

Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Acts 27.

(2013).

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Acts 27.

Topics.

- Paul sails for Italy with some other prisoners.
- Violent winds and tempestuous storms.
- An angel tells Paul he must stand before Caesar.
- The ship is destroyed, but everyone is saved.

The Previous Chapter.

In the previous chapter Paul in a meeting hall made his defense to King Agrippa and his sister Bernice, Festus and many other dignitaries. Paul (in chains) told Agrippa his testimony which sounded so outlandish to Festus he thought Paul was out of his mind. The chapter ended with Paul finishing his testimony and Agrippa, Bernice, Festus and the dignitaries all agreeing that Paul had done nothing deserving death or imprisonment and King Agrippa telling Festus that Paul could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

(This entire chapter is about Paul's sailing to Italy).

Paul sails for Italy with some other Prisoners.

Acts 27:1-20 ----- ¹And when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan Cohort named Julius. ²And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea, accompanied by Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica. ³The next day we put in at Sidon. And Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for. ⁴And putting out to sea from there we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us. ⁵And when we had sailed across the open sea along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra in Lycia. ⁶There the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy and put us on board. ⁷We sailed slowly for a number of days and arrived with difficulty off Cnidus, and as the wind did not allow us to go farther, we sailed under the lee of Crete off Salmone. ⁸Coasting along it with difficulty, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near which was the city of Lasea. ⁹Since much time had passed, and the voyage was now dangerous because even the Fast was already over, Paul advised them, ¹⁰saying, "Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, but also of our lives." ¹¹But the centurion paid more attention to the pilot and to the owner of the ship than to what Paul said. ¹²And because the harbour was not suitable to spend the winter in, the majority decided to put out to sea from there, on the chance that somehow they could reach Phoenix, a harbour of Crete, facing both southwest and northwest, and spend the winter there. ¹³Now when the south wind blew gently, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close to the shore. ¹⁴But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land. ¹⁵And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along. ¹⁶Running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we managed with difficulty to secure the ship's boat. ¹⁷After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along. ¹⁸Since we were violently storm-tossed, they began the next day to jettison the cargo. ¹⁹And on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands. ²⁰When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

Centurion: was an ancient Roman military officer in ancient Rome who was in charge of about one-hundred foot soldiers.

Augustan Age: is a term referring to the era of Augustus, ruler of Rome from 27 B.C., to A.D., 14. The boundaries of the Roman Empire were extended towards Spain, Asia, Pannonia, Dalmatia, and Gaul. An efficient administration was established bringing prosperity and stability to the Roman Empire. The Augustan age was also noted for a number of classical writers and is considered the Golden Age of Latin literature, during this age Rome and other cities were adorned with beautiful buildings.

King Agrippa, Festus (the governor of Judea) and the dignitaries who listened to Paul's defence (previous chapter) decide it is time Paul with some other prisoners set sail for Italy. They board the ship under the guard of Julius a Roman centurion. Accompanied by two-hundred and seventy-six other people (v37) they board a ship that would be stopping at certain ports along the coast of Asia.

The 1st Port the Ship Stops At.

The first day they stop at Sidon, notice the words "Julius treated Paul kindly and gave him leave to go to his friends and be cared for (v3)." This shows the following two things: -

1. Paul was a model prisoner who Julius respected and trusted.
2. Julius Paul's guard obviously perceived Paul was a law abiding man who would always do the right thing according to the law.

Remember; though Paul is innocent of any wrongdoing he is nevertheless held prisoner, but rather than complain he rests in the knowledge he is in the will of the Lord and wins the favour of his Roman guard and it is certain he would use his time on the ship testifying the word of the Lord not only to Julius but to any others who would listen.

The 2nd Port the Ship Stops At.

The second Port they stop at is Myra in Lycia here they change ships and board one that was sailing toward Italy.

The Ship leaves Myra.

Once the ship left Myra they could not put out to sea because of the strong winds so they sailed slowly and with great difficulty for a number of days along the coast line. They arrived at a port named Fair Havens where Paul advised them if they leave this harbour and put out to sea the trip will result in many being injured, an enormous amount of cargo being lost and some on the ship will even be killed (v8-10), but Julius listened to the captain of the ship who wanted to set sail because Fair Havens was not a suitable harbour to spend the winter in. They leave Fair Havens and sail out to sea hoping to reach Phoenix, a harbour of Crete and spend the winter there (v11-12).

Violent Winds and Tempestuous Storms.

Once out at sea they encountered turbulently violent winds, the storms were so cloudy and dark that they had seen neither the sun nor the stars for many days. The ship itself was so storm-tossed that it could not sail into the wind and was so strong that it was driving the ship in the direction the wind was blowing the storm became so wild they had to toss the cargo overboard. At this point the raging waves had become so furious those on the ship had given up all hope of being saved (v20).

An Angel tells Paul he must stand before Caesar.

Acts 27:21-26 ----- ²¹Since they had been without food for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Men, you should have listened to me and not have set sail from Crete and incurred this injury and loss. ²²Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among

you, but only of the ship. ²³For this very night there stood before me an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship, ²⁴and he said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar. And behold, God has granted you all those who sail with you.' ²⁵So take heart, men, for I have faith in God that it will be exactly as I have been told. ²⁶But we must run aground on some island."

Paul reminds the crew that he had told them not to leave the port of Fair Havens in Crete (v8-9), but knowing they were suffering, and without hope (v20) encourages the sailors and prisoners telling them an angel of God came to him during the night and told him not to be afraid because he must stand before Caesar and though the ship will be destroyed the crew will be safe.

NOTICE: Paul says, "An angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I worship" (v23). It is certain the men on the ship had a mixture of beliefs and worshipped various pagan gods thus the reason Paul makes it clear that the angel was an angel of the God who he belonged to and worships. Even today, most people confess to believe in God, but the God they are believing in is not the God of the Lord Jesus Christ, so even today this same principal applies to us, i.e., we need to clarify which God we are believing in since most have a totally different concept of the god they worship to the God the Bible speaks of.

NOTE: today there is a hollow Gospel floating around the churches that proclaims God is like a big sugar daddy or some type of Father Christmas who will always bless those who believe in His Son and give them a prosperous and charmed life, but this is not how the Bible presents the life of those who faithfully follow him. If there is doubt about this consider the life of Paul, Peter and James etc. Paul worked to support himself and suffered enormously and many of God's faithful endure horrific persecutions.

In the Bible's famous chapter often called by many the Hall Of Fame we read of many of the faithful in God achieving great things, but also many who suffered enormous terrors and horrors. The author of Hebrews says: -

- Time would fail him to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight and women received back their dead by resurrection BUT some were tortured, others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment they were stoned, sawn in two, killed with the sword went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth of who the writer of Hebrews says the world was not worthy BUT of who God says they are commended for their enduring faith and will be made perfect (in the resurrection to eternal glory and everlasting life) (Heb 11:32-40)

These verses clearly show that in God's Kingdom there are those who will have phenomenal success in life and there are those who will live a life full of troubles, but neither a life of success nor of troubles is what determines whether God will count a person worthy of His favour rather it is a person's faith despite their success or their troubles.

The majestic reward for both groups is resurrection from the grave to eternal life and everlasting glory. Sadly in some Christian circles the lost are being told they can have this life now in this mortal and decaying world all they have to do is come to Christ and God will bless them with a stress-free charmed life. Though for a short moment this message may drive some to seek the Lord sadly when a crisis in life or troubles come it often ends in many falling away in despair from the Lord altogether because they are disillusioned and confused since it is contrary to what they have been taught by their very popular and often famous teachers.

The Good News of the Gospel in a Nutshell.

It was not possible for death to hold Jesus (Acts 2:24) this is because death is a result of the law of sin and death which states, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23) but Christ was without sin (Heb. 4:15) therefore death had no legal right to

hold him in the grave. The Good News of the Gospel for all who trust in Christ is that they have been granted the free gift of God which is, "Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 6:23), because, "The law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death" (Rom 8:2) thus the law of sin and death (eternal) has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him. (This is the Good News of the Gospel in a nutshell).

The glory of the Good News.

The majestic Good News of the Gospel, states that whoever comes to God through repentance and faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift, but this is not the end of the Good News since God's promises also state that the faithful in Christ will be resurrected to eternal glory and everlasting life.

Can there be any better news than this? Thus the reason it is called the Good News.

The Ship Nears Land.

Acts 27:27-38 ----- ²⁷When the fourteenth night had come, as we were being driven across the Adriatic Sea, about midnight the sailors suspected that they were nearing land. ²⁸So they took a sounding and found twenty fathoms. A little farther on they took a sounding again and found fifteen fathoms. ²⁹And fearing that we might run on the rocks, they let down four anchors from the stern and prayed for day to come. ³⁰And as the sailors were seeking to escape from the ship, and had lowered the ship's boat into the sea under pretence of laying out anchors from the bow, ³¹Paul said to the centurion and the soldiers, "Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved." ³²Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the ship's boat and let it go. ³³As day was about to dawn, Paul urged them all to take some food, saying, "Today is the fourteenth day that you have continued in suspense and without food, having taken nothing. ³⁴Therefore I urge you to take some food. It will give you strength, for not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you." ³⁵And when he had said these things, he took bread, and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat. ³⁶Then they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves. ³⁷(We were in all 276 persons in the ship.) ³⁸And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea.

On the fourteenth night about midnight the ship was being driven across the Adriatic Sea, the sailors suspecting they were near land and might run onto rocks let down four anchors and prayed for daylight to come, but the sailors knowing the ship was going to be destroyed tried to secretly lower the ships life boats, Paul seeing this said to Julius the centurion guard and the soldiers if these men do not stay in the ship the soldiers will die, obviously the soldiers quickly cut the ropes stopping anyone from deserting the ship.

It is interesting to notice when Paul advised Julius at Fair Havens not to set sail, he did not take his advice (v9-11), yet now he does, this also shows the integrity of Julius and the relationship Paul has with him since rather than join the sailors and save his own life Julius remains to save all on the boat by trusting that Paul is hearing from God.

Daylight arrived and Paul encourages everyone (all 276 people in the ship) (v37) to eat for their health sake since they have been without food for many days (v21-33) and then encourages the men by telling them, "Not a hair is to perish from the head of any of you" (v34). Paul then took bread and giving thanks to God in the presence of all he broke it and began to eat and everyone ate with him then they threw the remaining food overboard to lighten the ship.

The Bible says: -

- Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man (Luke 2:52).

Paul has achieved this even with those who are keeping him under guard. The principal set out in Christ's teachings is as much as it is possible and in our power make the goal of our life about not only winning God's favour, but also the favour of people (regardless of their faith or lack of it) rather than turning them against us. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matt. 5:9).

The Ship is Destroyed, but Everyone is Saved.

Acts 27:39-44 ----- ³⁹Now when it was day, they did not recognise the land, but they noticed a bay with a beach, on which they planned if possible to run the ship ashore. ⁴⁰So they cast off the anchors and left them in the sea, at the same time loosening the ropes that tied the rudders. Then hoisting the foresail to the wind they made for the beach. ⁴¹But striking a reef, they ran the vessel aground. The bow stuck and remained immovable, and the stern was being broken up by the surf. ⁴²The soldiers' plan was to kill the prisoners, lest any should swim away and escape. ⁴³But the centurion wishing to save Paul, kept them from carrying out their plan. He ordered those who could swim to jump overboard first and make for the land, ⁴⁴and the rest on planks or on pieces of the ship. And so all were brought safely to land.

The 3rd time the ship Stops is not at a Port, but on a Beach.

It's now daylight and they see a bay they do not recognise so they decide to try to run the ship on its shore. They put the sail up and drop all the ships anchors but the ship hits rocks and begin to break up. To stop the prisoners escaping the soldiers intended to kill them all, but Julius the Roman guard wanting to save Paul stopped them and told everyone to swim to shore.

All arrive safely as the angel of the Lord had previously told Paul they would (v23-24). It is interesting to notice that the lives of the prisoners were saved because Paul had won the favour of Julius the Roman guard, had he not respected Paul the soldiers would have gone ahead with their plan to kill the prisoners.

Sometimes others (regardless of their faith or lack of it) are blessed because of those who worship and honour God, but this principal also works in the reverse, many Christians have been helped or protected by those outside of the faith, thus one of the reasons Jesus and Paul teach and wisdom says when it is in our power, it is wise to endeavour to win the favour of others rather than offend and turn them away.

A principal of Bible Writers and Authors.

The book of Acts begins with the words, "In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach" (Acts 1:1). The first book refers to the book of Luke we know this because it begins with the words, "It seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus" (Luke 1:3) showing us that the author of Luke is also the author of the book of Acts which of course is Luke himself.

Yet throughout the book of Acts the name of Luke is not mentioned, rather the author uses the words "we" and "us" but contained in these two words are of course Luke himself and whoever is with him at that time.

It is a common Bible principal for the author of the Scriptures to hide themselves in their letter. The writers very rarely use the word "I" they will often say, "That disciple with them" or "Him" when they are referring to themselves. It is a style of writing that avoids boasting. The spirit of the world is driven by pride, ego and the desire to feel important, if someone of the world has contact with a famous person they want to boast about it to their friends, biblical writers often avoid this by hiding themselves in their writings.

End