

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK & THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

Text: Acts 27:9-44

INTRO: In this study we hope to accomplish at least 2 purposes:

1. To gain insight into the workings of the Providence of God
2. To show our need to cooperate with God by following any instructions He may give.

Our study begins in a little port called Fair Havens. 276 people make up the passengers & crew of a ship bound for Rome. Those on board are a centurion, Julius (captain of the ship), the ship's owner, a crew of sailors, the soldiers under the command of the centurion, & the prisoners who are being taken to Rome to Caesar. The time is early autumn, 60 AD.

I. TO SAIL OR NOT TO SAIL, vs. 9-13.

- A. Paul's advice rejected. 2 Cor 11:25
- B. Journey of only about 50 miles. The weather is perfect. The voyage should take only a few hours.

II. THE VOYAGE UNDERTAKEN, vs. 13-20.

- A. First day, vs. 13-17. SE wind
- B. Second day, vs. 18.
- C. Third day, vs. 19. [equipment, perhaps even furniture]
- D. What to do on the 4th day? Nothing. Nothing left to do.
- E. Hope gone, vs. 20.

III. A RAY OF HOPE, vs. 21-29.

A. Paul's vision, vs. 23-24.

B. Paul's faith, vs. 25.

1. Not "I believe in the weather."

2. Not "I believe in the sea worthiness of the ship."

3. Not "I believe in the skill of the captain & crew."

4. But "I believe God." Paul not only believed IN God. He believed God.

IV. EACH MUST DO HIS PART, vs. 30-41.

A. All must remain in the ship, vs. 31.

B. They must eat, maintain their health, vs. 33-38.

C. Must use every skill, wisdom, ability available, vs. 40.

V. THE AMAZING OUTCOME, vs. 42-44.

A. Tho at the darkest moment, all hope was gone, vs. 20, not a single life was lost.

B. The God who could have used miraculous means to effect this amazing delivery, is not limited to the miraculous. God rather used His Providential guidance of the laws of nature, as He does even today. He used the decisions of men to bring about a Divine purpose--bring Paul to Rome, vs. 24; Acts 28:30-31.

CONCLUSION: We learn that:

1. God can bring great wonders to pass without the use of the miraculous, & we need not hesitate to seek His Providential guidance.

2. Tho God is interested in our welfare, both spiritual & temporal, we must seek to know His will, apply our wisdom, our skills, & abilities in cooperation with that Divine will.

Springhill, LA, March 2, 1975

La Porte, TX, January 11, 1976

Burkeville, TX, June 14, 1977 (meeting)

East Central, Tulsa, OK, June 26, 1977

Exton, PA, November 28, 1987

Shiloh, Mexia, TX, July 10, 1994

Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, January 8, 2006