

Acts 27

Introduction:

No one can accuse Paul of having it too easy. At this point in his ministry he's a prisoner of the Roman government and about to board a ship to take him to Rome to face trial. Not long into the voyage a storm will come upon them. By the end of the chapter the ship will be destroyed.

Compare this to storms and shipwrecks in your own life.

This chapter teaches us how we can face them.

Message: You can't avoid storms and shipwrecks, but you can trust the Lord and survive them.

- I. Sometimes storms and shipwrecks are unavoidable. 27:9-13, 21
- II. During storms and shipwrecks, you know that you're not in control 27:15-20, 27
- III. During storms and shipwrecks, there is reason to take heart. 27:22-25

Details:

27:2 Sir William Ramsey, in his book *St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen*, points out that on a military voyage such as this one, with a convoy of prisoners, Luke and Aristarchus would normally not have been allowed to travel. As a Roman citizen, however, Paul would have been able to bring along his own slaves. This may be how they made the trip, making themselves slaves to Paul.

27:9 *the Fast* Day of Atonement, *Yom Kippur*, somewhere about October 1.

IV. Sometimes storms and shipwrecks are unavoidable.

27:9-13, 21

A. Paul would have avoided the disaster, but the decision was not up to him. 27:10, 21

B. The decision highlights the importance of godly counsel. 27:9-13

i. Godly counsel can help us avoid storms and shipwrecks. No guarantee, but in this case it would have made a difference. Paul was right, but they had many reasons for not listening to him.

a) 27:9 Much time had been spent.

- It's easy to become impatient waiting on the Lord's timing. Godly counsel can help bring balance into our decision-making when we begin to get impatient.

b) 27:11 The experts (helmsman and the owner of the ship) agreed to go.

- Godly counsel can even be better than expert advice. Not implying we shouldn't consult experts, just pointing out that even their abilities can be limited.
- For example, the Bible knows more about the world's future than all the diplomats in the UN put together. We shouldn't expect them to listen to it, however, because their ignorance of it is precisely what will bring some of the prophecies to fulfillment.

c) 27:12a They didn't like the present spot they were in.

- Godly counsel can be better than looking at present circumstances. We may not like where we are at present, but that doesn't mean God doesn't have a plan for our being there.

d) 27:12b The majority advised to set sail.

- Godly counsel can be better than majority opinion. Alas, democracy has its shortcomings. Remember the 12 spies who scouted out the Promised Land?

e) 27:13 The conditions appeared right for departure.

- Godly counsel can be better than seeing favorable conditions.

C. But, all that said, you can't always make decisions for yourself. Other people's decisions can send us into storms. That's what happened to Paul.

V. During storms and shipwrecks, you know that you're not in control 27:15-20, 27

A. Conditions are completely chaotic.

- i. 27:15 *When the ship was caught ... we let her drive*
- ii. 27:17 *they struck sail and so were driven*
- iii. 27:18 *we were exceedingly tempest-tossed*
- iv. 27:20a *neither sun nor stars appeared for many days*
- v. 27:20b *no small tempest beat on us*
- vi. 27:27 *we were driven up and down in the Adriatic Sea*

B. We can be overcome with fear 27:17, 29 & 24

- i. 27:17 *fearing lest they should run aground on the Syrtis Sands*
- ii. 27:29 *fearing lest we should run aground on the rocks*
- iii. 27:24 The first thing the angel tells Paul is, "Do not be afraid."

C. There is a temptation to resort to unethical behavior 27:30-31, 42-43

- i. 27:30-31 The sailors thought to abandon the ship and everyone on it.
- ii. 27:42-43 The soldiers planned to kill all the prisoners.

D. It's possible to completely give up hope 27:20

E. Yet it's also possible to give thanks 27: 33-36

VI. During storms and shipwrecks, there is reason to take heart.

27:22-25

A. We can take heart because the Lord understands our need.

- i. That's why the angel appeared to Paul. God was deeply aware of all that was going on, not only all around Paul, but in his heart and mind as well. He precisely understands your situation too.

Matthew 6:8 (NKJV) "... For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

Hebrews 4:15 (NKJV) For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

B. We can take heart because we belong to Him.

27:23

- i. We belong to Him as the sheep to the shepherd.

John 10:11 (NKJV) "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

- ii. We belong to Him as a child to a Father.

1 John 3:1 (NKJV) Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

- iii. We belong to Him as a wife to a husband.

Ephesians 5:30-32 (NKJV) ³⁰For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. ³¹For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." ³²This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

- In each case we can take heart because we are His responsibility. He has obligated Himself to take care of us and the Lord always fulfills His commitments.

C. We can take heart because we are in His service.

27:23

1 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV) Who ever goes to war at his own expense? ...

Psalms 123:1-2 (NKJV) ¹Unto You I lift up my eyes, O You who dwell in the heavens.

*²Behold, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their masters,
As the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress,
So our eyes look to the LORD our God, Until He has mercy on us.*

D. We can take heart because we have His word.

27:25

Romans 15:4 (NKJV) For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

Read Psalm 42 43

Read Acts 27:44