

Commentary on Acts chapter 27 by Chuck Smith 7.23.23

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Reminder, Memorial Service for Marilyn InDelecatto, next Sunday July 30th at 2:30 PM

July memory verse Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV) Every word of God *is* pure; He *is* a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

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When it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band ([Act 27:1](#)).

So Julius is another Roman centurion we're introduced to, and interestingly enough, in the scriptures we're introduced to several centurions, and all of them were very commendable men. The Bible really speaks in a very favorable way of each of the centurions. There was a centurion who came to Jesus for the healing of his servant. And Jesus said, "I will come to your house." And he says, "Oh no, Lord. I understand what authority is about because I'm under authority and I have under me men. And I can say to this one, go and he goes and I can say come and he comes. I understand what authority is about, and I'm not worthy that you should come to my house, but you just speak the word and my servant will be healed. I understand authority and I understand your authority. You just speak the word." And Jesus said, "I haven't found this much faith in all of Israel" ([Matthew 8:7-10](#)).

The centurion at the cross, at the death of Jesus said, "Truly this was the Son of God" ([Matthew 27:54](#)). Cornelius, a Roman centurion, was the first Gentile converted in the church. And it was upon his household that the Holy Spirit was poured forth. Now, Julius is a very commendable man. He takes an interest and a liking to Paul, and he shows Paul special favors, and he actually spares Paul's life on this journey.

So they entered into a ship, and they launched, intending to sail by the coast of Asia; and Aristarchus, from Macedonia, was with them. [Luke was with them also.] The next day we touched Sidon [that area you hear so much about today in Southern Lebanon]. And Julius treated Paul courteously, and allowed him the freedom to go to his friends in order that he might refresh himself [when they were there at Sidon]. And when we had launched from there, 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. And there the centurion found one of the ships from Alexandria [It was a corn ship, which were about the largest ships in the sea at that time] and it was sailing to Italy; and so he put us on it. And when we had sailed slowly for many days, and were barely come over against Cnidus, the wind not allowing us, we sailed under Crete, and

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over against Salmone; and, hardly passing it, they came to the place that is called the Fair Havens [which is in about the middle of the island of Crete, which is south and slightly east from the tip of Greece]. Now when a long time was spent, the sailing was getting dangerous, because we were coming into the month of October ([Act 27:2-9](#)),

Now, it was dangerous to sail on the Mediterranean much after October because of the winter storms and all that would whip up the Mediterranean Sea.

So Paul admonished them, and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage would be with great hurt and a lot of damage, not only to the cargo, but also to our lives. Nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul ([Act 27:9-11](#)).

As they were harbored there in Fair Haven, Paul said, "Hey, fellows, I don't think we ought to sail. I perceive that there's going to be a bad voyage. We're going to lose the cargo, and we could lose lives." But the captain and the owner of the ship said, "Oh, I've been on the Mediterranean for years. What does this guy know? We can do it. I've got a good ship," and all of this.

And because it wasn't a very large city, it wasn't really commodious to winter in ([Act 27:12](#)),

There wasn't enough entertainment for the sailors through the three months of the wintertime. Most of them were advised to depart in order that they might get to a larger city in Crete, the city of Phenice, which is on the western end of the island of Crete, that they might winter there where there was all kinds of entertainment for the sailors.

And so when the south wind was blowing softly ([Act 27:13](#)),

They figured this is perfect, you know. They would just let out, and we'll head up to Phenice there at the northwest point of the island of Crete.

But not long after they had set sail there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called the Euroclydon. [It's like our Santa Ana.] And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, they just let her drive. And running under a certain island which is called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat: which when they had taken up, they used the helps, and the undergirding of the ship; fearing lest they should fall into the quicksand, they struck sail, and were so driven ([Act 27:14-17](#)).

They pulled in the sail and just let the storm drive them. But they would gird up the boats. They would put these big undergirdings, these ropes, and they would tie the boat together so the thing wouldn't break apart in the heavy surf. And so these big rope-type things that they would put under the ship, and then they would tighten them with a wench to hold the thing together. So they were doing everything they could, physically, to survive this furious storm.

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And we being exceedingly tossed with the storm, the next day they lightened the ship; and the third day [Luke was talking,] we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship ([Act 27:18-19](#)).

The ropes and the tackling and all. And so Luke was involved in throwing overboard the tackling.

And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared ([Act 27:20](#)),

Of course they lost their bearings. Without the sun or stars they couldn't, they really couldn't tell where they were.

and no small storm lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was taken away. But after a long abstinence [that is, the time of fasting], Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, you should have listened to me ([Act 27:20-21](#)),

Don't you love that? Don't you love to hear that? Oh, I hate that. "You should have listened to me."

So Paul said,

You should have listened to me, and never loosed from Crete, you would have not gained this harm or loss. But now I exhort you to be of good cheer ([Act 27:21-22](#)):

Hey, this guy's really flipped you know. Fourteen days we haven't seen the sun, the wind is still raging, the waves are still beating against us, we're being driven, we don't know where we are, we've given up hope of really being saved, and this guy's saying, "Be of good cheer."

for there shalt not be the loss of any man's life among you. We're only going to lose the ship. For there stood by me this night, the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve ([Act 27:22-23](#)),

Jesus, you remember, came to Paul when he was discouraged in Jerusalem in the prison there and said, "Paul, be of good cheer. Even as you've born witness of me here in Jerusalem so shall you bear witness of me in Rome." Now Jesus sent an angel to Paul during the night when they had given up hope of ever getting to Rome now. I mean, you know, "We've had it. We're going to die out here in the Mediterranean. We're going to be part of the statistics." And the angel reassured Paul. " You are going to get to Rome, Paul. You'll make it to Rome yet." And so Paul, in the morning, stands up and says, "Hey, fellows, be of good cheer! Last night the angel of the Lord... " whose I am and whom I serve, stood by me."

He said, Fear not, Paul; for you must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God has given to you all of them that sail with you ([Act 27:24](#)).

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But for Paul's sake, "I've given thee all of them that are sailing with you."

Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God [great testimony], that it shall be even as it was told to me ([Act 27:25](#)).

"Cheer up fellows, because I believe God. It's going to be just like that." But now notice, he's saying, "I believe God."

Howbeit [he said,] we will be cast on a certain island. When the fourteenth night was come, and we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen realized that they were drawing near to some land ([Act 27:26-27](#));

They probably heard the surf pounding.

And so they sounded, and found that it was twenty fathoms: and then when they went a little further, they sounded again, and it was fifteen fathoms ([Act 27:28](#)).

And so they realized that they were reaching some land.

And so fearing lest they would have fallen upon the rocks, they cast out four anchors from the stern, and they waited for the day. And some of the sailors were about to flee out of the ship, for they had let down a little boat into the sea, but they were acting as though they would have cast out some anchors from the foreship, but Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Unless those men abide in the ship, you cannot be saved ([Act 27:29-31](#)).

Notice how Paul has taken over here; he's now giving the orders. The captain is probably, you know, down in the hold someplace in the ship, probably in chains at this point for his advice to sail. But Paul has taken over. He's giving the commands and the orders now.

So the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let it fall off. And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them to take meat, saying, This is the fourteenth day that you've tarried and you've continued fasting, having taken in nothing ([Act 27:32-33](#)).

They were probably so seasick they couldn't with all of that storm.

Wherefore I pray you to eat some meat; for this is for your health ([Act 27:34](#)):

Paul recognized again the natural and the supernatural, but a man needs strength. And so Paul is saying, "Now, this is for your health; you better eat something."

for not a hair of your head is going to perish. And so when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and he gave thanks ([Act 27:34-35](#))

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And so we have a custom, and I think it's a beautiful custom, of giving thanks to God for our food. Before we partake, to just give God thanks for His provision. And he gave thanks to God in the presence of them all. I like to see people in a restaurant bow their heads and ask God's blessing upon their food. It actually gives you a great opportunity to witness. When we're out with the family, we bow our heads in the restaurant and we ask God's blessing upon the food, and a lot of times it opens up the doors of opportunity to witness. People will come over and say, "Oh, that was such a beautiful thing to see you and your children praying. There's not enough of that today," and all. And we can then say, "Well, are you a Christian?" It gives opportunity to share.

so when he had broken the bread, he began to eat. And they were all of good cheer, and they also took some meat. And there were about two hundred seventy-six people in the ship ([Act 27:35-37](#)),

Plus the load of corn that they were bringing from Egypt. Because Egypt was really the breadbasket for Rome, and most of the grain and all came from Egypt. And they had many of these cargo ships, but they also carried passengers. Two hundred seventy-six, so it was a pretty good size ship.

And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and they cast the wheat that they were carrying into the sea. And when it was day, they did not know what land it was: but they discovered a certain little creek with a shore, and they were hoping, if possible, to steer the ship [on into this creek to get close to shore]. And so when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves to the sea, they loosed the rudder bands, and they hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and they began to move to the shore. And they fell into a place where the two seas met, and they ran the ship aground; and the forepart of the ship stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the back part of the ship was broken up with the violence of the waves. And the soldiers' council was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim away, and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose ([Act 27:38-43](#));

Again, the centurion, a very honorable person, and he kept them from their purpose, because he wanted to save Paul.

and commanded that those which could swim should dive in first, and get to land: and the rest of them, some hanging onto boards, some under the broken pieces of the ship [floated on into land]. And so it came to pass, that they all escaped safe to land ([Act 27:43-44](#)).

We'll finish the book of Acts next Sunday night. I tried. Next Sunday night when we finish the book of Acts, in as much as we just have one chapter, I'll try to bring to you a brief account from history of what happened to Paul after the close of the book of Acts. Not only from history, but from some of the epistles. We get a little further insight of the things that took place in Paul's life after the end of the book of Acts. And so we'll serve a little history of Paul the Apostle next Sunday night after we've taken the twenty-eighth chapter of Acts, to carry it on up to the year sixty-seven when Paul was beheaded by

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Nero. And so we'll sort of complete the life of Paul in history's form next Sunday night. You'll find, I think, it very interesting, this guy Paul. I just really desire to meet him, to spend time with him. I have such great admiration for this man, for his courage, for his strength, for his dedication and commitment. He's just one of a kind, really, and I love him because of his great love for my Lord.

Eternity... the kingdom of God is going to be just a wonderful place, because we're going to be able to spend time with so many wonderful people there in the kingdom. I hope to spend time with Paul. I hope to spend time with David. I hope to spend time with John. I hope to spend time with you when we get there, and we've got all eternity, so why not? It's just going to be great when we come into God's glorious eternal kingdom.