

Acts 27:1-26

The Storm

Learning Objective(s)

- To show that God can gift us with discernment to accomplish his will.
- To reflect and discuss God giving us help in a storm, even if we end up “shipwrecked”.

Pray for your time together as a group.



Icebreaker: Have you ever been caught in a terrible storm? What happened?

Read Out Loud: In this passage, Luke discusses being caught in a storm with Paul and other sailors. Paul is under Roman guard. God used this storm to show His power and to bring Paul to the next location where he would share the Gospel.

Read Out Loud: Acts 27:1-26 (NIV)

27 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 Day of Atonement. 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 saw their opportunity; 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** so the men hoisted it aboard. Then they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Because they were afraid 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 they 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 to whom I belong 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."



(ESV Study Bible)

©Hope Community Church, 2016

? Verse 1 notes that Paul was a prisoner, under the watch of a centurion named Julius. However, in verse 3, the passage notes that Julius treated Paul kindly. How does this treatment indicate how Paul must have treated his captor?

Possible Answer: Paul most likely acted with respect to the centurion, Julius, and earned his trust, as Julius allowed him to be with his friends and be cared for prior to the ship setting sail.

? The passengers on this ship had decided to set sail for Italy before the storm set in. Have you ever had plans that completely fell apart? How did you react?

? Why do you think the centurion ignored Paul's advice in verse 11?

Possible Answer: The pilot and owner of the ship probably had more sailing experience than Paul, his own prisoner. The centurion was not aware of the power of God working through Paul.

? In this passage, Paul warns against the storm to the other passengers twice. How does the warning differ in verse 10 compared to verse 21 and 22?

Possible Answer: Verse 21 and 22 highlight that Paul had heard from an angel of God. He goes on to encourage them by saying they would all survive, and they should take heart (verse 25), based on Paul's faith that that situation would turn out just as God had said.

Read Out Loud: Jonah 1:1-12 (NIV)

1 The word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai: ²“Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”

³ But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

⁴ Then the Lord sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up. ⁵ All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship.

But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. ⁶ The captain went to him and said, “How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us so that we will not perish.”

⁷ Then the sailors said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah. ⁸ So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What kind of work do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?"

⁹ He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

¹⁰ This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the Lord, because he had already told them so.)

¹¹ The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

¹² "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you."

? How does Paul's presence on the ship contrast to Jonah's presence on a ship in the story of Jonah (Jonah 1:12)?

Possible Answer: Paul's presence brought comfort and assured deliverance, while Jonah's presence threatened to destroy everyone.

? In both this passage and the passage of Jonah, what was the cause of the storm?

Possible Answer: In the book of Jonah, the storm was caused from Jonah's disobedience, where in this passage about Paul, the storm was caused by natural causes.

? In both situations, God wanted Jonah and Paul to be in the storm. What was God's ultimate purpose for them? What does this say about the "storms" we go through in our own life?

Possible Answer: He wanted both Paul and Jonah to grow in obedience and faith in God, but ultimately the sharing of the Gospel message (to the people of Nineveh and Rome) was His greater purpose in both scenarios. In our own lives, God uses our "storms" to further the Gospel, to teach us obedience and to stretch our faith.

? What does verse 25 tell us about Paul's faith?

Possible Answer: Paul believed it would happen exactly as God told him (verse 25). Even though a miracle did not happen immediately at that point in the story, Paul had faith that each life would be spared.

? In verse 24, an angel of God told Paul that his life and the others' lives on the ship would be spared. What has been the track record of God's promises and miracles to/through Paul throughout Acts? How would that have impacted Paul's faith to this point?
Possible Answer: Examples (such as passages in the text box) show that God has revealed His power to Paul, and Paul does not question whether God will accomplish His purposes.

God Working Through Paul
Paul's conversion (Acts 9:1-9), Paul heals a cripple (14:8-10), Paul goes to Macedonia (16:7), Paul casts out an evil spirit (16:16-18), Paul and Silas' prison doors opened by an earthquake (16:25-26), Paul communicates the power of the Holy Spirit (19:1-6), Paul heals multitudes (19:11-12), Paul restores Eutychus to life (20:9-12), Paul went to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22).

? Verse 24 notes that Paul would stand before Caesar. What does this indicate about the ultimate purpose for Paul's deliverance?
Possible Answer: Paul was delivered for his testimony in Rome (cross reference Acts 19:21, 23:11).

For Discussion and Accountability

? Have you gone through a "storm" in your life, where it was difficult to see God's hand in it?

? How can we encourage each other to change our perspective in the midst of any storms we may currently be going through?