

Acts 27: Paul Sails Toward Rome

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[0 : 00] 27, Acts chapter 27, last time Paul had appeared before Agrippa and again they had found nothing that he had done worthy of death, worthy of being in prison, worthy of anything that had been happening to him as a result of the Jews or the authorities and but Paul had appealed to Caesar which was his right as a Roman citizen and so now he's going to be sent to to Rome and it come to the point where Agrippa said this man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed on the Caesar and so had Paul not made that appeal he could be free at this point but remember the Lord has told Paul that he must go to Rome he must bear witness and testify of him in Rome just like he's testified in Jerusalem and other places he has to go to Rome and in fact this journey to

Rome in Paul's mind started way back we hear about it first in Acts chapter 19 verse 21 when Paul was still in Ephesus about the time he was going to leave Ephesus he said I got to go to Jerusalem and then I must see Rome also so this has been a long time in the works and it's interesting as we go through this be thinking about the fact that God told Paul you got to go to Rome but he didn't tell him how he was going to get there he didn't tell him everything that would happen on the way there and Paul was right where he was supposed to be right going in the right direction and things were not going well so just because things are going in reverse doesn't mean you're in the wrong place things can go bad when you're in the right place doing the right thing and so this is going to be evident as we go through this but at the same time you see the fact that God is in control he's behind the scenes working and he will get Paul to where he needs him to be it may not be as smoothly as Paul would have hoped for but he's going to get him there and so that's that's what we can see as we go through this and so chapter 27 we'll start in verse 1 and when it was determined that we should sail into Italy they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners under one named Julius a centurion of the Augustus band and now remember a centurion is a soldier who has ruled over a hundred soldiers centurion and so Paul has been put with one of those and entering into a ship of Adramatitum we landed and meaning to sail by the coast of Asia one Aristarchus and Macedonian of Thessalonica being with us now Adramatium is north in Troas so the ship originated from there more than likely this was a coastal ship there were a couple different kinds of ships back in the day they were coastal ships they were just built for going up the coast staying near the coast and going from different little port city to port city along the coast these ships were not we have have been built for the open seas and so more than likely this is what Paul is on at first how can we gather that is he probably left from Caesarea that was the nearest major port to Jerusalem and Sidon where they're going to land first is north of there straight up the coast and so Paul is taking a northern voyage here at first most likely on a ship that just is a coastal kind of ship also Aristarchus keep that name in mind we've seen him before back in chapter 25 or no but back in chapter 19 verse 29 and then as you read Paul's epistles you'll read about him in Colossians chapter 4 and also you'll read about him in Philemon verse 24 now keep in mind Paul has not written Colossians or Philemon by this time he will write them as he is imprisoned in Rome and so those are epistles that will come later and Aristarchus will be there with him and his name will show up in those epistles so that's that's where you'll see that name as well he was a Macedonian of Thessalonica and he was traveling with him also I forgot to mention back in verse 1 notice the first person pronoun we where it says and we and when it was determined that we should sail into Italy in other words Luke is including himself here so Luke is traveling with Paul again we don't know how much interaction Luke and Paul would have had on those two years that Paul has been in custody we don't know how much interaction they would have had but it appears that Luke is back traveling with him you know at one point in Paul's later epistles he's going to write and say only Luke is with me and so Luke is his faithful companion and he will travel

with him some have suggested the fact that Aristarchus and Luke are traveling with Paul doesn't mean they're prisoners it could be that because of Paul's status as a Roman citizen and because he is entitled to certain benefits that he could have had Luke traveling as his personal physician a lot of people think that Paul at this time his health was probably not good and so Luke could have been his personal physician and Aristarchus may have been something like a personal attendant we don't know that for sure but we we're never told that Aristarchus and Luke were actually prisoners as well they may have been allowed to travel with Paul as one of his benefits of being a Roman citizen and so back to verse 3 and the next day we touched at Sidon and Julius courteously entreated Paul and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself so again Paul has got liberties the other prisoners didn't have him being a Roman citizen and also him not being charged with anything formally or convicted of anything wrongdoing he's got some liberties and they're letting him go in and out to different places and when we had launched from thence we sailed under Cyprus because the winds were contrary and when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia we came to Myra a city of Lycia so by this time Paul has traveled approximately 14 days and about 500 miles so this is a long a long journey and we'll find out later that it's not only a long journey but it's a very dangerous journey especially the time of the year that they are going and there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing into

Italy and he put us there in now most commentators agree that this is probably a grain ship hauling large amounts of grain because it was coming from Alexandria Rome was dependent upon Egypt for most of its grain supply and so and people who who ran those ships going from Alexandria to Rome they were actually given special privileges by the by the Roman government because it was such a necessity and Rome depended on that part of the that part of the world to supply a lot of their grain things like wheat and stuff would have been on this boat and so they're going to put them on this this grain ship and this would have been a large ship a ship built for the purpose of handling the open seas and making the the journey from where they are on into Italy and so Paul has been moved from probably a coastal type ship now to a larger ship hauling grain and these these prisoners as well verse 7 and when we had sailed slowly many days and scarce were come over against Cnidus the wind not suffering we sailed under Crete over against Salmoni and hardly passing it came into a place which is called the fair havens nigh and where unto was the city of Lacia now when much time was spent and when sailing was now dangerous because the fast was now already passed Paul admonished them now we got to understand what time of the year we're talking about when he says the fast is already passed and then he's going to mention winter here shortly that fast he's talking about occurred on the day of atonement so the day of atonement was in the seventh month it was around the 10th day of the of the seventh month of the year and in in our terms terms that we can relate to that would have been anywhere from mid to late September to early October and so this is coming down to the fall of the year the day of atonement was one of the fall it was the second of the fall festivals or fall feasts that were celebrated by the jews the first feast of the feast of the feast of trumpets signifying that the summer harvest was passed the summer was ended and then 10 days later you were have the day of atonement and that was a day of affliction you were to afflict your souls you weren't to do any work you were to fast on that particular day and so when he's talking about a fast that's where he's talking about and it's around these times of the year that sailing in the area of the mediterranean would get dangerous and after you get on into the november time november december january a lot of times shipping would shut down pretty much completely because it went from dangerous to deadly you didn't want to be out on the on the sea in those times of the month because or those times of the year because it was just too too dangerous it was too too risky and a lot of times the shipping and the sailing industries would would shut down nearly completely due to the danger involved and so paul is going to warn them about this that's verse 9 now when much time was spent and when sailing was now dangerous because the fast was now already passed paul admonished them and so they're entering into mid to late october around that time where sailing is no longer safe and said unto them sirs i perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage not only of the landing and ship but also of our lives and so paul says i perceive now the word perceive here is kind of the idea of i've learned from past experiences so remember by this time paul had already written a number of his epistles and one of those epistles he had written was second corinthians and remember how he talks about all those times he had suffered shipwreck and a night and a day he had spent in the deep so paul had been in situations like this before he has already told us about them in his letter to second corinthians to the the of second corinthians to the

corinthian church he told us about his three times suffering shipwreck and a night and a day he had spent in the deep and things of that sort so when he says i perceive in other words he's saying past experiences have told me sailing right now is probably not good and so that's that's the idea here and he said it will cause much damage not only to the ship but also our lives nevertheless the centurion believed the master and owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by paul and so the centurion believed the sailors you know the professionals you know the experts they won't lead you in the wrong direction so they thought remember amateurs built the ark professionals built the titanic the experts are not always are not always best the experts do not always have all the right answers sometimes the experts can lead you the the wrong way people invest in the stock market and they listen to experts and they say we invest in this and it'll go well and you read of all these financial advisors that have went into depression and are on all kinds of stuff now because they led people the wrong way and they lost a bunch of money so the experts don't always have the right answer and in this case that was true and so they said nevertheless the centurion believed the master and all and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by paul in other words was this was this little guy this little tent maker what does he know about traveling the seas we're going to listen to we're going to listen to the experts all right and so and because the haven was not commodious to winter in the more part advised to depart thence also if by any means they might attain to phoenix and there to winter which is in a haven of crete and lieth toward the southwest and northwest and when the south wind blew softly supposing that they had uh obtained their purpose losing fence they sailed close by crete and so they're they're looking at this and they're thinking where we are it's not real comfortable for the winter there's a better place not far from here to winter at and we can go there and it just so happens we now have a south wind and that's what they needed a wind from the south to kind of help them on their journeys north and so they think conditions are favorable paul doesn't know what he's talking about we're going to go on and and do what we want to do but verse 14 but not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind called euroclidon now the word tempestuous is the word is the word violent it's actually where we get the english word for typhoon the word tempestuous it's uh it's the word tufonicos in the greek it's where we get our word typhoon so it's a very violent very turbulent wind so but not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind called euroclidon now the euroclidon is the idea of a northeast wind the wind coming out of out of the northeast and so you're in mediterranean sea area you got a wind coming out of the northeast going to bring cold air right so what happens when cold air and warm air get together bad things happen right and so we're going to see that as as we move along and when the ship was caught and could not bear up into the wind we let her drive and running under a certain island which is called clauda we had much work to come by the boat in other words the boat it was difficult to control it that phrase there we had much work to come by the boat the boat became difficult to control so here they are in this violent typhoon type wind this wind coming out of the northeast it's causing causing them troubles it's causing them to have difficulty controlling the ship which when they had taken

[15 : 09] up they used helps undergirding the ship and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands strakesail and so were driven so quicksands they're the idea of those sandbars that are a lot of times out out from from the coast and we being exceedingly tossed with the tempest the next day they lighten the ship in other words now they're having to throw off some cargo grain wheat their money maker right this is this is they were delivering this to to the romans and now they're having to throw that out because things are so dangerous they they have to even the thing that they were responsible for getting from point a to point b that thing has that stuff has to be thrown over because of conditions being so dangerous and the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship and when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared and no small tempest lay on us all hope that we should be saved was then taken away so here are people on a ship for days without seeing sun nor stars so they had no idea of their position and they had no idea of their direction so that's how that's how significant this has become because they didn't have this is 2 000 years ago they didn't have all the technology we have today their their compass was the stars their position was determined by where they were in relation to where the sun was at where the where the stars were at that's how they that's how they charted their course that's how they knew where they were they depended on the the sun you know rises in the east and sets in the west they would have been aware of that and not seeing the sun well which ways east which ways west they knew certain stars appeared in certain parts of the sky but if you can't see that where where are you which way are you going this wind has been you know type a typhoon type of wind you can you can be turned in a different kind of direction not know where you are where you're going and where are you supposed to go from here and so they're in a very very dangerous position keep in mind god has told paul you must testify in rome so god's behind the scenes he knows he knows what's going on he sees exactly what's going on in fact he knew it before they went through it that this is exactly what was going to happen so he's still behind the scenes he he's still he's still in control verse 21 but after long abstinence paul stood forth in the midst of them and said sirs you should have hearkened unto me and not have loosed from crete and to have gained this harm and loss and so paul was telling them you should have listened i told you not to do this and there was a reason and i don't think paul is trying to be the i told you so person here because right no one likes that right if you make a mistake and your and things start to go bad and then somebody comes along and says i told you so that's not what you want to hear at the time and i don't think that was paul's attitude paul was telling them you should have listened to me because what i had come from from the lord is basically what he's he's telling him there so sirs you should have hearkened to me and not have loosed from crete and to have gained this harm and loss and now i exhort you to be of good cheer for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you but of the ship for there stood by me this night the angel of god whose i am and whom i serve saying fear not paul thou must be brought before caesar and lo god hath given them all that them that sail with thee wherefore sirs be of good cheer

for i believe god that it shall be even as it was told me so paul is saying you know i've i've heard from god i've heard from the angel of god god has sent a messenger to me i've heard from the angel of god who's who's i am it's like this is the god i belong to this is the god i serve now the word serve there is the word sometimes is translated on two occasions uh in the bible it's translated worship that same that same greek word on at least two occasions is is rendered as worship so the god i worship the god whom i have allegiance to the god whom i serve he has sent a messenger to me saying fear not paul thou must be brought before caesar now there that word must there is a little greek word it's three letters long it's the word day d-e-i it's the idea of a divine necessity so basically paul is saying or paul is being told you have a divine appointment to appear before caesar that's in that little word must there when he says paul thou must be brought before caesar it's saying you have a divine appointment god has ordained for you to appear before caesar therefore it must must happen so there is no way under any circumstances paul is not going to get to rome because it's a divine appointment that he appear before before caesar that's the weight of that little little word day there that's used that we get the word must from it's a divine necessity it's a divine imperative you've got a divine appointment to appear before caesar and so what's paul being reminded of here god keeps his promises he's told you you're going to appear before caesar therefore it must happen right and so the promises of god that we have in the scriptures they must they must happen we can still have we can still have faith in those if god promises something his character is on the line he must bring it to pass because that's who he is he's he's a he's a god of character he's a god of holiness he's a god of of perfection so if he made a promise it's got to happen and so it's of divine necessity paul that you get to appear before caesar and notice what he says wherefore search be of good cheer for i believe god that it should be even as it was told me and so paul knew where his assurance and confidence was not in the conditions around him not in the capabilities of those operating the ship but his confidence was in the promises of god that's the only place assurance is found of any type you say well what about assurance of salvation you're trusting in the promises of god believe on the lord jesus christ and thou shall be saved if you've come to the point where you truly are trusting him and him alone for salvation you can rest and have assurance in the promises of god that he'll do what he said and same thing here if it's something in the in the christian life something that you're experiencing you have the promises of god that he's going to bring you through that may not look like you want it to look but he's going to still bring you through it because he has a ultimate purpose in mind remember romans chapter 8 says those who he justified that's in the aorist tense one time completed action that happened when you put faith in christ them he also glorified that's future tense that's when we get to heaven but in that verse it's in the aorist tense meaning it's a one-time completed action so if you've been saved if you've been justified you're going to get to heaven you have god's word on it and so he's made that promise now how you get there between point a and point b the point a of your salvation the point a of getting to heaven

we at the point of getting to heaven we don't know what it's going to look like in between it could get messy like it did for paul but there are promises that god made paul there's promises that god's made us those whom he justified them he also glorified there are promises he's made to us that he has to bring to pass his character is on the line therefore he has to do it and so it's of divine necessity paul has a divine appointment and therefore because it's a promise that god made him paul says i i believe god i can trust in his i can trust in his promises he's promised it therefore it has to happen how be it we must be cast upon a certain island in other words we're gonna have a wreck but when the 14th night was come and we were driven up and down in adria about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country and so their adria the idea they're the adrian sea it kind of joins the mediterranean you have three kind of seas that all are in this part of the area and at one point between italy and macedonia you have the adrian sea it comes down and joins the mediterranean sea and sounded and found it 20 fathoms now a fathom is about six feet so 20 fathoms would be around 120 feet and um when they had gone a little bit further they sounded again and it was it found 15 fathoms then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks they cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day in other words they were praying they were praying that it would be day and no longer no longer no longer night and so uh one thing that commentators have mentioned is the accuracy with which luke describes what would it have been like to sail in these times under these conditions what actions would the the crew members would have had to taken to survive or to at least try to survive people are amazed at the accuracy with which luke has has described this they're again giving validity to luke's testimony and the inspiration of of scripture so it says and the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship when they had let down the boat into the sea under color as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship in other words they were going to escape by way of lifeboat but they were given the pretense that they were going to cast anchors out of the foreship and so they were kind of being deceptive here we're going to make it look like we're going to cast anchors out of out of the ship but what we're actually going to do is we're going to jump in the lifeboat and we're going to get out of here that was that was their plan and notice paul stopped them he said paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers except these abide in the ship you cannot be saved in other words you do that you're going to perish if you do that you're going to die you're not you're not going to be be saved then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat and let her fall off and while the day was coming on paul besought them all to take meat saying this day is the 14th day that ye have tarried and continued fasting having taken nothing wherefore i pray you to take some meat for this is for your health for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you and when he had thus spoken he took bread and gave thanks to god in presence of them all and when he had broken it he began to eat then were they all of good cheer and they also took some meat and so paul is encouraging them like he fasted long enough eat be of good cheer paul is reminding them you're going to make it through this you're going to you're going to be you're going to be safe through this storm remember paul is on divine commission paul has had a divine order from the lord you have to appear before caesar it's a divine

necessity you have a divine appointment so paul is remembering the promises of god remember he said i believe god i'm taking him at his word and that's what believing is you're taking god at his word you're believing he will do what he said you're believing that that he said what he did he meant what he said he will do it he'll bring it bring it to pass and so paul is believing and not only is he believing he's encouraging those around him who are probably just pagans and heathens to believe also and so they they eat they're kind of refreshed and when they had eaten enough they lightened the ship and cast out the wheat into the sea so there again you know the significance if they're throwing the wheat over that was their main cargo that was what they were trying to get to to rome and in those days if you were on commission to deliver something to the romans you wanted to get it there so the fact that they're throwing this overboard gives you how how intense and how dangerous the situation really was and when it was day they knew not the land but they discovered a certain creek with a shore into the which they were minded if it were possible to thrust in the ship and when they had taken up the anchors they committed themselves under the sea and loosed the rudder bands and hoisted up the main sail to the wind and made toward shore and falling into a place where two seas met they ran the ship aground and the forepart struck fast and remained unmovable but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves and the soldiers council was to kill the prisoners lest any of them should swim out and escape because you lose a prisoner back in these days if you lost if you're under roman rule and you were responsible for prisoners if you lost them whatever sentence they had came to you if they were to be killed by whatever means you lose them that you're going to be killed by that means their sentence was passed on to you so they were they were in you know preventative mode here right better them than than us so if they try to escape you know take them out verse 43 but the centurion willing to save paul because remember he was not charged with anything he was not committed he hadn't committed a crime guilty of imprisonment or anything so if that happened to him they were in trouble so paul needed protection again at this point so but the centurion willing to save paul kept them from their purpose and commanded them that that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea and get to land and the rest some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship and so it came to pass that they all escaped safe to land and so god kept his promise paul is going to make it to to rome he hasn't quite got where he's going yet but he is almost there god's going to get him there he's got a divine appointment he's got a divine purpose for paul and he's going to get him to rome so he can testify in front of caesar but the way he got him there wasn't what we would call the most ideal and so but paul was in the right place doing the right thing yes there were there were a lot of people on the ship and for all 200 and plus people to come in on boards on planks on whatever they could hold on to shows you that that god was taking care of of the people and and he was keeping his promises again it wasn't the way they intended it wasn't the way they probably had in mind you you never if you're taking off somewhere on a boat you don't picture yourself getting to where you are on a little piece of that boat right that's not how you vision yourself getting to your destination but that's how they got there god didn't tell them how he was going

to get them there he just said i'm going to get you there and all are going to be safe and so behind the scenes god was protecting these people god was keeping his promise and god was fulfilling his word and paul will eventually get to rome and he'll testify to in front of caesar and so next time we'll look at chapter 28 two weeks from today the high school i work for graduates and so i will be away that week and then the following week the june the 8th i think we'll finish the book of acts with kind of a review a recap we'll connect it back to the book of luke that we went through a few years ago we'll see how they connect and so we'll we'll wrap all this up in a few weeks let's pray