THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

OCTOBER 18TH, 2026 // BOOK OF ACTS

FRIENDS (ACTS 27:1–8)

SETTING SAIL

Under the authority of a centurion named Julius, Paul and the other prisoners boarded a ship to start the journey to Italy. As part of Julius's plan, they traveled on smaller vessels until they reached Myra.

- This journey allowed them to board a much bigger cargo ship that was used for transporting grain from Egypt to Rome.

ARISTARCHUS

Once again we are introduced to a dedicated colleague who had joined Paul on his third missionary journey. He was nominated by the people in Thessalonica to transport a significant financial relief fund to Jerusalem.

- Now, we find him accompanying Paul on his journey to Rome. In this role, he would have provided food andclothing, and served as a co-laborer alongside Paul.

"WE" PUT TO SEA

Along with Aristarchus, Luke also chose to go on this journey, highlighting their spirit of camaraderie. This is suggested in Luke's commentary, where he mentions that "we" boarded the ship and set sail.

- Luke likely served as Paul's personal physician, and his presence enriches our understanding of the remarkable events that unfolded during this journey.

PERSONAL SLAVES

Roman authorities would most likely have permitted Paul's friends to travel with him only if they **took on the status as Paul's personal slaves or servants.**

- **They embraced this role, willingly sacrificing their own freedoms to be by Paul's side.** This selfless decision helped ensure Paul's safety and provided him with care while he faced imprisonment.

SIDON

In this passage, we observe Julius demonstrating kindness towards Paul by permitting him to connect with fellow Christians within the town to meet his needs, including food and supplies.

- Although these individuals had likely never met Paul, their shared bond as Christians **created an inherent friendship where they all cared for one another.**

MISSION (ACTS 27:9–20)

DAY OF ATONEMENT (YOM KIPPUR)

This day is recognized as a time for repentance and reconciliation with God. It's marked by fasting and prayer.

- The reference to this specific day suggests when this journey was likely to take place. It presumably occurred in October, a time sailing could be especially perilous due to weather conditions. After mid-November, it became unsafe to sail altogether.

"UNSUITABLE TO WINTER"

Paul, who had already survived three shipwrecks, shared some common sense based on his knowledge of the sailing calendar.

- Understandably, but unfortunately, Julius listened to the expertise of the pilot and owner of the ship. Aiming to maximize profits, they decided to winter in a safer harbor.
- **When focused on tasks we believe are essential for success, it can be easy to overlook sound wisdom**.

"THOUGHT THEY HAD ACHIEVED THEIR PURPOSE"

Initially, everything seemed promising, but then a fierce storm swept in like a hurricane, and they were compelled to take drastic measures, prioritizing their safety over the cargo.

- The intensity of the storm brought a sense of doom and despair. **Life can present us with numerous challenges, leading us to the brink of hopelessness.**

ENCOURAGEMENT (ACTS 27:21–26)

SUBTLE JAB

The crew was frightened, losing morale, and not eating. Then Paul arrived with what seemed to be an "I told you so" moment. He pointed out the obvious—that they should have taken his advice. I'm sure this was exactly what everyone wanted to hear.

- Because of what Paul said next, this seems to be less of a jab and more of an attempt to establish himself as a credible speaker.

"TAKE COURAGE"

Paul then declared that no one would lose their lives and explained why. An angel had visited him during the night and reminded him of the promise God had made that he would go to Rome, along with giving a new promise to protect everyone on the ship.

- **How are we reminded of God's promises as we navigate the storms of life?**

PROCLAMATION OF FAITH

Paul didn't waste an opportunity to share the reason for the hope he held. He declared that the messenger was from the God he served—the only God who offered answers among the countless deities they sought.

- **Disaster can become a pathway to deliverance, and hopelessness can blossom into hope, thanks to God.**

MORE TRIALS TO COME

Even though God had reminded Paul of His promises, it did not imply freedom from the trials they would encounter. **Though they would ultimately be safe, they would still face tremendous loss and be shipwrecked.**

- **Jesus promises that we will face suffering in this world, but we are to be courageous and have peace because He has conquered the World** (John 16:33).

PARALLELS WITH JONAH

- **The destination**: Jonah was running, not including his friends. Paul went with his friends.
- **A storm**: It was destroying both ships, so they threw over the cargo.
- **Quiet:** Jonah was asleep during the chaos. Paul was listening for God.
- **Proclaim:** They both confessed God.

STORMS

- We are all called to a destination with God. **The question is: Are we running toward it or away from it?**
- We will encounter many storms along the way. Some serve to guide us back to God, while others help us strengthen our faith in Him.
- **How do we discern which are which?**

FRIENDSHIP

- A great way to hear from God is to surround yourself with people who will encourage and strengthen you to run towards God.
- **Even without prior connections, Paul formed friendships in Sidon through their shared faith in Christ.**
- **What friendships do we have?**

THE QUIET

- As we engage with the Body of Christ, it is important that we also take time to be alone with Christ so we can hear His voice.
- **Notice that Jonah isolated himself from both people and God, yet he never had rest. In contrast, Paul intentionally spent quiet time with God to receive direction and comfort.**
- **How are we getting alone with God?**

GOD IS FAITHFUL

- By staying attentive to God and surrounding ourselves with true friends, we will gain clearer understanding of His direction for us.
- **God is always faithful to fulfill His purposes.**
- **Will we choose to participate in what He is doing, or will we turn away?**