

K.E.Y. Bible Study

Description: K.E.Y. Bible Study introduces the essential biblical narratives, concepts, and themes, and teaches the student how to apply the message of the Bible to daily living. Each teaching session is self-contained, which allows participants to join in the study at any time during the five years.

Purpose: To teach the most significant events, passages, and doctrines of the Bible in a manner and using methods which encourages and empowers the student to:

- Keep the faith that we have received
- Be Equipped to serve the Body of Christ
- Become Yoked, or connect, with others for the purpose of ministry

The Cruise That Crashed May 4, 2016 Acts 27:1-44

General Background

This passage is a fascinating depiction of a first century adventure gone wrong. (*Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale...*). Luke's description of this voyage is a wealth of information and is considered a maritime masterpiece. Why did Luke go to such lengthy detail of this 2,000-mile trip from Caesarea to Rome that under the best conditions would take about five weeks? Does it parallel the presentation in the Gospels of the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem the week leading up to the crucifixion and resurrection? Is it a literary device to provide excitement such as in other ancient epics, (a modern day chase scene in a movie)? Is it purely an allegory depicting the struggle of good versus evil? Or, is it an account of God's sovereign protection of Paul and Paul's desire to share the gospel in Rome? And, is it Luke's intention to present Paul as a leader and a man of great faith? Probably these last two are the best reasons for this long portion of Acts. However, there is an element of parallel between this story and the story of salvation, as we shall see.

What Happened

Leaving for Italy – Acts 27:1-12

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.

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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.

A Storm at Sea – Acts 27:13-26

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**

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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."

Shipwreck – Acts 27:27-44

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 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**.

What Does It Mean and How Can I Apply It?

- Times of crisis do not develop character; they reveal character
- Even the worst crises cannot hide the face of God or hinder the purposes of God.
- Crises can give us opportunities to serve others and bear witness to Jesus Christ.