

## **Acts 27b** verses 27-44

27-29 In the first century, the Adriatic Sea was not the same as the present day Adriatic between Yugoslavia and Italy. *By "sea of Adria" they designated the Ionian sea and the north-central Mediterranean between Greece and Italy, extending south to Crete and Malta. It was across this stretch of ocean that Paul's ship was blown the 475 miles from Cauda to Malta...* — New American Commentary- during the 14 days of stormy weather. The sound of the breakers off of Malta known as Point Koura may have alerted them that they were near land. Dropping the anchors from the stern left the ship pointing toward land in case they needed to make a run for the beach. Anchors in that day were usually large granite tear shaped stones with a hole in the top to thread a rope through. The sailors were probably praying to their gods, Zeus and perhaps Neptune, but ultimately it would Paul's God who would save them.

30-32 The dinghy would have been required to drop an anchor out away from the bow, but the sailors were really planning to leave their passengers stranded while they escape to shore. Paul realized this was happening and warned Julius. This time he listened to Paul and cut the rope holding the dingy. That was an act of faith in Paul as the dingy was the most logical way to make it to shore the next morning. Paul may have known the sailors' expertise was needed when they would later make for shore, or he may have understood the word from the Lord to mean they all had to make for shore together.

33 –34 More practical advice from Paul, they needed to eat to have some strength to make it to shore. With faith in the words from the angel, Paul used a Biblical phrase, "not a hair of your head will be lost", meaning they would suffer no harm. 1Samuel 14:45; Luke 12:7 The literal meaning of "You need it to survive" is "this is necessary for your salvation". Was Luke throwing in a little allegory to the bread of life eaten to be rescued from the storms of life?

35 This is the language of Luke 22:19, again following the allegory of salvation. Paul was an example to them of calm assurance that the Lord would fulfill His word. Just as the Lord often broke bread with the disciples, this meal surely reminded Paul of the Lord's presence with him. We can be that calm assurance to others in times of worldly chaos. Isaiah 32:17

36-38 Paul's faith did encourage them. They prepared to make a run to get as close to the shore as possible by lightening the ship.

39-41 The place they tried to beach is known today as St. Paul's Bay. They cut the ropes to the anchors, set the rudder back into the water to try to guide the ship around any obstacles, but they ran aground and the stern was broken up by the waves.

42-44 Soldiers could lose their life for letting a soldier escape, so they planned to kill them. Julius respect for Paul had grown and he didn't want him killed, so he ordered all who could swim to make for shore. The translation is ambiguous here as to whether those who couldn't swim were on debris or on the backs of the swimmers.

The book of Hebrews has an interesting analogy of Jesus as the *archegos*, captain/author of our salvation. Hebrews 2:10 In this application, the best swimmer would take a rope and make for shore. He would secure the rope from ship to shore so those who couldn't swim would have a lifeline. This is what Jesus did for us. We are all unable to make it through the storms of life. The waves of sin will drown anyone who tries to make it to safety. Jesus came to our rescue and swam where we could not have survived, securing a way to come to safety of the heavenly shore.

Ancient stories like that of Jonah often had an entire ship in danger because of the god's anger with one man on board. In this case, the opposite was true. They all survived because of the presence of Paul and the favor of the true God on His life. 276 souls were "saved" because Paul walked with God. How many will be saved because of your walk with God?