

PAUL'S VOYAGE TO ROME (1)

Acts 27

Introduction:

- 1. Paul had spent two years as a prisoner in Jerusalem and Caesarea.**
 - a. Several hearings before Jewish and Roman authorities had failed to substantiate any charge of wrongdoing.**
 - b. Felix kept Paul in custody hoping for a bribe.**
 - c. He left Paul in custody when he left office to please the Jews.**
 - d. Festus wanted to turn Paul over to the Jews as a favor.**
 - e. Paul had no hope for justice except to appeal to Caesar.**
- 2. He had long desired to go to Rome to preach the Gospel (Rom. 1:9-13).**
- 3. He is now going to Rome, but as a prisoner instead of a free man.**

Discussion:

- I. THE JOURNEY FROM CAESAREA TO FAIR HAVENS (1-12).**
 - A. It was already late in the shipping season on the Mediterranean.**
 - 1. Because of frequent violent storms, ships usually did not travel between late October and early March.**
 - 2. It was late in September when they began their voyage.**
 - B. Paul, along with other prisoners, was put in the hands of Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Band.**
 - 1. Every centurion in the New Testament is presented in a favorable light (Matt. 8:5-13; 27:54; Acts 10).**
 - 2. Aristarchus, a Christian from Thessalonica, accompanied Paul (Col. 4:10).**
 - 3. Luke, an eyewitness of all he recorded, was possibly given permission to accompany Paul as his physician.**
 - C. The journey began on a freighter ship that serviced ports along the coast.**
 - 1. Julius treated Paul kindly.**
 - a. Paul was a learned man and a Roman citizen.**
 - b. Julius may have been among the officers who heard Paul's speech before Agrippa.**
 - c. He probably bore letters from Festus and Agrippa stating they had found no wrongdoing in Paul.**
 - d. Julius allowed Paul to go ashore at Sidon to receive care from his friends.**
 - 2. They were soon hindered by contrary winds.**
 - 3. At Myra, the centurion put them on an Alexandrian ship**

- bound for Rome.
 - 4. Ships from Egypt to Rome carried the grain that fed the city.
 - 5. Sailing had now become dangerous because it was so late in the season.
 - D. Paul advised those in charge not to continue the journey for he feared loss of life and of the ship and its cargo.
 - 1. He was speaking from experience and common sense.
 - 2. He was a seasoned seaman having been shipwrecked three times in the past (2 Cor. 11:25,26).
 - 3. The centurion chose to listen to the captain and the owner of the ship rather than Paul.
 - 4. They found Fair Havens was not a safe harbor so they decided to sail to Phoenix to winter there.

II. THE JOURNEY FROM FAIR HAVENS TO SHIPWRECK ON MALTA (13 - 28:1).

- A. Euroclydon, a violent storm from the northeast, arose.
 - 1. It was impossible to control the ship so they allowed it to be driven by the storm.
 - a. They feared they would be driven to the perilous water near the North African shore and run aground.
 - b. They lightened the ship by throwing the tackle overboard.
 - 2. Neither the sun nor stars appeared for many days; thus they were unable to know where they were.
 - 3. The crew and passengers were fasting during this time.
- B. In the midst of the crisis, Paul addressed his fellow travelers.
 - 1. He reminded them they should have heeded his warning.
 - 2. This very night God had sent an angel to him.
 - 3. The angel assured Paul he would stand before Caesar; therefore Paul would survive.
 - 4. All those in the ship would be given to Paul as well.
 - 5. However, they must be shipwrecked on a certain island.
- C. On the fourteenth day of the storm, they sensed land was near.
 - 1. The sailors took soundings and confirmed it.
 - 2. They put down the anchors fearing they might be dashed on the rocks.
 - 3. The sailors attempted to leave the ship in the lifeboat.
 - 4. Paul saw them and said to the centurion, "Except these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved."
 - 5. The centurion ordered his soldiers to cast the lifeboat adrift.
 - 6. Paul again encouraged the crew and his fellow passengers.

- a. How strange that a prisoner became the leader!
 - b. Paul encouraged them all to eat for they would need their strength for the ordeal ahead.
 - c. All that remained in the ship was thrown overboard.
- D. They were shipwrecked the following morning.
- 1. They cut the anchors and headed for the land intending to run the ship aground.
 - 2. The ship lodged on a shoal before reaching the shore and was being broken apart by the currents.
 - 3. The soldiers planned to kill all the prisoners lest any escape.
 - a. If a Roman soldier let a prisoner escape, he paid for it with his life.
 - b. Julius refused to let his men carry out their plan for he wanted to save Paul.
 - c. He commanded those who could swim to go ashore first and the rest follow on planks from the ship.
 - d. This would assure that none of the prisoners would escape.
 - 4. Everyone made it safely to land just as the angel had promised Paul.
- E. The island on which they landed was Malta.
- 1. It is a small island about 20 miles long and 10 miles wide.
 - 2. It is about 60 miles south of Sicily.

Conclusion:

- 1. This was the fourth time Paul had been shipwrecked (2 Cor. 11:25,26).
- 2. The ship and its cargo were lost but all on board were saved.
- 3. The other passengers were saved because of having Paul as a fellow passenger.
- 4. We take measures to avoid all kinds of disasters.
- 5. We rejoice when someone is rescued from such disasters.
- 6. Yet, we fail to make to make preparation for the greatest disaster of all - eternal punishment because of our sins.
- 7. Come to Jesus that you may avoid the greatest disaster of all (Mark 16:15,16).

