, a **tempestuous wind**,
a great violent storm known as a Euroclydon, seized the ship and drove it out into
the open dangerous winter waters of the Med Sea, far from the desired harbor of
Phoenix

“Taken by storm,” the crew was not able to fight the wind so they let the wind drive the
ship wherever it would take them
They were unable to control the ship so the crew surrendered to the wind that knew
no mercy

Satan is attempting to murder Paul before he gets to Rome,
just as he attempted to murder Jesus on the Sea of Galilee (Matt 8:24-27)...
which ended with a whimper when Jesus rebuked the winds and the seas,
restoring a great calm

Great storms happen in life, do they not?
For the child of God following Jesus, a distinct spiritual element is often involved
It is vitally important to know that

v16-17 The violent wind drove the ship south of a tiny island named Clauda, about 30 miles SW of Crete

The rough winds and seas presented 3 problems to the crew

1. the skiff they had been towing could be driven into the ship, possibly damaging it; worst case scenario: sink the ship

So, being proactive, the crew, with great difficulty
("Why is everything so hard?!!!")
was able to secure the skiff onboard

2. the ship itself was in danger of falling apart

So, the crew wrapped chains/ropes under the ship and tied them tightly to keep the ship in one piece

3. the ship was being driven south toward the Syrtis Sands, sand from the Sahara blown into the Med Sea and gathered by the sea currents in large shifting sandbars, submarine dangers to all ships; so the crew let down the sail to not catch the wind pushing them that direction

The "out of control" ship was captured and driven by the wind at its will

2 Tim 2:24-26 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

v18 For those of you have gone on a cruise vacation, did you every encounter rough winds and seas that tossed the very large boat you were on?

Did you get "green around the gills"?

Imagine being tossed about on a relatively much smaller, wooden ship!

In fear for their lives, the captain commands the crew to lighten the ship so it will ride higher in the waves...Paul was correct (v10)

What was thrown overboard?

Only God knows

It is NOT the cargo of grain, their profit (that happens in v38)

But something of value in the world

Is there something of the world in your life that the Lord wants you to throw overboard?

Do it!

v19 The next day the tackling of the ship, weighty equipment, gear, baggage, and furniture were hurled overboard; life is more valuable than any amount of worldly stuff

v20 The relentless great storm blocked out the sun and the stars, the points of reference sailors used to navigate

Having been driven by the “will of the wind” for many days, the crew is utterly disoriented, not having any idea where they are or even the direction they are being driven

Then, after many sea-tossed and “blind” days, something else is “tossed overboard”

Fear has gripped all onboard the ship

Their hope of surviving this storm was

- taken away...ripped off by the thief
- tossed overboard

Hopelessness comes with powerlessness to help oneself in a circumstance

No power, no hope

They have no power, they have no hope

At which point Paul stands up, “taking command” of the situation

v21-22 After a long abstinence

either from eating any food because of the sea sickness

or of Paul holding his peace for a long time until he heard from the Lord

or even both

Paul said

Sirs...speaking respectfully and humbly

I told you so!

now...listen to me now, this time

I exhort you...advise you

to be of good cheer...to be encouraged in the midst of this violent storm!

1. there will be no loss of life...ALL will survive
2. the ship will be a total loss

Imagine the response of the others onboard!

I think attentive and reacting with

1. Whew!
2. Huh?!

How can both things possibly be true?

How could Paul possibly say such a “ridiculous” thing?

v23-24 Paul bears witness of the hope that lies within him:
 this night...tonight, just a few moments ago
 the angel of God...Heb 1:14
 whose I am...1 Cor 6:19-20
 whom I serve...a servant of the Living God
 (sounding like the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel,
 1 Kings 18:15)
 said to me...a messenger from heaven with a message from heaven
 Fear not Paul...because he was fearful just like everybody else in this great
 violent storm as a man of like passions as Elijah and us
 you must be brought before Ceasar...Acts 23:11, a promise by the Living God

- Who cannot lie and cannot fail
- Who means what He says and says what He means
- Whose Word must be fulfilled
- Who is Almighty...1 John 4:4

God has given to him ALL the passengers...ALL will survive,
 by the power of God

The ship was not going to preserve the people
 The people could not save themselves
 But God...

Paul is comforted and encouraged and strengthened by the Word of God and the promises
 of God, as are we when we are in the midst of a great and relentless storm

Ps 31:24 Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in
 the LORD.

Ps 33:18 Behold, the eye of the LORD *is* upon them that fear him, upon them that
 hope in his mercy

Ps 42:5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and *why* art thou disquieted in me?
 hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him *for* the help of his countenance

Ps 119:114 Thou *art* my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word.

Ps 146:5 Happy *is he* that *hath* the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope *is* in the
 LORD his God:

v25 Wherefore...Therefore...since The Almighty made a promise and is trustworthy
sirs...always respectful and humble as the servant of God, gentle and meek
be of good cheer...be encouraged
the 7th and final time this phrase appears in Scripture, all in NT
for...because
I believe God...I depend on the Living God, I lean on the Rock that cannot be moved
that it shall be even as it was told me...to the very letter of every infallible word since
God is good to His Word

Ps 119:89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

My and our survival depends on God's faithfulness to His Word
He is ever faithful
Our hope...anticipation with pleasure...is certain

And in every situation/circumstance lies an opportunity to witness of Jesus Christ
Iowa Conference: Fishers of Men in the Last Days
John Higgins: on oxygen, as needed, via a "carrying pack"
Breakfast in a café on Friday morning
In comes a frail old man with an oxygen "carrying pack"
John was nudged by the Holy Spirit to go witness to him

"We are dying, you and me.
When we die, we are either going to heaven or hell.
I'm going to heaven because I know the Lord.
Where are you going? Do you know the Lord?"

"No." (an honest answer!)

John witnessed to him and the old man accepted Jesus Christ in his heart
A Divine appointment kept by faith

Speaking of which...

v26 However, we have an "unscheduled" Divine appointment to keep

God is navigating the ship now!
Ps 37:23 The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD:

What will happen onboard this storm-tossed ship where hope has failed?
We will look at that in two weeks

But in v1-26

As we walk with the Lord, we see and experience the same winds on our journey to
“a distant shore”

The winds affect us every day of our journey...they are ever-changing

- contrary...opposing
How frequently are we resisted in our walks?
How frequently are the circumstances in our lives antagonistic?
“Why is everything so hard?!”
Even when we are in the will of God!
Expect “contrary winds” and a bumpy road
- “dead”...delaying
We are at a standstill, in a holding pattern
Forward progress is minimal
Fueling the emotions (flesh) of frustration and impatience...
leading to foolish choices
hindering the choice (Spirit) of “cheerful endurance”
- gentle at our back...encouraging
Smooth sailing!
Finally, things are going our way!
The wind is at our back, we are going to make great progress now!
- tempestuous and violent...discouraging and frightening
Great “murderous” storms of life...health, financial, relational
Fear, doubt, anxiety, and despair abound

Note: The winds of false doctrine can take all these forms

But God...is navigating

2 Tim 1:7

2 Tim 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not
according to our works, but according to his own purpose and
grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began

Nothing is “unscheduled” in a walk with the Lord

In “stormy conditions” we must lean on the infallible promises of God
He sustains us in the midst of the storms, He is with us and leading us **thru** the
storm

He is our Lighthouse, Refuge, Strong Tower

He is teaching us and transforming us, conforming us into His image

A gift from Mike and Elsa: A smooth sea never made a skilled sailor

Whether the winds are

- contrary/opposing
- dead/delaying
- gentle/encouraging but deceptive
- violent/threatening, frightful, and discouraging lasting for a long time

the Sovereign God of all the earth is directing us, using the winds of Satan to navigate us from Divine appointment to Divine appointment

PTL!

That truth yields fruit

- patience...cheerful endurance
- peace...that defies understanding
- hope...confident expectation of pleasure i.e. salvation
- comfort

in world that knows none of those things

God reigns!

The Most High rules in the kingdom of men!

In the “beginning of sorrows” and the Days of Noah and the Days of Lot in which we live... characterized by deception and disgusting perversion...

- be spiritually discerning
- pray for discernment
- Luke 21:28 *And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*
- Luke 21:36 *Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

Eph 6:10-13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles (winds) of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Map of Paul's Journey to Rome

