ACTS 27

I Believe God

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

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

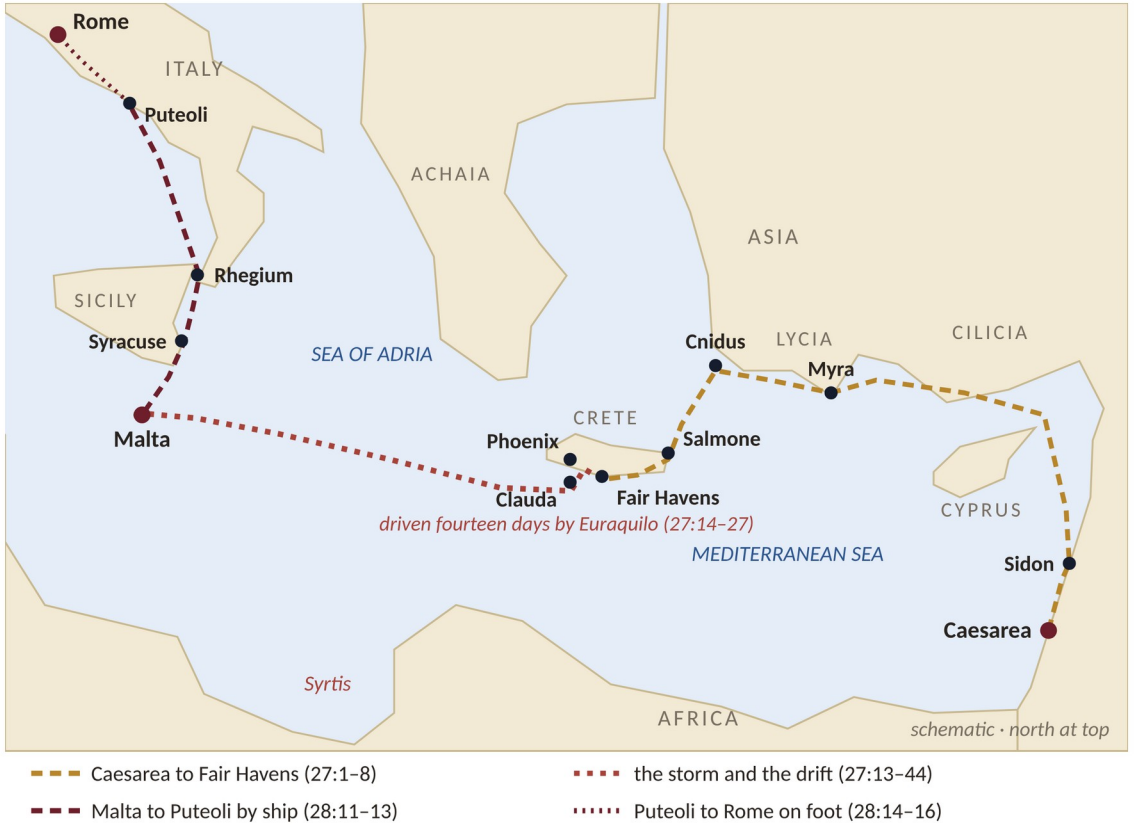
A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where Luke has brought us

1. 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.

2. Luke is on board. The “we” of 27:1 opens the last and longest “we” section of Acts, running to 28:16.

3. 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”…



We Would Sail for Italy

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

ACTS 27:1

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.

DAVID GUZIK

Julius' kindness; Luke aboard; Paul spoke as a seasoned traveler — they should have listened.

MATTHEW HENRY

Many respect good ministers but won't take their advice; prudence over revelation is dangerous.

παραινέω
PARAINEŌ · "ADMONISH, URGE"

To advise earnestly, to recommend.

I Believe God

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

ACTS 27:24

saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'

DAVID GUZIK

They let her drive; Paul believed God when there was nothing else to believe.

R.C. SPROUL

Everyone but Paul lost hope; his peace was confidence in God's sovereign hand.

C.H. SPURGEON

The believer comes to the front; believe God when the winds are out.

MATTHEW HENRY

Melancholy can be the saints' lot too; Paul is forbidden to fear, and believes God.

Εὐρακύλων

EURAKYLŌN · "NORTHEASTER"

A sailors' word, the Greek euros (east wind) joined to the Latin aquilo (north wind): a northeaster.

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.

Unless These Men Remain in the Ship

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

ACTS 27:34

"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."

DAVID GUZIK

The sailors tried to slip away; hints of the Lord's Table at dawn; 276 aboard.

C.H. SPURGEON

A calm face, a cheerful voice, "take bread and eat" — comforted, he comforts.

MATTHEW HENRY

Except these abide in the ship; thanks given in presence of them all.

σωτηρία

SŌTĒRIA · "PRESERVATION"

The ordinary New Testament word for salvation, used here in its plain sense of survival: "this is for your preservation" (v. 34).

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.

All Brought Safely to Land

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

ACTS 27:43

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,

DAVID GUZIK

A narrow landfall on Malta; the centurion's favor; God's word never fails.

MATTHEW HENRY

A brutish plan stopped; the centurion saves all the prisoners for Paul's sake.

διασώζω
DIASŌZŌ · "BRING SAFELY THROUGH"

Sōzō, save, strengthened by dia, through: to bring safely through a danger.

What to carry from this chapter

1

The prisoner is the freest man on board.

Paul warns (v10), stands up (v21), stops the escape (v31) and feeds the crew (v35).

2

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).

3

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.

4

God’s “must” included a shipwreck.

Dei carries Paul to Caesar (v24) and onto a reef (v26).

More to carry

5

Belonging comes before serving.

“The God to whom I belong and whom I serve” (v23).

6

Believe God, not merely in God.

Spurgeon: “The common run of men’s faith is fair-weather faith.”

7

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).

8

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.

Talk it through

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?

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?

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?

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?

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?

CLOSING

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

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the Acts study page.