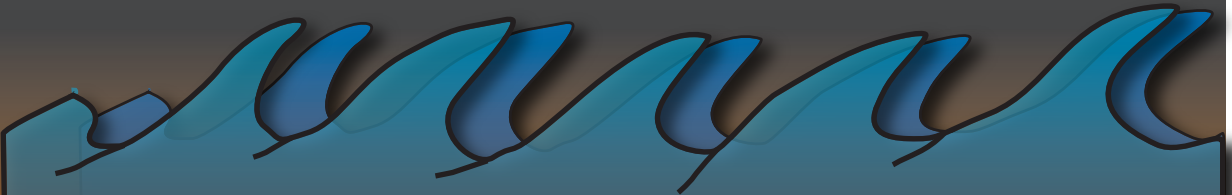


The Apostle and the Great Storm

a four-step study on evangelism and missions in **Acts chapter 27**

W	<i>Watching</i> in order to gather the measurable biblical data.
A	<i>Analyzing</i> the passage data to find the main theme and subthemes.
L	<i>Linking</i> the content themes to other Scripture and everyday life.
K	<i>Knowing</i> what to do and planning how to do it.

Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by **Paul**. (Acts 27:11)



But the centurion, willing to save **Paul**, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: (Acts 27:43)

Commentary overheard in a Literature Class at imaginary Quest Bible College

Dr. Penwell (on Hemingway's famous sea story and Luke's testimony in the storm)

Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* is not just about an old man and a large fish. It is about the painful struggles and vanity of life. Likewise, there is much about human frailty and struggle in Acts chapter 27. Yet, the ending to Luke's true story is much more positive. Another important difference is the fact that there were 276 people on the large ship in Acts chapter 27 all of whom knew and could confirm what had happened and Paul's central role in it all. In Hemingway's story, however, there was just one man in a small imaginary boat who was misunderstood by most. What do you think about these two famous sea stories?

Alethia (on the two stories both sounding real)

Well, they both sound very realistic to me, though Hemingway's story is, of course, fiction.

Dr. Penwell (on the difference between real and realistic)

Yes. Luke was able to write his lengthy account because he was actually there. The length and details point to authenticity. Similarly, Hemingway sounds real because he knew much about fishing from personal experience. Sadly, his life showed that he did not know the Lord, however, even though there is some religious content and truth in his realistic writings.

ON THE MOVE FOR GOD	Acts 27:1-44 Paul in the Great Storm
W.	A.
<i>who, what, when, etc. (especially measurable things)</i>	<i>Theme Analysis, putting it All together</i>
<p>WHO?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paul, God's man with the message - centurion, Julius (name, 27:1,3) (rank, 27:6,11,31,43, 28:16) - we, us, our (27:1-8,16,18,26-27, 28:2) <i>Paul, Luke, etc.</i> - Aristarchus. (27:2, Col. 4:10) - angel of the Lord (27:23) - other prisoners (27:1, 42) - soldiers (27:32. 42. those with Julius, - ship owner, helmsman (27:11), <i>oppose Paul's 1st advice</i> - sailors (27:30) <i>who tried to save themselves</i> - 276 people in all (27:37) <p>When?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - probably it was August when they started (27:1-8) - then late September, after Day of Atonment (27:9) (having been delayed for many days) <p>What stands out?</p> <p>1.) MANY SAILING & GEOGRAPHIC TERMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ship (noun, 13 times, far more than elsewhere) - sail (verb, 27:1, 2, 5, 6, 24), etc. - from Asia (27:2) to Africa (27:17) to Malta (28:1) <p>2.) ABILITY & INABILITY TERMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - able / if able (27:12, 15, 31, 39, 43) - difficulty (27:7, 8, 16) <p>3.) PHYSICAL SALVATION, BUT MATERIAL LOSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - saved (27:20, 31), salvation / health (27:34) - rescue / escape (27:43, 44, 28:1, 4) - not a single person died (27:42-44) - life loss expected in 27:10, but not in 27:23-24 - loss of cargo (27:6, 38) & the ship (27:21-22, 41) <p>4.) PAUL'S CENTRAL ROLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The chapter is focused on Paul from start (27:3). - He gave advice but they didn't listen (27:9-12, 21). - He gave God's message to everyone in 27:21-26. - He warned Julius of the sailors' plan in 27:31. - The sailors were needed, but Paul was central. - He encouraged everyone to eat (27:33-36). - Julius spared all prisoners because of Paul (27:43). <p>5.) THE LENGTH OF THE CHAPTER, 44 verses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Almost as long as chapter two (47 verses). <p><i>Add or change points as needed.</i></p>	<p>What are the themes?</p> <p>SEA TRAVEL & STORMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - many geographic details & sailing terms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The details show authenticity. - protection at sea (27:44) and on land (28:3-6) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - faith involved, (27:24) - prayer involved (27:10. 23-24) - The storm was too great for them the sailors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They lost all hope (27:20). <p>BAD DECISION MAKING & ECONOMIC LOSS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - based on the harbor (27:12) - based on majority opinion (27:12) - based on changeable weather (27:13-14) - based on not listening to God's messenger <p>COMING TO BELIEVE (over time)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - all on the ship eventually believed Paul though they did not listen at first <p>LUKE'S TESTIMONY ABOUT PAUL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the use of 1st person indicates testimony (the first such 'we' was in 16:10) - chapter 27 is not just a story <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "we" is used in the first eight verses - but Paul wasn't just a group member when he spoke it was usually as "I."

L.

*Like: what is the passage like?***Like what else in Acts?**

- **like some other detailed passages**
12:5-10 details about the angel and prison
18:1-17 details about ministry in Corinth
(names & length of stay, 18:11)
but ch. 27 is much longer and more detailed
- **like the Jewish loss of salvation** (28:28)
It was sent to the Gentiles instead,
because the Jews didn't listen (28:26-28)
This is the conclusion of Acts as a whole.
This was like the loss of the cargo and ship
because of not listened (27:21).

Like what in other Scriptures?

- **Paul in ch. 27 was a lot like Jeremiah.**
both gave advice, but were not heeded
resulting in great loss
"not listen" is found in Jeremiah 17 times.
both were trusted more at the end
- **Like Christian who lose rewards**
1 Cor. 3:10-15., especially (3:15)
he shall suffer loss, but still be saved
loss for doing half-hearted work

Like what else?

- **Like ignoring clear warnings & suffering for it**
Like Challenger space shuttle disaster.
They did not listen to warning about weather.
- **Like choosing social science & rejecting Bible**
like in much so called Christian counseling
replacing Paul with Carl Rogers
like in the church growth movement.
replacing Paul's gospel with sociology
- **Like & Unlike Hemingway's famous novel**
like & unlike The Old Man and the Sea
There is much maritime detail in both,
but Hemingway's account is fiction.

Add or change points as needed.
Choose your favorite likeness point(s).

K.

*Key points for us, Knowing what to do***LET'S PROCLAIM PAUL'S MESSAGE, INSTEAD OF REJECTING IT...****1.) LIKE THE JEWS DID.**

because of collective thinking (28:23-25),
nationalism, and wrong assumptions (21:28-29)

2.) LIKE THOSE ON THE SHIP DID.

because of superficial factors: worldly experts,
the majority, and the weather (27:11-13)

3.) LIKE AGRIPPA DID.

because of his worldly position
(It was not because of ignorance, 26:27-30.)

4.) LIKE THE WORLDLY CORINTHIANS DID.

They were believers who did not
take God's work seriously.
(1 Cor. 3:15, wood, hay, and stubble)

KNOWING THAT PAUL WAS SENT BY GOD

We accept Luke's testimony, because the things
concerning Paul **did not happen in a corner** any
more than the events in Jesus' life on earth did
(26:26). There were 276 people (27:37) on the
ship, and these places still exist (27:39, 28:1). St.
Paul's Bay, Malta, etc.

How? *Make some specific applications.*

Commentary from various perspectives as overheard in a literature class at imaginary Quest Bible College

Dr. Penwell (on true stories and testimonies)

This is a wonderful, true story and one of my favorites, but it is not just a story. Did you notice that Luke included himself by repeatedly using the pronoun 'we,' especially in the first eight verses. I suspect that helps explain many things about the story of the shipwreck, including about why it is so long. What do you think?

Evan (on Jesus not being directly mentioned in chapter 27)

Did anyone notice that the Lord Jesus is never mentioned by name in Acts chapter 27 even though Paul is named nine times? The apostle spoke about God in general four times (27:23, 24, 25, 35), but what kind of a testimony or witness is it if God the Son is never named? I suspect Paul prayed in Jesus name when he gave thanks (27:35), but it looks to me like Luke's testimony in chapter 27 is more about Paul as God's messenger than it is about Jesus as God's Son. Isn't this a problem?

Indy (on Paul as an individual in chapter 27)

Personally, I'm glad to see that Paul is presented as an individual in the chapter, instead of as just part of an ancient gospel team. He played a central role in the story from the beginning, in verse one, to the end, in verse 43, and when he spoke he usually did not use the collective 'we.' For instance, he said, "I believe God, that is shall be even as it was told me." (27:25). Paul was the man with the message who encouraged others.

Socie (on the need for teamwork and testimonies)

Yes, but there really was an evangelistic team on the ship, and without Luke we would not have the detailed testimony about deliverance through the storm. Viewing the chapter as the group's testimony encourages me to join others in giving testimony about what the Lord has done in own lives and in our church family. Testimonies tend to be long and detailed, but in light of this chapter I don't think that is necessarily a problem.

Red (on the need to read multiple chapters at a time)

Testimonies can be wonderful, but I think we need to read more. To understand Luke's testimony about Paul in chapter 27, we need to appreciate his Christ-centered message to the Jewish leaders in chapter 28. He spoke to them about Jesus from morning to evening, freely using the Scriptures (28:23). The two chapters go together!

Dr. Penwell (on reading more to better appreciating Paul's message)

Good point, Red. It is easy to forget that the Scriptures are sacred Literature which is to be read instead of just what preachers use a few verses at a time on Sundays. Chapters 27 and 28 should be read together and compared, and when you do so, it's clear that Paul's approach changed with the setting and the audience. You also notice that both chapters show how disastrous it was, and still is (!), to reject Paul's message. When the two chapters are read together, the problem that Evan mentioned disappears.