

## **On the way to Rome with Paul - Storm, shipwreck and snakes!**

*Acts 27:1-28:10; Luke 12:22-31*

### **The Storm**

Stuck in a small boat - waves got bigger, got quite scared...

We were impotent to change our fate...

Storms are great! So long as you aren't in them!

### **Shipwreck - the Providence of God?**

Paul knows he's going to get to Rome - see 23:11.

But what if he's wrong?

Will he drown?

But God appears to him 27:21-26 - assures him of his care of him and the others... but the ship will be destroyed.

What is God doing?

It might not be clear amidst the storm I reckon...

A mix of human action (if you ignore the weather report - see the consequences!), God's sovereignty - God will look after them.

Remember as you paddle on a piece of destroyed boat - "God is looking after me!"

### **Paul**

*Trust in the Word of God 27:22-26*

He believes what God's angel says to him.

(and God has graciously said the lives of all those who are with him will also be spared).

*And He communicates this to others - he is not ashamed of God's word.*

*Wisdom 27:30-32*

Can't trust the sailors.

Imagine the scene - angry soldiers (with the sailors), angry sailors (they couldn't get away), scared prisoners - possibly in chains - will they be drowned?

Amidst this seething mass of humanity, the roaring of the wind and the pounding of the waves, Paul seems to be the leader, peaceful and in control.

*Kindness towards others (with a hint of Jesus!) 27:33-36*

He says "eat!"

Giving thanks to God! God is still here, still with them.

A "hint" of God in that they still have food - a good time to acknowledge God.

Dependence...

Because of Paul's relationship with the centurion they are not killed.

### **How we Live in Life's Circumstances**

*Trust in the Providence of God*

When we are amidst the storm of life, or even when our lives are threatened, we can sometimes doubt God's love, providence and care.

God is with us, cares about us (does not say we won't die, but if we do, he will usher us into eternity!)

Jesus says...

Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life**[b]**? 26 Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

What we see the Apostle do is *entrust his life to God*. He is *seeking first the kingdom of God*. His focus is on obeying God - and in Paul's case, bringing the Gospel to Rome, the centre of the Empire and the seat of power.

Where is your focus?

Have you entrusted your life to God?

Are you seeking his kingdom?

*Trust in the Word of God*

How do we live? God has given us his word - the Scriptures.

The 25 Words" the Bible Society sends out each day (if you signed up). Often those words have been surprisingly (!) appropriate.

Many times the word of God can speak to us and our circumstances - *but we **do** need to know it before we can apply it!*

And we need to trust God's word when we read it.

Bring God's word into your daily life and conversation.

*With Wisdom*

Godly people seek to live their lives with godly wisdom. Sometimes its just as simple as doing the right thing, but God has given us wisdom to live in a real world with its joys and challenges. Try to *apply* the wisdom that God has given to you in the circumstances in which he has placed you.

*Loving your neighbour (with a hint of Jesus!)*

Paul breaks bread - they are going to eat - and does what is right and natural for him - he prays and gives thanks to the God he trusts. I encourage you to do the same. As you love your neighbour, fulfilling that command, makes sure Jesus is not absent. Live your "faith life" as part of your "normal" life.

*Some Reflections on Paul's ministry as he heads for Rome:*

He is -

Faithful

Determined

Godly

Keeps on making Jesus and "he Resurrection" central....

Can we do the same?

**Amen**

**Acts 27:1 -28:10**

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. **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. **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.

**9** Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Day of Atonement.[a] 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 Storm

**13** When a gentle south wind began to blow, they saw their opportunity; 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. **16** As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure, **17** so the men hoisted it aboard. Then they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Because they were afraid they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor[b] and let the ship be driven along. **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.

**21** After they 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. **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. **23** Last night an

angel of the God to whom I belong 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."

## The Shipwreck

**27** On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic[c] 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[d] deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet[e] deep. **29** Fearing that we would be dashed against the rocks, they dropped four anchors from the stern and prayed for daylight. **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 drift away.

**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.

**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.

**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 other pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land safely.

### **Paul Ashore on Malta**

**28** Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. **2** The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. **3** Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. **4** When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, "This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, the goddess Justice has not allowed him to live." **5** But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. **6** The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead; but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

**7** There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and showed us generous hospitality for three days. **8** His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. **9** When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured. **10** They honored us in many ways; and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

### **Luke 12:22-31**

**22** Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. **23** For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. **24** Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable

you are than birds! **25** Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life**[b]**? **26** Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

**27** "Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. **28** If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! **29** And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. **30** For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. **31** But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.