

## ACTS CHAPTER 27

From Caesarea to Fair Havens - Paul's ship makes its way to Crete

### THE LAST JOURNEY BEGINS

#### Acts 27:1-8

*"When it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they handed over Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Cohort Augusta called Julius.*

*When we had embarked upon a ship of Adramyttium, which was bound for the ports along the coast of Asia Minor, we set sail, and Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us. The next day we put in at Sidon.*

*Julius treated Paul kindly and allowed him to visit his friends and to receive their attention.*

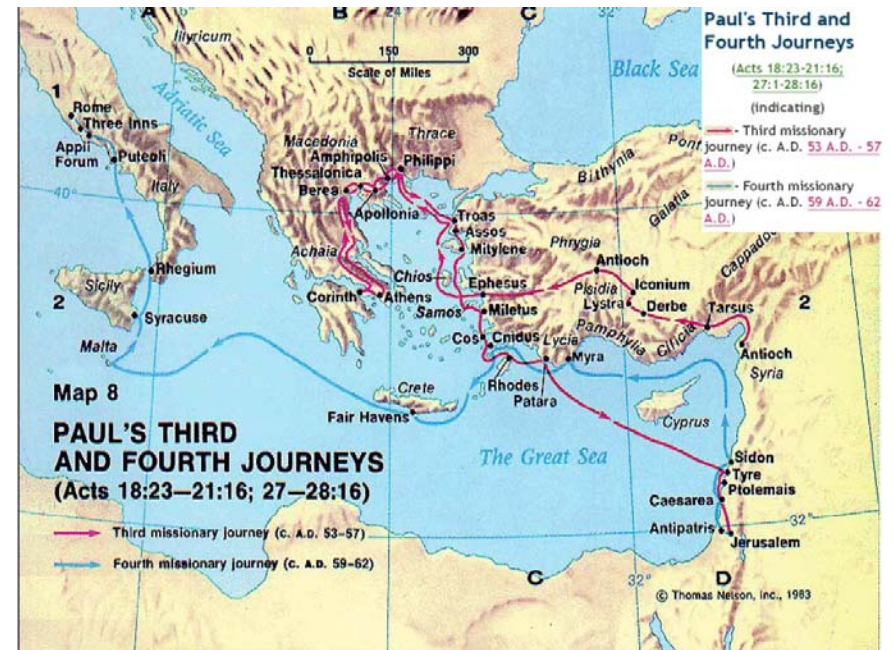
*We put out from there and sailed under the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us.*

*When we had crossed the sea, coasting along the shores of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we reached Myra in Lycia.*

*There the centurion found an Alexandrian vessel bound for Italy and embarked us on her. When we were making slow progress for many days and had with difficulty arrived off Cnidus, because the wind was unfavourable, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone.*

*With difficulty we sailed along the coast and reached a place called Fair Havens, to which the town of Lasea is near."*

Paul has embarked upon his last recorded journey.



### Paul's journey to Rome: Acts 21:27-28:31 59-62 AD

1. Antipatris – Act 22:21
2. Caesarea – Act 23:32-27:1
3. Sidon – Act 27:2-3
4. Myra (Lycia) – Act 27:4-6
5. Cnidus – Act 27:7
6. Fair Haven (close or Lasea) – Act 27:8-12
7. Past Crete & Claudia(Cauda) across the Sea of Adria – Act 27:13-30
8. Melita (Matla) – Act 27:39-28:11
9. Syracuse – Act 28:12
10. Rhegium – Act 28:13
11. Puteoli – Act 28:13
12. Appii Forum. The Three Taverns. Rome – Act 28:14-31

**1) When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, Paul and some other prisoners were handed over to a centurion named Julius, who belonged to the Imperial Regiment.**

It was common for Roman soldiers to accompany the transport of criminals, those awaiting trial, and also merchant ships filled with grain going from Egypt to Rome.

Julius, the Roman centurion, treated Paul with kindness and consideration which were more than mere courtesy throughout the voyage.

He is said to have belonged to the Augustan Cohort. We don't know much about this specific Augustan Regiment (several held that title).

That may have been a special corps acting as liaison officers between the Emperor and the provinces.

If so, Julius must have been a man of long experience and with an excellent military record.

It may well be that when Paul and Julius stood face to face one brave man recognized another.

“We” - Luke is tagging along!

Paul will go to Rome, spend some years there in prison, finally get to see the emperor,

we don't know from Scripture, but we have other reasons to believe that the case was dismissed;

Paul was freed, went on to other things, in Spain, Britain;

He is arrested again, is sent back to Rome in prison again, and

finally he is taken outside the city and beheaded.

Luke was with him right to the end!

Many scholars believe that Paul had illness and infirmities and that Luke was his personal physician.

**2) We boarded a ship from Adramyttium about to sail for ports along the coast of the province of Asia, and we put out to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica, was with us.**

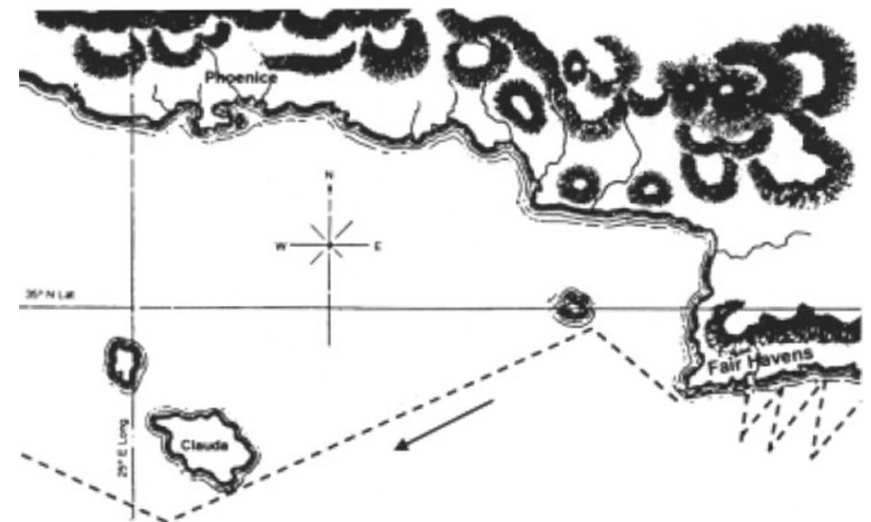
**3) The next day we landed at Sidon; and Julius, in kindness to Paul, allowed him to go to his friends so they might provide for his needs.**

The voyage began by coasting up to Sidon.

The next port of call was Myra but things were difficult.

The prevailing wind at that time of year was the west wind and they could make Myra only by slipping under Cyprus and then following a zigzag course up the coast.

The South Coast of Crete



At Myra they found a ship from Alexandria bound for Rome.

She would be a corn ship, for Egypt was the granary of Italy.

If we look at the map we can see what a long way round she had to take; but the strong west winds made the direct journey impossible.

After many days of beating against the wind she slipped under the lee of Crete and came to a little port called Fair Havens.

This chapter discusses an enormous amount of technical details about sailing techniques of the period (inferred through the Greek).

The ships were single-masted,  
they did not have a single rudder;

instead two paddles on either side, which they used to maneuver.

Even though Paul is a prisoner, Julius gives him the freedom in Sidon to visit the believers of the area. Julius trusts that Paul will not flee.

Throughout Scripture, centurions — the backbone of the Roman army are always seen in a favorable light (**Matthew 8, Luke 7, Acts 10**), and Julius was no exception.

He showed kindness to Paul by granting him liberty for refreshment and fellowship.

The kindness that Paul was shown reflects both his status as an un-condemned man awaiting an appeal before Caesar, and his evident godly character, giving him favor before man.

Paul was visibly different in character from the other prisoners on board, who were probably all condemned criminals being sent to Rome to die in the arena.

Although Paul could only have known Julius for perhaps a day at the most, there must have been something in Paul's character which gave Julius absolute confidence he would not try to escape.

Paul was accompanied by Aristarchus and Luke (notice the us of verse 2 and beyond) on this voyage;

Some have thought that they went "undercover" with Paul as his "slaves,"

It is probable that Aristarchus chose to act as the slave of Paul rather than be separated from him--and loyalty can go no further than that.

In Ch 19 he was the one that the mob grabbed in the whole scene; and

he was also the one who was with Paul on his last visit to Jerusalem; and

he is mentioned in Paul's letter to the Colossians as a very dear to Paul

It is just as likely that Aristarchus was convert who accompanied Paul with the Thessalonian offering to Jerusalem and stayed with Paul through his arrest and trials and then paid his own fare as a passenger the ships.

Luke may have signed on board as the ship's doctor.

***4) From there we put out to sea again and passed to the lee of Cyprus because the winds were against us. 5) When we had sailed across the open sea off the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we landed at Myra in Lycia. 6) There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy and put us on board. 7) We made slow headway for many days and had difficulty arriving off Cnidus. When the wind did not allow us to hold our course, we sailed to the lee of Crete, opposite Salmone. 8) We moved along the coast with difficulty and came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.***

The Jewish belief is that you couldn't really navigate those waters after the Feast of Tabernacles,

they are running out of time, and running into storm season.

They engaged passage on a larger vessel, typically carrying grain from Egypt to Italy.

## IN PERIL ON THE SEA

*Acts 27:9-20*

*"Since a considerable time had elapsed and since it was now no longer safe for sailing because the Fast was already past, Paul offered his advice.*

*'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I see that this voyage is going to be fraught with injury and much loss not only to the cargo and to the ship but also to our own lives.'*

*But the centurion was persuaded by the master and the owner rather than by what Paul said.*

*Since the harbour was not suitable to winter in, the majority proposed the plan of sailing from there, to see if they were able to reach Phoenixe and to winter there. Phoenixe is a harbour in Crete which faces south-west and north-west.*

*When a light southerly wind blew they thought that their purpose was as good as achieved; so they weighed anchor and coasted close in along the shores of Crete.*

*But soon a tempestuous wind called Euraquilo rushed down from it upon them.*

*When the ship was caught by it and could not keep her head to the wind, we yielded to the wind and scudded before it.*

*When we had run under the lee of a little island called Cauda we had great difficulty in getting the dinghy under control.*

*They used their lifting tackle to get it on board and they trapped the ship.*

*Because they were afraid that they would be cast on to the Syrtis Sands they loosed the gear and away they were driven.*

*When they were making very heavy weather on the next day, they began to throw equipment overboard; and on the third day with their own hands they jettisoned the ship's spare gear.*

*When neither sun nor stars were seen for many days and a great storm was raging, at last all hope that we should be saved was taken away."*

The decision is made to sail on, instead of wintering at Fair Havens on the island of Crete

*9) Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them, 10) "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also." 11) But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship. 12) Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.*

"The fast was now already past" - Yom Kippur had apparently gone by.

The Fast referred to is the Jewish Day of Atonement and on that year it fell in the first half of October, probably October 5 (the date of the Day of Atonement in AD 59).

According to the navigational practice of the time, sailing was considered doubtful after September and impossible by November.

"The dangerous season for sailing began about September 14 and lasted until November 11;

after the latter date all navigation on the open sea came to an end until winter was over."

The ancient ships had neither sextant nor compass and in cloudy and dark winter weather they had no means of finding their way.

the idea is that now as winter approaches, The sky will be cloudy nearly 100% of the time and the weather storms will make sailing all the more dangerous.

It is quite certain that Paul was the most experienced traveler on board that ship.

It was Paul's advice that they should winter in Fair Havens where they were.

The ship was an Alexandrian corn ship.

The owner would be the contractor who was bringing the cargo of corn to Rome.

The centurion, being the senior officer on board, had the last word.

It is significant that Paul, the prisoner under arrest, was allowed his say when counsel was being taken.

Paul at this point isn't speaking as a prophet of God, but as an experienced traveler on the waters of the Mediterranean, having logged some 3,500 miles by sea.

In addition, Paul had already been in three shipwrecks; he knew what stormy seas were like!

***2 Cor. 11:25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;***

We can't be surprised that the centurion had more respect for the opinion of the chief sailor and the owner of the ship, who each had much to lose if the ship didn't make it to Rome.

It may be that the sailors did not want to spend three months wintering in the small town of Lasea, so they opted to try for the larger city of Phoenix on Crete.

Fair Havens was not a very good harbor nor was it near any sizeable town where the winter days might be passed by the crew;

The small town of Fair Havens probably could not support 276 people throughout the winter.

The centurion rejected Paul's advice and took the advice of the master and the contractor to sail farther along the coast to Phoenix where there was a more commodious harbor and a bigger town.

### **The stormy trip from Fair Havens to Malta**

They made a good start from Crete, but the ship quickly encounters great difficulty in a storm

"South wind" is a favorable wind, contrary to the normal winds there.

***13) When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete. 14) Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island. 15) The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along.***

A very unexpected south wind made the plan seem easy; and then struck the terrible wind from the northeast.

The wind that came up was infamous for its destructive power;

“Euroclydon” - the name of the wind!

The sailors knew that they were in for a bad time.

It was a gale and the peril was that if they could not control the ship they would inevitably be blown on the Syrtis Sands off North Africa which were the graveyard of many a ship.

(They have been called "The Goodwin Sands of the Mediterranean.")

***16) As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure. 17) When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.***

By this time they had managed to get the dinghy, which had been towed behind, on board, in case it should either become water-logged or dashed to pieces against the ship.

The skiff was normally towed behind the boat, but was taken aboard at bad weather.

We secured the skiff with difficulty may be quite literal from Luke's perspective;

Luke may have been pressed into service pulling ropes!

The peril of the ship was by this time desperate. These corn ships were not small.

They could be as large as 140 feet long and 36 feet wide and of 33 feet draught.

In a storm these ships had certain grave disadvantages.

They were the same shape at the bow as at the stern, except that the stern was swept up like a goose's neck.

They had no rudder like a modern ship, but were steered with two great paddles coming out from the stern on each side.

They were very hard to manage.

They had only one mast and on that mast one great square sail, made sometimes of linen and sometimes of stitched hides.

With a sail like that they could not sail into the wind.

The single mast and the great sail put such a strain on the ship's timbers in a gale they often broke and separated ships timber so that the ship foundered.

It was to avoid this that they trapped the ship.

That means that they passed hawsers under the ship and drew them tight with their winches so that they held the ship together like a tied up parcel.

Using cables to under gird the ship was a customary practice, to help prevent the ship from breaking apart in a storm.

The Syrtis Sands were an infamous "graveyard" of ships off the coast of North Africa,

“Quicksands” are a form of sand bar.

These waters were feared like a "Bermuda Triangle"; at all costs, the sailors wanted to avoid this area.

***18) We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard. 19) On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. 20) When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.***

They began to throw out all spare gear to lighten the ship.

With the stars and the sun shut out, they did not know where they were

Remember that they did not have compasses. Neither sun nor stars – their plight was desperates;

these were the only tools of navigation they had

The terror of the Syrtis Sands gripped them so that they abandoned hope.

All hope that we would be saved was finally given up.

## **BE OF GOOD CHEER**

### **Acts 27:21-26**

**"Since they had been without food for a long time Paul stood up in the midst of them and said, `Gentlemen, you should have obeyed me and you should not have sailed from Crete and so you would have avoided this injury and loss. So now I advise you to keep your hearts up. There will be no loss of life among you, but only the ship. For this night there stood beside me the Angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, `Have no fear, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and lo, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.' So, gentlemen, be in good heart! For I trust God that things will turn out as it has been told to me; but we must be cast upon an island."**

Then an amazing thing happened. Paul took command;

the prisoner became the captain,

he was the only man with any hope left.

Hope often shows up as courage in the face of disaster.

The man of God is the man whose courage stands when terror invades the hearts of others.

## **HOPE FOR THE DAY**

### **Acts 27:27-38**

**"When the fourteenth night came and we were drifting across in the Adriatic, in the middle of the night the sailors suspected that some land was approaching them. They took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. Since they were afraid that they would be cast up on rough places they cast four anchors out of the stern and hoped for the day. When the sailors were trying to escape from the ship and were lowering the dinghy into the sea on the pretext of being about to send out anchors from the bow, Paul said to the centurion, `If these do not stay in the ship, you cannot be saved.' Then the soldiers cut the dinghy's ropes and let her fall away. When it was nearly day, Paul urged all of them to take some food. `Today,' he said, `is the fourteenth day you have spent waiting without food and have taken nothing. So I urge you to take some food for this is for your health; for not a hair of the head of anyone of you will be lost.' When he had said this and then had taken bread, he gave thanks to God before them all and broke it and began to eat. All of them were in good heart and took food. And we who were in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six souls in all; and, when they were satisfied with food, they lightened the ship by casting the corn into the sea."**

By this time they had lost all control of the ship.

She was drifting, broadside on, across the Adriatic; and they could not tell where they were.

In the darkness they heard the crash of breakers on some distant shore;

they cast out sea anchors from the stern to slacken the drifting speed of the ship in order to prevent being cast on the rocks that they could not see.

It was then that Paul took the action of a commander.

**Paul reveals to the crew what God had told him about their fate**

***21) After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.***

The long abstinence from food probably had nothing to do with fasting,

but with the poor condition of the food during such a storm the prevalence of seasickness among everyone!

Paul can't resist - and rightly so - an "I told you so" in this situation.

***22) But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.***

The promise that there would be no loss of life, only the destruction of everything material, would have sounded like a bad deal in our materialistic age.

***23) Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me 24) and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' 25) So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. 26) Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."***

Do not be afraid, Paul - he was afraid!

The assurance that Paul would make it safe to Rome and an appearance before Caesar was a given;

God had promised it before;

***Acts 19:21 After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.***

***Acts 23:11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.***

The promise that God has granted you all who sail with you is the pure mercy of God, which Paul announces to the passengers and crew.

"I believe God that it will be just as it was told me"

the essence of what it means to put our faith in God and His Word to us;

Paul's unshakable confidence in God makes him a leader among these people, even though he is a prisoner of Rome.

'On a certain island' - God did not tell Paul everything about what was going to happen; Paul had to trust that God knew what island!

**Paul ministers to the passengers and crew on the fourteenth night**

***27) On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic Sea, when about midnight the sailors sensed they were approaching land. 28) They took soundings and found that the water was a hundred and twenty feet deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet deep. 29) Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight.***



Sensing land is near (probably by hearing the breakers in the distance), the sailors take proper precautions against being crashed against some unknown rocks.

***30) In an attempt to escape from the ship, the sailors let the lifeboat down into the sea, pretending they were going to lower some anchors from the bow. 31) Then Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved." 32) So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away.***

The sailors planned to sail away in the dinghy, which would have been quite useless for two hundred and seventy-six people; but Paul frustrated their plan.

Not only did the ship's passengers desperately need the crew's expertise, but Paul also probably sensed that God's promise to give him the lives of the whole ship's company assumed that they would stay together.

The man of God has somehow made others sure that God is in charge of things. The most useful people in the world are those who, being themselves calm, bring to others the secret of confidence.

Paul was like that; and every follower of Jesus ought to be steadfast when others are in turmoil.

Paul has words of faith and confidence, from the Lord (not a hair will fall from the head of any of you),

but the word only benefited those who believed it.

God has scores of promises of His comfort and care for us in desperate times;

but they only benefit us if we believe them.

Paul insisted that they should eat.

He had not the slightest doubt that God would do his part but he also knew that they must do theirs.

He knew that hungry men are not efficient men; and so he gathered the ship's company around him and made them eat.

***33) Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "For the last fourteen days," he said, "you have been in constant suspense and have gone without food--you haven't eaten anything. 34) Now I urge you to take some food. You need it to survive. Not one of you will lose a single hair from his head." 35) After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. 36) They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves. 37) Altogether there were 276 of us on board. 38) When they had eaten as much as they wanted, they lightened the ship by throwing the grain into the sea.***

There are hints that Paul regarded this meal mentioned in verses 35-36 as communion at the Lord's Table for the Christians present.

They ate what they could and threw the rest overboard to lighten the ship.

Throwing out the wheat into the sea reflects their great desperation; this was the essential cargo of the ship.

## **ESCAPE FROM THE DEEP**

### ***Acts 27:39-44***

***"When day came they did not recognize the land; but they saw a bay with a beach, on which they purposed, if it was possible, to run the ship ashore.***

*They loosed the anchors and let them go into the sea and at the same time they loosed the lashings of the rudder paddles, and they set the foresail to the wind and made for the beach.*

*When they were cast into a place where two seas met, they beached the ship; and the bow remained fast and immovable but the stern was being broken up by the surf.*

*The soldiers had a plan to kill the prisoners for fear any should swim away and escape; but the centurion, wishing to save Paul, stopped them from their purpose. He ordered those who could swim to throw themselves overboard first and to get to land; as for the rest, he ordered some to go on planks and some on pieces of the ship. So it happened that all came safely to land."*

**The ship runs aground and all are safe - in fulfillment of God's promise through Paul**

*39) When daylight came, they did not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach, where they decided to run the ship aground if they could. 40) Cutting loose the anchors, they left them in the sea and at the same time untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the beach. 41) But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow stuck fast and would not move, and the stern was broken to pieces by the pounding of the surf.*

They had come to an island called Malta; where the ship came aground is now called St. Paul's Bay.

Only the rarest conjunction of favorable circumstances could have brought about such a fortunate ending to their apparently hopeless situation . . . all these circumstances are united in St. Paul's Bay.

If they missed Malta, there would have been nothing for it but to hold on for 200 miles until they struck the Tunisian coast, and no one could have expected the ship to survive that long.

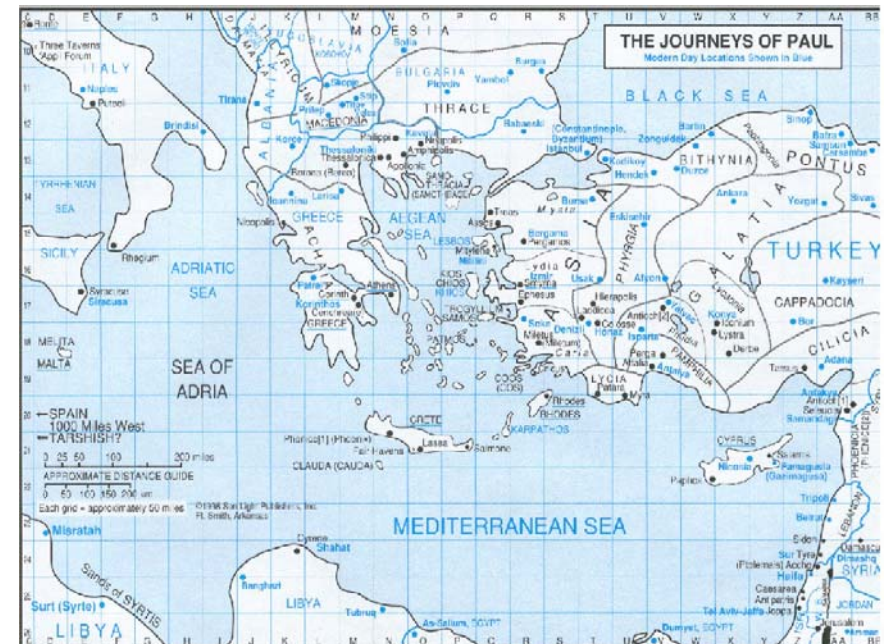
*42) The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from swimming away and escaping. 43) But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land. 44) The rest were to get there on planks or on pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety.*

To the soldiers, it made sense to kill the prisoners, because Roman military law decreed that a guard who allowed his prisoner to escape was subject to the same penalty the escaped prisoner would have suffered - in the case of most of these prisoners, death.

The Centurion stepped in saving all the prisoners to save Paul.

Roman soldiers could swim, it was part of their training, but the prisoners were on their own – grab a piece of the broken ship and hold on...

Just as the Lord promised, everyone on board survived the storm.



## **Why Do Christians Have Trials?**

[From Hal Lindsey's book, *Combat Faith*, Bantam Books, New York, 1986.]

### **1. To glorify God (*Daniel 3:16-18, 24-25*);**

*Daniel 3:16-18 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. [17] If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. [18] But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.*

*Daniel 3:24-25 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. [25] He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.*

### **2. Discipline for known sin (*Hebrews 12:5-11; James 4:17; Romans 14:23; 1 John 1:9*);**

*Hebrews 12:5-11 And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: [6] For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

*[7] If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

*[8] But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

*[9] Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? [10] For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. [11] Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

*James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*

*Romans 14:23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

*1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

### **3. To prevent us from falling into sin (*1 Peter 4:1-2*);**

*1 Peter 4:1-2 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; [2] That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

### **4. To keep us from pride. Paul was kept from pride by his "thorn in the flesh" (*2 Corinthians 12:7-10*).**

**2 Cor. 12:7-10** *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. [8] For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. [9] And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

[His eyes? *Galatians 4:15, 6:11* (signature)];

*Galatians 4:15* *Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.*

*Galatians 6:11* *Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.*

**5. To build faith (1 Peter 1:6-7);**

*1 Peter 1:6-7* *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: [7] That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

**6. To cause growth (Romans 5:3-5).**

**Romans 5:3-5** *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; [4] And patience, experience; and experience, hope: [5] And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

**7. To teach obedience and discipline (Acts 9:15-16; Philippians 4:11-13);**

*Acts 9:15-16* *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: [16] For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

*Philip. 4:11-13* *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. [12] I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. [13] I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

**8. To equip us to comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3-4);**

**2 Cor. 1:3-4** *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; [4] Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

**9. To prove the reality of Christ in us (2 Corinthians 4:7-11);**

**2 Cor. 4:7-11** *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. [8] We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; [9] Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; [10] Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. [11] For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*

**10. For testimony to the angels (Job 1:8; Ephesians 3:8-11; 1 Peter 1:12).**

**Job 1:8** *And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*

**Ephes. 3:8-11** *Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; [9] And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: [10] To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, [11] According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:*

**1 Peter 1:12** *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*

***For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Romans 8:18***

## **Reasons why storms come into our lives:**

### **Storms of correction:**

Ask Jonah about these. When a storm arose and he was tossed overboard and swallowed by a great fish, it was because he was rebelling against the Lord.

***Jonah 1:10 Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them.***

Sometimes when I'm in a place of disobedience or rebellion, the Lord will allow a storm to get me on track again.

### **Storms of perfection:**

After Jesus fed the five thousand, He sent His disciples across the Sea of Galilee (***Matthew 14***).

Midway through their journey, a storm arose around them -- for their perfection.

It wouldn't be too many months before these same disciples would see another multitude of five thousand — not fed, but saved (Acts 4:4) — followed by another storm — not on the sea, but of persecution within the Church (Acts 8:1).

***Acts 4:4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.***

***Acts 8:1 And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.***

Jesus was training His followers to endure the storms of persecution which inevitably follow the seasons of blessing.

Faith is not a pill we take, It's a muscle we work.

The Lord will send me into a storm from time to time not for correction, but for perfection because the way I react to storms internally will tell me where I'm at spiritually.

Storms provide opportunity for me to see where I'm at, and to grow in my understanding that the Lord will come through at the right time, saying, 'Be of good cheer. We're going to make it.'

### **Storms of protection:**

Because '***Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord,***' (***Genesis 6:8***), God sent a storm to drown out all of the carnality, sin, and iniquity which surrounded him.

The storm raged for forty days and nights, but Noah and his family were not only protected in the storm — they were protected by the storm.

We cry, "What a storm I'm in." But, as in Noah's case, it might be a storm of protection — protecting us from the carnality and iniquity which surround us continually.

### **Storms of direction:**

There was a group of people on the island of Malta in need of ministry.

The Lord allowed Paul to be blown off course because of something He wanted Paul to do for Him

— something you never would have thought of on your own,  
— something that wasn't part of your agenda.

Although it looks like the storm is blowing you off course, it will put you in the very place I want to use you.'

Realize that the Lord is changing your direction because there's something He wants to do that will ultimately be a blessing.

`Why am I in this storm, Lord?

Is it correction — or are You perfecting me for what You see is coming my way?

Is there a new direction for my life — or are You protecting me from something which would be very damaging?'

How long has it been since you got away to spend time with the Lord?

Clear your schedule and seek Him — and you'll be blown away by His goodness, rather than by the storm.