



# Finding the Eye of the Storm

—Part 1

Acts 27:8-28:14

Bob Stone

## LISTENING GUIDE

**INTRODUCTION:** How do we find the eye in “hurricane like” circumstances (death, divorce, job layoff, accident, failure, etc.) created by ourselves or someone else? From an actual storm that Paul faced at sea, we will see how God can get us to sandy beaches of peace, provision, safety and opportunity, even while storms are swirling all around us.

### I. WHAT KIND OF “STORMS” WILL WE FACE? Acts 27

- A. Storms of correction **because of disobedience**, e.g., sailors. (See also Jonah 1:3-17.)
- B. Storms of growth **because of our obedience**, e.g., Paul. (See also Matthew 14.)
- C. Storms of advancement **because of our innocence**, e.g., Paul. Result? Gen. 50:20

**Observation:** In some cases, all three kinds of storms can happen simultaneously or sequentially—Acts 27.

### II. WHY DO WE EXPERIENCE “STORMS” OF CORRECTION? (Sailors?)

Three common reasons we get into storms of correction:

- A. **Counselors.** We get impatient and ignore spiritual advice—vv. 10-11. We find those who agree with us, that justifies our position and action, e.g., pilot, owner.
- B. **Crowds.** We let the crowd/majority rule our life—v. 12. The majority, unanimous opinion can prove to be wrong—Job 42:7, e.g., friends, culture, politically correct.
- C. **Circumstances.** We let open doors be our ONLY guide—v. 13. “...gentle south wind”

### III. HOW DO “STORMS” IMPACT OUR LIVES? Acts 27:14-20

- A. Storms can cause us to be **DRIVEN (NOT DIRECTED)**. vv. 15,17—  
“... so we gave way to it and were driven along...” (That’s typical of many people.)
- B. Storms can cause us to be **DISORIENTED (NOT DISCERNING)**. vv. 18-19—  
“... they began to throw the cargo overboard...” (Throw valuable, needed things.)
- C. Storms can cause us to be **DISCOURAGED (NOT DEVELOPED)**. v. 20—  
“... we finally gave up all hope of being saved...”
  - 1. The sailors forgot (weren’t aware of) God’s plan and despaired—Prov. 13:12.
  - 2. Paul’s reaction was calm, confident and courageous. Why?
  - 3. Our response reveals (determines) our character and course.

**Principle:** Character is formed in storms and suffering, and through simple obedience to God’s commands—Rom. 5:3-4. (Needed: *hupomena*)

**Quote:** “I love the (person) who can smile in trouble, who can gather strength from distress, and grow brave by reflection.” (Nose dive, survive, or thrive?)

Recalibrate

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#### IV. HOW DO WE FIND AND STAY IN THE EYE OF THE STORM? Options (vv. 21-44):

- A. **Short-term solutions.** The sailors lowered 4 anchors—vv. 29,40. (Temporary?)
- B. **Long-term solutions.** Our responses should mimic Paul's; find the eye of storm.
1. **1st Response: PRACTICE (look for) HIS PRESENCE**—vv. 21-23.  
Storms cannot hide the face of God (His presence with us—Psalm 23:4.)
  2. **2nd Response: PILOT TOWARD HIS PURPOSES**—v. 24.
    - We fight fear and pilot toward what we know is GENERALLY TRUE.
    - Storms may be temporary setbacks to God's purposes.
    - Storms can't change God's ultimate purposes for our lives.
    - Interestingly, Paul piloted the ship, even though he wasn't at the wheel.
  3. **3rd Response: PLAN ON HIS PROMISES** (burrow into them)—v. 25.
    - **Promises:** Recite His promises often—Phil. 1:6; 4:13; 2 Cor. 12:9; Jer. 29:11; Heb. 13:5; Job 23:10; Isa. 43:18-19; Mal. 4:2; 1 Pet. 5:10; Prov. 26:2; Ps. 34:18.
    - We may lose the boat, the cargo, and get wet, but we're going to make it.
    - Storms can't destroy the one who has faith in God's promises.
  4. **4th Response: PARTNER WITH GOD'S PEOPLE**—v. 24b.
    - **What did Paul's presence mean to the sailors?** (They were saved!)
    - **What do we do while we wait for the storm to subside?**
      - Sometimes it takes awhile for the logical consequences and/or the purposes of God to be accomplished through a storm.
      - As we ride out the storm, partner with TRUE friends and family.
    - **How do we tell who they are?** Friends and enemies both take initiative.
      - Our enemies: Ps. 41:9; 55:12-14; 38:11
      - True friends: Prov. 17:17; 18:24; Job 6:14; Eccl. 4:10
  5. **5th Response: PRAY FOR HIS PROVISION**—vv. 23-24,29b,35,39. Pray for food, daylight, solid ground, safety, solutions, etc. The result: Acts 27:36-44.

**Conclusion:** Here's the big idea, the **Shipwreck Principle:** "If we cooperate with God, He will use our storms (our tests and even our failures) to supply the means to get us where we need to be, so we might fulfill our ultimate destiny - the next phase of our spiritual life." **Is there a storm that's about to break up your ship?** (A storm of correction, growth and/or advancement?) My strong encouragement is to cooperate with God and turn the wheel over to Him. Climb into this passage and let Paul mentor us. God will get us to where He wants us to be, and ultimately, we'll be better for it. Also, if by God's grace our character and hope is revealed, we might even save the one(s) causing or witnessing the storms in our lives.

#### Application Questions

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- Have you ever been in a storm-like circumstance that seemed to go on and on?
  - What did you learn? Where or to whom do you go to for help in a difficult time?
  - Which of Paul's five responses have you found to be helpful, think you might need, or try? How might Acts 27 help you or your friends in the future?
  - What promises from the Bible do you quote when your life is stressed?
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