

Week 41 – Acts 27  
December 16<sup>th</sup> 2023

Paul at sea; the shipwreck

**Background**

Paul has appealed to be tried by the emperor's tribunal (Acts 25: 10). After a short time he appears before Agrippa II and arrangements are made for Paul to be transferred by ship to Rome. Acts 27 tells the story of the first leg of the journey from Adramyttium (close to Caesarea) to Malta via Sidon, past Cyprus and southern Asia to Myra. Paul is transferred to an Egyptian ship bound for Italy. This ship calls in at Cnidus, Fair Havens, across the Adriatic sea where a Mediterranean hurricane hits the vessel and it is shipwrecked. All the crew and other travellers survive and are beached on the island of Malta.

**Scripture**

Read Acts 27; Jonah 1-4

Familiarise yourself with the map shown below and note what happens where on the voyage.

**Resources:**

Read the article "3: Details on the Mediterranean Season" in "The Sailing Seasons Around the World" found at <https://improvesailing.com/guides/sailing-seasons> , noting particularly the paragraph headed "Medicanes".

If you are *seriously* interested in Paul's voyage you might like to acquire a modern reprint/updated copy of "The Voyage and Shipwreck of St Paul" by James Smith and W.E. Smith first published in around 1886. One review states "James Smith, an accomplished yachtsman, has given a narrative of Paul's voyage. He follows this with dissertations on the wind Euroclydon, the island Melita, the hips of the ancients, and geological changes in St. Paul's Bay. Six appendices and a general index conclude the book. Maps, engravings, and line drawings illustrate it".

**Questions for Discussion**

1. What do you think of Luke's account of the voyage from Adramyttium to the place where they are shipwrecked?
2. Compare and contrast the stories of the two significant storms in the Bible as seen in Acts 27: 13-44 and Jonah 1 – 4. Note any similarities, differences and the outcomes. In your opinion how does Paul's experience compare with that of Jonah?
3. What might Paul have meant by his statement in Acts 27: 31? Can you see an allegorical meaning in this statement?

# Map of Paul's Journey to Rome

