

RUSSELL SANDERS

8-23-2021

THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 53

THE JOURNEY TO ROME – PART 7

SHIPWRECKED PAST CRETE

The ships' master and the centurion had decided that their location in Fair Haven, Crete, was not a good place to spend the winter that was closing in on them. They determined to sail a little farther to Phenice, (Phoenix) near the west end of Crete due to much better winter accommodations. (60 A.D.) Paul warned them not to do it, but they did it anyway (Acts 27:12-44).

Not long after they set sail, a terrible storm arose. This Euroclydon would be like a sailboat caught in a hurricane. In fact, hurricanes had sunk large Spanish galleons (cargo-sailing ships) off our Florida coast often, during the 16th and 17th centuries. This Alexandrian ship carrying 276 people plus cargo was in danger also of sinking. The ship was not doing well, and the sailors and others were alarmed and afraid.

By the second day, they began throwing out some cargo to lighten the ships' load. It did not help, so the third day they cast off some of the ships' tackling. They were so afraid that everyone was fasting and praying to their gods. This went on yet for several days.

After being silent for many days, Paul spoke to them all. He rebuked those in charge for not listening to him in the first place. Then he told them that the angel of God had stood beside him that night and told him that no life would be lost, but that they would be cast upon an island.

It was the fourteenth night of the Euroclydon. As they tossed around in the Adriatic Sea, they discovered by sounding that they were nearing land. This caused the sailors to fear that the ship would be dashed to pieces against rocks. Under cover of darkness, they were letting down the lifeboats so they alone could escape and survive. Paul found it out and told the centurion that everyone must stay on the ship or else nobody would survive. The centurion had the soldiers cut the ropes to the lifeboats, which fell empty into the sea.

When daylight came, they saw a place on shore where they could try to land. They didn't make it. The ship broke up. The soldiers wanted to kill all prisoners so that none could escape to freedom. The centurion, protecting Paul, denied them. Instructions were given for those who could swim to jump into the sea and swim for shore. Others were to grab broken pieces of the ship (as a float).

Everyone escaped safely to shore just like God had promised. It was an obscure island called Melita, as we shall learn tomorrow.