

Acts 27 NIV study guide

1 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 Fast. 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.

13 When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; 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** When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor 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 the men 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 whose I am 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." **27** On the fourteenth night we were still being driven across the Adriatic 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 deep. A short time later they took soundings again and found it was ninety feet 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 fall 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

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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 pieces of the ship. In this way everyone reached land in safety.

This is an exciting chapter. Read it at least twice before starting to answer the questions. There is so much happening in this chapter you will want to take your time to really get the facts. Pray and ask God to bless your time as you study this lesson on “living in through the storm.” I heard it said once... “you are either in a storm or just came out of one or you are fixing to be in one” Let’s prepare ourselves so we will face it with courage and faith like Paul.

1. Go back and mark any references to time. Use your highlighter
There are several. (I found 12)
2. Now go back and mark every place that was named. Use a different color highlighter
(I found 21)
3. Notice who Paul is turned over to, a centurion named Julius. What do you remember about the office of centurion from our study of Acts 10:1? What type of character would be required of the person holding this position?
4. Did you notice all the references to “we” and “us”, who is traveling with Paul?
5. It is specifically mentioned in verse 2 that they are traveling along the coast. They are not venturing out into the deep. In verse 4 we see they are sailing under the lee of Cyprus. This means they were sailing between land and the island in order to avoid some of the very strong winds.
6. What changes were made in verse 6?
7. Are you watching a map as you read this chapter to follow their journey? It will help you to have a greater understanding if you locate the route. The normal route from Myra to Rome would have taken them south of Rhodes and north of Crete to Sicily. They were already well off course when they reached Cnidus. Vs.7
8. Any sailor will tell you that the time of year that you are sailing makes a big difference. What does Paul try to point out to them in order to persuade them to stay put?
9. After reading the discussion in verses 11-12 who do you think was in charge on this ship? Who had the final say? Often we are so occupied in our thinking “just a little bit more” or “just a bit farther” that we fail to use good judgment. We fail to listen to godly advice.
10. What happened in verses 13-20? What was the result of not listening to the advice Paul had given them?
11. Have you ever been given advice concerning your finances, marriage, or parenting and you thought it was not something that required your immediate attention? Then very soon a giant storm came up out of seemingly nowhere. How did you handle it?
12. What did you do? Did you try to lighten the load as these sailors did, even to the point of throwing the ship’s tackle overboard? We must not worry so much about the future needs that we jeopardize today. Yes, they would need that tackle if they made it out of the storm but if they did not lighten the load the ship might very well sink; and who needs

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tackle then? In the storm you may be in why not stop and consider, what is the tackle that I may need to let go of to lighten my load and keep from sinking?

13. Is God speaking to you concerning anything you are going through right now? If so stop and pray and seek direction from Him. Ask Him to direct your thoughts and plans. Then give Him the glory when you arrive safe and sound.
14. Paul stands up to speak to the men in verse 21 and reminds them that they should have listened to him and not set sail from Crete. This is not an "I told you so" speech; he is reminding them that God is speaking to him and if they will listen God will deliver them safely. What instructions does he give them in verses 22-38?
15. Did everyone totally buy into Paul's lead?
16. Who did finally choose to follow Paul's advice? Vs.32 Sometimes when we are in the leadership position we must make the decision for the group.

Notice things got worse before they got better. Often we get ourselves in such a problem that it is not a quick fix. There are often other obstacles to encounter before we get to the shore. Have you ever been on a boat in a storm? There is nothing like that feeling when your feet finally touch land again.

17. What further obstacles did they encounter before the safety of land? What was lost at sea? Vss.38-43

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18. Who saved Paul's life when the soldiers wanted to kill him? Do you remember why they would have been tempted to do this? Remember the Philippian jailer who was about to kill himself when Paul said "do not harm yourself, for we are all here" in Acts 16:25-34 According to Roman law what would happen if a prisoner escaped?
19. What was the good news that ends this chapter?
20. What have you heard from God as you studied this chapter?
21. What have you learned about the character of God?
22. If you are not in a storm today great, what have you gleaned from this chapter that will help you as you weather the next storm of life?
23. Is there anything you learned that you could share with someone else in order to encourage them?