SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



DEEP DIVE

Acts

Chapter Twenty-Seven, Verses 1–44

I Believe God — a prisoner, a grain ship, fourteen days in a northeaster, and a promise that every life would be spared

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

Paul warned them not to sail, and they sailed anyway. When the storm had taken the cargo, the tackle and all hope, the prisoner stood up and said, "I believe God" — and two hundred and seventy-six people came through the sea alive. Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Acts 27:1–44

the warning · the storm · the night · the shore

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

Contents

Four movements from Caesarea to the beach at Malta

—	**How to Read This Study** · *the four voices & their colors*	3
—	**Before the Passage** · *from Caesar's judgment seat to the open sea*	3
I	**We Would Sail for Italy** · *Acts 27:1–12 · the voyage and the warning*	5
II	**I Believe God** · *Acts 27:13–26 · the storm and the angel*	6
III	**Unless These Men Remain in the Ship** · *Acts 27:27–38 · anchors, a plot, and bread*	9
IV	**All Brought Safely to Land** · *Acts 27:39–44 · the wreck and the rescue*	11
V	**The Passage in the Whole Bible** · *cross-references*	12
†	**At a Glance** · *the four voices side by side*	14
†	**Key Insights & Questions for the Table** · *discussion*	14
†	**Sources** · *where each voice comes from*	16



"Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told."
— Acts 27:25

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Acts 27:1–44

I Believe God — Paul sails for Rome in chains — and in the worst storm of his life he is the one man on board who is not afraid

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Acts 27 in 4 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · ACTS 27:25

"Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told."

† Before the Passage

Acts 1:8 set the course of the whole book — Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, "and even to the remotest part of the earth" — and for nine chapters Rome has been on Paul's horizon. In Ephesus he said, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome" (19:21). In the Jerusalem barracks the Lord stood at his side: "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also" (23:11). After two years in custody at Caesarea he appealed to Caesar (25:11), and Agrippa's verdict closed chapter 26: "This man might have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar" (26:32). Chapter 27 is the road the promise took — by sea.

Luke is on board. The "we" of 27:1 opens the last and longest "we" section of Acts, running to 28:16. Guzik: "Aristarchus and Luke (notice the us of verse 2 and beyond) accompanied Paul on this voyage." That is why the chapter reads like a ship's log: harbors, winds, soundings in fathoms, the count of souls. Paul himself was no stranger to the sea. Years earlier he had written, "three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep" (2 Corinthians 11:25).

The calendar matters. Open-sea sailing on the Mediterranean shut down for the winter; citing Bruce, Guzik notes that "The dangerous season for sailing began about September 14 and lasted until November 11." Luke dates the danger by Israel's calendar: "even the fast was already over" (v. 9) — the Day of Atonement, "the tenth day of this seventh month" (Leviticus 23:27), in late September or October. The second ship was an Alexandrian grain carrier (vv. 6, 38), one of the big freighters that carried Egypt's wheat to Rome.

Set this storm beside an older one. Jonah ran from God's call, and "The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea" (Jonah 1:4); the sailors threw the cargo out and finally the prophet. Paul is going where God sent him, and the storm comes anyway. This time the servant of God is not the reason for the danger but the reason for the rescue: "God has granted you all those who are sailing with you" (v. 24).

FIGURE · THE VOYAGE TO ROME



Follow the gold line from Caesarea to Fair Havens, the red line of the storm's fourteen-day drift to Malta, and the maroon line on to Puteoli and up the Appian Way to Rome.

I
MOVEMENT

ACTS 27:1–12

We Would Sail for Italy

A kind centurion, a slow coast, and a warning nobody heeded

1 When it was decided that we would sail for Italy, they proceeded to deliver Paul and some other prisoners to a
centurion of the Augustan cohort named Julius. 2 And embarking in an Adramyttian ship, which was about to
sail to the regions along the coast of Asia, we put out to sea accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian of
Thessalonica. 3 The next day we put in at Sidon; and ☆ Julius treated Paul with consideration and allowed him
to go to his friends and receive care. 4 From there we put out to sea and sailed under the shelter of Cyprus because
the winds were contrary. 5 When we had sailed through the sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we
landed at Myra in Lycia. 6 There the centurion found an Alexandrian ship sailing for Italy, and he put us aboard
it. 7 When we had sailed slowly for a good many days, and with difficulty had arrived off Cnidus, since the wind
did not permit us to go farther, we sailed under the shelter of Crete, off Salmone; 8 and with difficulty sailing past
it we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea. 9 When considerable time had passed
and the voyage was now dangerous, since even the fast was already over, Paul began to admonish them, 10 and
said to them, "Men, I perceive that ⚠ the voyage will certainly be with damage and great loss, not only of the
cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." 11 But ⚠ the centurion was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain
of the ship than by what was being said by Paul. 12 Because the harbor was not suitable for wintering, the
majority reached a decision to put out to sea from there, if somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete,
facing southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there.

ACTS 27:1–12

"But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, "Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.""

ACTS 23:11

"On exactly the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement; it shall be a holy convocation for you, and you shall humble your souls and present an offering by fire to the LORD."

LEVITICUS 23:27

παραινέω

PARAINEŌ · "ADMONISH, URGE" · G3867

To advise earnestly, to recommend. The word appears only twice in the New Testament, both times in this chapter and both times from Paul: "Paul began to admonish them" (v. 9) and, after the damage was done, "I urge you to keep up your courage" (v. 22). The first counsel was refused; the second saved the crew's morale. Guzik reads the first as seamanship — Paul "did not necessarily speak here as a prophet of God, but perhaps as an experienced traveler on the Mediterranean." He had been shipwrecked three times already (2 Corinthians 11:25).

νηστεία

NĒSTEIA · "FAST" · G3521

"The fast" (v. 9) is the Day of Atonement, the one fast the Law of Moses appointed: "you shall humble your souls" on the tenth day of the seventh month (Leviticus 23:27). It fell in late September or October, inside the season Bruce marks as dangerous (September 14 to November 11). A Jewish writer telling a Roman sea story keeps time by Israel's holy calendar — and the day of atonement is the day the warning goes unheeded.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik follows the route and the people. Julius "treated Paul kindly and gave him liberty to go to his friends and receive care," and Guzik credits more than Roman courtesy: "Paul's godly character and display of Christian love were also helpful in gaining favor." Paul is not alone — "Aristarchus and Luke (notice the us of verse 2 and beyond) accompanied Paul on this voyage." At Fair Havens the season was turning: "The idea is that as winter approached, the weather became more dangerous for sailing." Paul warned them, "Taking a vote of the crew, they decided to sail on to the harbor of Phoenix," and Guzik's verdict is plain: "They should have listened to Paul."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry admires Julius: he "gives an example to those in power to be respectful to those whom they find worthy of their respect." But courtesy is not the same as obedience: "Many will show respect to good ministers that will not take their advice." The centurion trusted the master and the owner of the ship over the prisoner, and Henry draws a lesson for every age: "Those know not what dangers they run themselves into who will be governed more by human prudence than by divine revelation." Where Guzik hears an experienced traveler in Paul's warning, Henry hears the voice of God that men set aside for expert opinion and a majority vote.

II

MOVEMENT

ACTS 27:13–26

I Believe God

A soft south wind, a northeaster off Crete, and an angel in the night

13 When a moderate south wind came up, supposing that they had attained their purpose, they weighed
anchor and began sailing along Crete, close inshore. 14 But before very long there rushed down from the land a
violent wind, called Euraquilo; 15 and when the ship was caught in it and could not face the wind, we gave way
to it and let ourselves be driven along. 16 Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were
scarcely able to get the ship's boat under control. 17 After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in
undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on the shallows of Syrtis, they let down the sea
anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along. 18 The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed,
they began to jettison the cargo; 19 and on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own
hands. 20 Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing us, from then on
all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned. 21 When they had gone a long time without food, then
Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from
Crete and incurred this damage and loss. 22 "Yet now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there will be no
loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 "For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and

> *whom I serve* stood before me, [24] saying, '*Do not be afraid, Paul*; *you must stand before Caesar*; and behold, *God has granted you all those who are sailing with you*.' [25] "Therefore, *keep up your courage*, men, for *I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told*. [26] "But we must run aground on a certain island."
>
> ACTS 27:13–26

> "The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up."
>
> JONAH 1:4

FIGURE · FOURTEEN DAYS IN THE STORM



Read down the line: each day takes something more away — cargo, tackle, sun and stars, hope — until a word from God stands in the middle and everything after it moves toward land.

Εὐρακύλων

EURAKYLŌN · "NORTHEASTER" · G2148

A sailors' word, the Greek *euros* (east wind) joined to the Latin *aquilo* (north wind): a northeaster. The interlinear glosses it "the Noreaster"; the KJV's "Euroclydon" follows a different spelling found in later manuscripts. It "rushed down from the land" (v. 14) — off Crete's mountains — onto a ship that had just weighed anchor under "a moderate south wind" (v. 13). The gentle breeze that seemed to approve the majority's plan was the doorway into the storm.

εὐθυμέω

EUTHYMEŌ · "KEEP UP YOUR COURAGE" · G2114

From *eu*, well, and *thymos*, spirit: to be in good heart. The interlinear glosses it "to take heart"; the KJV has "be of good cheer." Paul says it twice (vv. 22, 25), and in verse 36 the related adjective describes the crew: "All of them were encouraged." Courage passed from one man who had heard from God to two hundred and seventy-five who had not.

δεῖ

DEI · "MUST" · G1163

Luke's word for divine necessity runs through the voyage. "You must stand before Caesar" (v. 24) — the same "must" as "I must also see Rome" (19:21) and "you must witness at Rome also" (23:11). But the angel's plan has a second "must": "we must run aground on a certain island" (v. 26). Even Paul's rebuke uses it — "you ought (*edei*) to have followed my advice" (v. 21). God's necessity included the reef.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik pictures the crew's helplessness: "Helpless to navigate with this wind in their face, all they could do is let her drive." They hoisted the skiff and undergirded the hull — "This was a normal emergency measure, helping to prevent the ship from breaking apart in a storm" — and still, "All hope that we would be saved was finally given up." Then Paul stands, with a word from the God he belongs to: "God never forgets those who belong to Him and serve Him." Guzik's key is verse 25: "Paul believed God when there was nothing else to believe." "This was not a fair-weather faith; he believed God in the midst of the storm, when circumstances were at their worst."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul preached this storm at St. Andrew's on 17 July 2005 ("Paul in the Tempest," Acts 27:13–38); Ligonier publishes the audio and a summary but no transcript. The sermon takes up the moment when everyone on board except Paul had lost hope of surviving, and asks what gave the apostle peace in the wind and waves. The series summary opens, "All of us go through trials and hardships in this life," and notes how quickly people in a crisis forget that God will bring them through; Sproul's answer is Paul's "confidence in God's sovereign hand to bring him through the tempest at sea," and he holds up Paul's hardships as a model of faithfulness to God's call.

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon preached these verses twice. In "Paul in the Tempest" (No. 3145, on 27:18–25) he notices that in a crisis "The Believer is sure to come to the front": with the ship breaking up, "Paul is the center of the whole company, the observed of all." Paul's confidence rested on what God had said — "He confined himself to revelation" — and Spurgeon draws the lesson: "Learn from Paul not to be a presumptuous dreamer, but a prudent speaker." In "A Cheery Word in Troublous Times" (on 27:25) he presses the difference between believing in God and believing God: "It is a grand thing to believe God when the winds are out," because "The common run of men's faith is fair-weather faith."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry sees more than weather. The ship "could not possibly bear up into the wind," and as the days passed without sun or stars, "All hope that we should be saved was then taken away." He turns it inward: "Thus melancholy sometimes is the condition of the people of God upon a spiritual account." Then "Paul stood forth in the midst of them." The angel's first word to him was "Fear not," and Henry comments, "He is forbidden to fear." Paul's answer is the whole chapter in one line: "for I believe God, and depend upon his word, that it shall be even as it was told me."

III
MOVEMENT

ACTS 27:27–38

Unless These Men Remain in the Ship

Soundings at midnight, a plot in the dark, and bread broken before dawn

27 *But when the fourteenth night came, as we were being driven about in the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the*
sailors began to surmise that they were approaching some land. 28 *They took soundings and found it to be twenty*
fathoms; and a little farther on they took another sounding and found it to be fifteen fathoms. 29 *Fearing that we*
might run aground somewhere on the rocks, they cast four anchors from the stern and wished for daybreak.
30 *But as the sailors were trying to escape from the ship and had let down the ship's boat into the sea, on the*
pretense of intending to lay out anchors from the bow, 31 *Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless*
these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved." 32 *Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the*
ship's boat and let it fall away. 33 *Until the day was about to dawn, Paul was encouraging them all to take*
some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have been constantly watching and going without
eating, having taken nothing. 34 *"Therefore I encourage you to take some food, for this is for your*
preservation, for not a hair from the head of any of you will perish." 35 *Having said this, he took bread*
and gave thanks to God in the presence of all, and he broke it and began to eat. 36 *All of them were encouraged*
and they themselves also took food. 37 *All of us in the ship were two hundred and seventy-six persons.* 38 *When*
they had eaten enough, they began to lighten the ship by throwing out the wheat into the sea.

ACTS 27:27–38

> *"And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.""*
>
> LUKE 22:19

> *"Yet not a hair of your head will perish."*
>
> LUKE 21:18

FIGURE · THE PROMISE AND THE MEANS

THE PROMISE AND THE MEANS · ACTS 27:22–44

WHAT GOD PROMISED		WHAT THEY STILL HAD TO DO	
v22	"no loss of life among you, but only of the ship"	v31	keep the sailors in the ship: "Unless these men remain …"
v24	"God has granted you all those who are sailing with you"	v34	eat: "take some food, for this is for your preservation"
v26	"we must run aground on a certain island"	v38	lighten the ship: the wheat into the sea
v34	"not a hair from the head of any of you will perish"	vv43–44	swim, or ride planks and pieces of the ship to land

"And so it happened that they all were brought safely to land" (v44) — the promise kept, through the means

God's promise on the left was certain; the duties on the right were still required. Paul never treats one as a reason to skip the other.

σωτηρία

SŌTĒRIA · "PRESERVATION" · G4991

The ordinary New Testament word for salvation, used here in its plain sense of survival: "this is for your preservation" (v. 34). Its verb *sōzō* (G4982) frames the chapter — "all hope of our being saved" (v. 20), "you yourselves cannot be saved" (v. 31). Luke lets the rescue preach without forcing it: the God who promised every life delivered it through food eaten, ropes cut, and sailors kept on board.

εὐχαριστέω

EUCHARISTEŌ · "GAVE THANKS" · G2168

From *eu* and *charis*, grace. Verse 35 uses the order of the upper room — he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, began to eat (compare Luke 22:19). Guzik: "There are hints that Paul regarded this meal as communion at the Lord's Table for the Christians present." Most of the 276 were pagans, so many readers take it as an ordinary meal opened with a believer's grace, said "in the presence of all." The verb returns at 28:15: "he thanked God and took courage."

ἄγκυρα

ANKYRA · "ANCHOR" · G45

Four New Testament uses: three in this chapter (vv. 29, 30, 40) and one in Hebrews 6:19, "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast." Four anchors from the stern held the ship off the rocks until daylight (v. 29); at dawn they were cast off and left in the sea (v. 40). An anchor can hold you through the night; it cannot carry you to shore.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notes that the sailors read the signs well — "Sensing land was near (probably by hearing the breakers in the distance) the sailors took proper precautions" — and then tried to slip away in the boat under cover of laying out anchors. "Paul knew two reasons why they had to stay together," and he spoke to the centurion before the boat was gone. At dawn Paul urged everyone to eat and gave thanks in front of them all; "There are hints that Paul regarded this meal as communion at the Lord's Table for the Christians present." Luke adds the count, and Guzik repeats it: "Acts 27:37 tells us there were 276 people on board, both passengers and crew."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

In the third part of "Paul in the Tempest" Spurgeon calls Paul "The Sympathetic Comforter." The scene was dismal — "The ship was going to pieces, death stared them in the face, dismay was written on every countenance" — and into it came "that calm face amid the storm, that practical action in bidding them take bread and eat." A steady voice can stop a stampede: "Doubtless, his cheerful tones and manly voice helped to banish their fears and to prevent a panic." The secret was comfort received: "He had been comforted of the Lord and with this consolation he could cheer others." And on means: "When we have done our best and can make no headway, we had better commit our vessel to the care of God."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry walks through the night. Fearing the rocks, "they cast anchor, and wished for the day;" then the seamen "were about to flee out of the ship," and Paul spoke the words Henry sets down plainly: "Except these abide in the ship, you cannot be saved." At dawn the prisoner led the company to the table: "He gave thanks to God in presence of them all." Henry finds Paul's joy in being useful to people who had ignored him: "There is no greater satisfaction to a good man than to know that he is a public blessing."

IV
MOVEMENT

ACTS 27:39–44

All Brought Safely to Land

A bay with a beach, a reef where two seas met, and a centurion's mercy

39 *When day came, they could not recognize the land; but they did observe a bay with a beach, and they resolved*
to drive the ship onto it if they could. 40 *And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea while at the same*
time they were loosening the ropes of the rudders; and hoisting the foresail to the wind, they were heading for the
beach. 41 *But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and*
remained immovable, but the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves. 42 *⚠ The soldiers' plan was to*
kill the prisoners, so that none of them would swim away and escape; 43 *but the centurion, ☆ wanting to bring*
Paul safely through, kept them from their intention, and commanded that those who could swim should jump
overboard first and get to land, 44 *and the rest should follow, some on planks, and others on various things from*
the ship. And so it happened that ☆ they all were brought safely to land.

ACTS 27:39–44

διασῴζω

DIASŌZŌ · "BRING SAFELY THROUGH" · G1295

Sōzō, save, strengthened by *dia*, through: to bring safely through a danger. Luke uses it four times in a row — the centurion wanting "to bring Paul safely through" (27:43), "they all were brought safely to land" (27:44), "When they had been brought safely through" (28:1), and the islanders' "though he has been saved from the sea" (28:4). The interlinear glosses it "having been saved." Peter uses the same verb of the eight souls in Noah's ark (1 Peter 3:20). God did not save them from the storm; He saved them through it.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

"They did not know it at first, but they came to an island called Malta." Guzik passes on how narrow the landfall was. Citing Ramsay through Bruce: "If they missed Malta, there would have been nothing for it but to hold on for 200 miles," and "Only the rarest conjunction of favorable circumstances could have brought about such a fortunate ending." The soldiers wanted the prisoners dead, but "God gave Paul favor in the eyes of this Roman centurion, and that favor kept Paul and all the prisoners alive." Guzik sums up the chapter in four words: "God's word never fails."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry stresses how lost they were — "That they knew not where they were;" — and still the promise held. The soldiers' plan to kill the prisoners "was a brutish barbarous motion," but the centurion "prevented the execution of that bloody project." Henry sees one providence running through the chapter: "As God had saved all in the ship for Paul's sake, so here the centurion saves all the prisoners for his sake;" some swam, some floated on planks and broken pieces of the ship, and every one of the 276 came to land, just as the angel had said.

V
THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

Storms at sea, the God who stills them, and the hope that holds

"Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, And He brought them out of their distresses. He caused the storm to be still, So that the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad because they were quiet, So He guided them to their desired haven."

PSALM 107:28–30

"The LORD hurled a great wind on the sea and there was a great storm on the sea so that the ship was about to break up."

JONAH 1:4

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you."

ISAIAH 43:2

> *“They came to Jesus and woke Him up, saying, “Master, Master, we are perishing!” And He got up and rebuked the wind and the surging waves, and they stopped, and it became calm. And He said to them, “Where is your faith?””*
>
> LUKE 8:24–25

> *“But on the night immediately following, the Lord stood at his side and said, “Take courage; for as you have solemnly witnessed to My cause at Jerusalem, so you must witness at Rome also.””*
>
> ACTS 23:11

> *“Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep.”*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 11:25

> *“This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,”*
>
> HEBREWS 6:19

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

On verse 25 Guzik quotes Spurgeon’s wish that believers would say their faith out loud the way Paul did before a shipful of pagans: “I would to God that all Christians were prepared to throw down the gauntlet and to come out straight;” — Paul’s “I believe God” was spoken in public, before the storm broke.

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers on one long night at sea. Guzik keeps the log — route, season, seamanship — and keeps returning to faith that takes God at His word. Sproul (from his sermon's published summary) fixes on God's sovereign hand in the tempest. Spurgeon puts Paul at the center of the deck as believer, prophet and comforter. Henry turns each turn of the voyage into counsel. They differ on Paul's first warning — seasoned judgment (Guzik) or a word men set aside for prudence (Henry) — and agree that the promise held to the last soul.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · The warning	Julius' kindness; Luke aboard; Paul spoke as a seasoned traveler — they should have listened.	— (Sproul's sermon on this chapter begins at verse 13)	— (no Spurgeon sermon on these verses sourced here)	Many respect good ministers but won't take their advice; prudence over revelation is dangerous.
II · The storm and the angel	They let her drive; Paul believed God when there was nothing else to believe.	Everyone but Paul lost hope; his peace was confidence in God's sovereign hand.	The believer comes to the front; believe God when the winds are out.	Melancholy can be the saints' lot too; Paul is forbidden to fear, and believes God.
III · Anchors, plot, bread	The sailors tried to slip away; hints of the Lord's Table at dawn; 276 aboard.	— (same sermon, 27:13–38; no transcript available to summarize)	A calm face, a cheerful voice, "take bread and eat" — comforted, he comforts.	Except these abide in the ship; thanks given in presence of them all.
IV · The wreck and rescue	A narrow landfall on Malta; the centurion's favor; God's word never fails.	—	—	A brutish plan stopped; the centurion saves all the prisoners for Paul's sake.

ACTS 27:1–44 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **The prisoner is the freest man on board.** Paul warns (v10), stands up (v21), stops the escape (v31) and feeds the crew (v35). Spurgeon: "Paul is the center of the whole company, the observed of all." SPURGEON
- **Experts and majorities can both be wrong.** The centurion "was more persuaded by the pilot and the captain" (v11), and "the majority reached a decision" (v12). Henry: those "governed more by human prudence than by divine revelation" know not what dangers they run into. HENRY
- **A soft south wind is not a sign from God.** "Supposing that they had attained their purpose" (v13), they sailed on a gentle breeze straight into Euraquilo. Easy beginnings do not prove a decision right. THE TEXT
- **God's "must" included a shipwreck.** *Dei* carries Paul to Caesar (v24) and onto a reef (v26). The plan that guaranteed Rome also guaranteed the island. THE GREEK
- **Belonging comes before serving.** "The God to whom I belong and whom I serve" (v23). Guzik: "God never forgets those who belong to Him and serve Him." GUZIK
- **Believe God, not merely in God.** Spurgeon: "The common run of men's faith is fair-weather faith." Guzik: "Paul believed God when there was nothing else to believe." SPURGEON
- **Promise and means are not rivals.** God had "granted you all" (v24), yet "Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved" (v31). The certainty of the end did not cancel the duty of the hour. THE TEXT

- **Thanksgiving in the dark.** Before dawn, after fourteen days without food, Paul "gave thanks to God in the presence of all" (v35) — *eucharisteō*, the word of the upper room. THE GREEK
- **Saved for another's sake.** Henry: "As God had saved all in the ship for Paul's sake, so here the centurion saves all the prisoners for his sake." One faithful man can be the reason for many rescues. HENRY
- **Anchors hold you till daylight.** Four anchors kept the ship off the rocks through the night (v29) and were left in the sea at dawn (v40). "This hope we have as an anchor of the soul" (Heb 6:19). THE GREEK

† Questions for the Table

1 **Paul's warning was set aside because the experts and the majority wanted to go (vv10–12). Where am I tempted to follow the crowd or the "pilot" over what God has plainly said?**

Many will show respect to good ministers that will not take their advice (Henry).

27:9–12

2 **A moderate south wind made them think they had their way (v13). When has an easy start convinced me that God approved a decision I had already made?**

The gentle breeze led straight into Euraquilo.

27:13–15

3 **"The God to whom I belong and whom I serve" (v23). Which comes first for me — belonging to God or serving Him — and why does the order matter?**

God never forgets those who belong to Him and serve Him (Guzik).

27:23–24

4 **Paul said, "I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told" before anything changed (v25). What promise of God do I need to say out loud while my storm is still blowing?**

It is a grand thing to believe God when the winds are out (Spurgeon).

27:22–25; Heb 6:19

5 **God promised every life, yet Paul said, "Unless these men remain in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved" (v31). Where am I using God's promises as an excuse to skip the means He gave me — His Word, His people, the group?**

The certainty of the end does not cancel the duty of the hour.

27:24, 31–34

6 **Paul gave thanks for bread in front of 275 frightened people (v35). Who is watching how I act in my storm, and what do they see?**

He had been comforted of the Lord and with this consolation he could cheer others (Spurgeon).

27:33–36; 2 Cor 1:4

Acts 27 is one long night at sea, and the steadiest man on the ship is a prisoner in chains. God did not stop the storm; He stood by His servant in it, kept His word to the letter, and brought every one of the 276 to land. Belong to Him, believe Him, and stay in the ship.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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