

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

LESSON 29: CHAPTER 27

18 December 2015

PAUL'S TREACHEROUS SEA VOYAGE

VSS. 1-4 Paul and his friends (including Luke) enter a ship headed for Italy. The ship heads north, staying close to the coast of Israel. Paul is a prisoner, but he's also a Roman citizen, so he is treated courteously and given some liberty while aboard ship. There are many condemned criminals onboard this ship who will have opportunity to hear the gospel before they reach their fate in the Roman coliseum. The trip is slow because "the winds were contrary" (vs. 4).

VSS. 5-11 They sailed to Myra (vs. 5) in southern Asia Minor and boarded another ship (vs. 6) headed to Italy. After many days of slow, hard sailing against the wind, they made it to Lasea (southern Crete), at which point Paul admonished them that this trip would end tragically (vs. 10) if they chose to continue. His warning was not heeded. They chose to follow human speculation rather than the wisdom of God (vs. 11).

VSS 12-20 The shipmen decided to set sail toward Phenice and spend the winter there. A soft south wind encouraged them to proceed (vs. 13). Not long after setting sail, they found themselves in a hurricane and couldn't control the ship, so they "let her drive" (vs. 15). Arriving at a very small island south of Crete called Clauda, they took the time to strengthen the ship (vs. 17) by running cables underneath. After that they dropped their sails and let the wind drive them. As the storm grew worse day by day, they started throwing things overboard (18-19). All hope of survival was lost (vs. 20).

VSS. 21-29 Paul has held his tongue until now. He encourages the men, promising them that no man would lose his life (vs. 22); only the ship would be destroyed. God had sent an angel to stand by Paul and give him this message (23-24). God said they'd be cast upon a certain island (vs. 26) called Melita, which today is Malta. After two weeks of fighting this storm (vs. 27), they suspected that they were near land, so they started checking the depth of the water (vs. 28). As the water became shallower, they threw out four anchors to prevent them from getting smashed against the rocks (vs. 29). After two weeks of darkness they "wished for the day."

VSS. 30-32 When the shipmen attempted to abandon ship, Paul warned the centurion and soldiers that they would not survive if they allowed them to leave the ship (vs. 31). The soldiers prevented them from leaving by cutting the ropes holding the small boat (vs 32).

These men tried to save themselves, but they needed to have faith that God would save them as He said He would.

VSS. 33-37 Paul encourage everyone to eat for their health's sake, promising them again that they would not die (vs. 34). After eating, the men were of good cheer (vs. 36). There were 276 "souls" on board that ship (vs. 37) which would survive this storm and possibly be saved eternally (see vs. 24).

VSS. 38-44 After eating they lightened the ship some more by throwing the food overboard (vs. 38). They spotted some land with a creek and decided to try and land the ship in there (vs. 39). They raised the anchors, raised the sails and aimed for the shore (vs. 40). The ship entered turbulent waters caused by two currents converging together (vs. 41). When the front of the ship got stuck in a sand dune, the rear of the ship was left in the turbulent waters, causing it to break.

The soldiers thought to kill the prisoners to prevent escape, but the centurion prevented them for Paul's sake. They all swam or floated to safety as God had promised.

This voyage pictures the Christian life.

This voyage pictures the Church.
