

"Yet now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship." (Acts 27:22)

Loving Lord, on all our journeys you remain by our side. We thank you for protecting us from all danger and harm. Help us to face adversity with the confidence of knowing that we have nothing to fear, so long as you are with us. In your name we pray. Amen.

Introduction

There were many people who tried to stop Paul from preaching the message of Jesus. They had Paul arrested and even tried to kill him. He was brought before local rulers, who kept him under house arrest. But Paul appealed his case by asking to be sent to the Emperor in Rome. However, getting to Rome was no easy journey!

Read: Acts 27:18-44

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

The Biblical Context

As the apostles traveled from place to place, they started new congregations in the towns they visited. In spite of rejection and persecution, the message of Jesus spread throughout the Roman Empire.

After many journeys, when Paul had returned to his homeland in Judea, some of the Jewish authorities wanted to put an end to his ministry. They had him arrested and tried to kill him. But Paul was a Roman citizen; he had the right to a trial under Roman law.

He used the opportunity to speak about Jesus to several leaders, including Governor Felix and his wife, Drusilla, as well as Governor Festus and King Agrippa and his wife, Bernice. When he had been under house arrest for many months, Paul finally appealed to be heard before the Emperor himself, in Rome. He was taken by ship under guard to appear before Caesar.

Discussion Questions

1. Read the lead up to today's story in Acts 25:6-12. What did Paul say in his own defense (v. 8)?
2. What was the final destination for Paul's journey (Acts 27:1-3)? What country is that in? Who was assigned to guard Paul along the way? How did he treat Paul?
3. According to verses 9-11, Paul was not afraid to speak up. Why do you think none of the sailors were willing to listen to Paul? What did they think of him?
4. What was the promise that the angel gave to Paul on the ship (vs. 21-26)? What mission did God want Paul to complete?
5. How does faith in God give us hope and confidence, even when our circumstances seem hopeless and grim? How do you see this in the attitude of Paul compared to the attitude of the sailors?
6. Why did the soldiers plan to kill the prisoners (v. 42)? Who stopped them? In what way can you tell that God was already working on the centurion?
7. Read Jonah 2:2-9. How was Jonah's experience similar to that of Paul? What same power was at work in both men's lives?
8. Read Psalm 18:13-19. Are people of faith immune from trouble and hardship in life? In what sense is God's power something to be feared? How is this same almighty power of God also the source of our faith and hope?