
a ***Grace Notes*** course

The Acts of the Apostles

an expositional study
by Warren Doud

Lesson 407: **Acts 27:1-21**

ACTS

ACTS407 - Acts 27:1-21

Contents

ACTS 27:1-21.....	3
Alexandria.....	12
Roman Commerce.....	15
Ships and Navigation of the Ancients.....	16
Sidon.....	20

ACTS 27:1-21

ACTS 27:1. *And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy,* The chief city of which was Rome, the metropolis of the empire, where Caesar had his palace, to whom the apostle had appealed; and his voyage thither was determined by Festus, with the advice of Agrippa and his council, pursuant to the apostle's appeal, and which was founded on the will of God; all which concurred in this affair: it was the decree and will of God that the apostle should go to Rome, which was made known to him.

It was his resolution upon that, to go thither, wherefore he appealed to Caesar; and it was the determination of the Roman governor, not only as to his going there, but as to the time of it, which was now fixed: the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read "he", instead of "we"; and the Ethiopic version reads expressly "Paul"; but the Greek copies read we: by whom are meant the apostle, and his companions; as Luke the writer of this history, and Aristarchus the Macedonian mentioned in the next verse, and Trophimus the Ephesian, who was afterwards left at Miletus sick, (2 Timothy 4:20) and who else cannot be said; these were to sail with him to Italy, not as prisoners, but as companions: this resolution being taken,

they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners; who very likely had also appealed to Caesar, or at least the governor thought fit to send them to Rome, to have their cases heard and determined there; and these by the order of Festus were delivered by the centurions, or jailers, in whose custody they had been, ***unto one called Julius;*** in the Alexandrian copy of the third verse, he is called Julianus; he was either one of the Julian family, or rather was one that had been made free by some of that family, and so took the name:

a centurion of Augustus' band; of a Roman band of soldiers, which belonged to that legion which was called "Augusta"; for it seems there was a legion that bore that name, as Lipsius observes, and it may be from Augustus Caesar.

ACTS 27:2. *And entering into a ship of Adramyttium,* Which was in the port of Caesarea; for from thence they set sail to the place where this ship was bound, which very likely was the place here mentioned; there was a city of this name in Africa, and which was built upon the sea shore, and is sometimes called Hadrumantum, as this is called Adramantos, in the Syriac version; and in the Alexandrian copy, and in another manuscript, "a ship of Adramyntum"; it is mentioned with Carthage, a city in Africa, by Pliny and Solinus; the one calls it Adrumetum, and the other Adrymeto; and the latter says, that it, as well as Carthage, was built by the people of Tyre.

Sallust says, that the Phoenicians built Hippo, Adrumetum, Leptis, and other cities on the sea coast; and the name seems to be a Phoenician name, "Hadarmuth", which signifies "the court of death"; perhaps it might be so called, either from the badness of the air in which it was, or the dangerousness of its haven.

Jerome calls it Hadrumetus, and says it is a city in Byzacium, a country in Africa; he seems to design another place, the metropolis of the Byzacian country, the most fruitful of all the parts of Africa, and which in the Phoenician language was "Hadarmeoth"; which signifies "the court of a hundred"; that is, it was a place so fruitful that it brought forth an hundred fold; and agreeably to which is what Pliny says, they are called Libyphoenicians, who inhabit Byzacium, a country so named, in circuit two hundred and fifty miles, and of such great fruitfulness that the land returns to the husbandmen an hundred fold.

The former of these is most likely to be the place here meant; and though we nowhere read of the apostle being here, nor of the Gospel being preached here in the early times of Christianity; yet in the "fourth" century there was a church in this place, and Philologus was bishop of it, who subscribed at a council held at Carthage in this century.

In the "fifth" century we read of several bishops of this place, as Aurelius, who was in the Chalcedon council, Flavianus in that at Ephesus,

which was reckoned an infamous one, and Helladius, who was in the first Ephesine council, and Felix, who was banished by Gensericus. There was another city of the same name in Aeolia, or Mysia, and which was formerly called Pegasus, and since Landerniti, and was a seaport, and bids fair to be the place here intended; though since there was an island of Lycia called Adramitis, now Audromety, and it was at Myra, a city of Lycia, where this ship stopped, (Acts 27:5) and where the passengers changed their ship, this seems most likely to be designed:

we launched; in the said ship from Caesarea:

meaning to sail by the coast of Asia; the lesser Asia, along by Ephesus and Miletus, as they did; for in this last place, as before observed, Trophimus was left sick; the Alexandrian copy reads, "that was about to sail"; that is, the ship of Adramyttium was about to sail, or just ready to sail by the coast of Asia, wherefore the company entered, and set forth in it on their voyage:

one Aristarchus a Macedonian, of Thessalonica, being with us; the same person that was with the apostle at Ephesus, and accompanied him into Asia, (Acts 19:29, 20:4) the same went through with him to Rome, and became his fellowlabourer, and fellow prisoner there, (Philemon 1:24) (Colossians 4:10).

Aristarchus

One of those faithful companions of the apostle Paul who shared with him his labors and sufferings. He is first mentioned along with Gaius as having been seized by the excited Ephesians during the riot stirred up by the silversmiths (Acts 19:29). They are designated "men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel." We learn later that he was a native of Thessalonica (20:4; 27:2). They were probably seized to extract from them information about their leader Paul, but when they could tell nothing, and since they were Greeks, nothing further was done to them.

We do not know when Aristarchus attached himself to Paul, but he seems to have remained

in Paul's company ever after the Ephesian uproar. He was one of those who accompanied Paul from Greece via Macedonia (20:4). Having preceded Paul to Troas, where they waited for him, they traveled with him to Palestine. He is next mentioned as accompanying Paul to Rome (27:2). There he attended Paul and shared his imprisonment.

He is mentioned in two of the letters of the Roman captivity, viz., Colossians (4:10) and Philemon (v 24), in both of which he sends greetings. In the former Paul calls him "my fellow prisoner." According to tradition he was martyred during the persecution by Nero.

ACTS 27:3. And the next day we touched at Sidon, This was a famous city in Phoenicia, upon the northern border of the land of Israel; it was a maritime place, and noted for trade and navigation; Mela calls it rich Sidon, and the chief of the maritime cities; Jerom calls it the ancient city Sidon; and Curtius says it was renowned for the antiquity and fame of its founders; it is thought to be built by Sidon, the firstborn of Canaan, (Genesis 10:15) from whom it took its name.

Josephus affirms, that Sidonius, as he calls him, built a city in Phoenicia after his own name, and it is called by the Greeks Sidon; some say it was built by Sidus the son of Aegyptus, and named after him: according to R. Benjamin it was a day's journey from hence to Tyre; and with others, it was not more than two hundred furlongs, about twelve or thirteen miles, which was another city of Phoenicia, as this was: Jerom's account of Sidon is this, "Sidon, a famous city of Phoenicia, formerly the border of the Canaanites, to the north, situated at the foot of Mount Libanus, and the artificer of glass:" and so Pliny calls it, it being famous for the making of glass; and Herodotus speaks of it as a city of Phoenicia: Justin the historian says it was built by the Tyrians, who called it by this name from the plenty of fish in it; for the Phoenicians call a fish "Sidon": and indeed Sidon or Tzidon seems to be derived from, "Tzud", which signifies "to fish"; and the place is to this day called Said or Salt; and so R.

Benjamin calls it Tzaida : to this city they came from Caesarea, the day following that they set out on, and here they stopped awhile:

and Julius courteously treated Paul; the centurion into whose hands the apostle was delivered, used him with great humanity and civility; he found grace in his sight, as Joseph did in the sight of Potiphar, and as he himself had done before with Lysias, Felix, Festus and Agrippa:

and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself; for as there were disciples at Tyre, (Acts 21:3,4) so it seems there were at Sidon, both which cities were in Phoenicia, and are often mentioned together; and the apostle was allowed to go ashore, and visit his friends, and be refreshed by them, both in body and spirit, and be provided for by them with things convenient for his voyage.

It is highly probable that there was here a Gospel church, but by whom planted cannot be said; our Lord himself was at the borders of this place, (Matthew 15:21) and the ministers of the word scattered at the death of Stephen, went as far as Phoenicia preaching the Gospel, (Acts 11:19) and that there were brethren there, appears from note on: (see Gill on "Acts 15:3"), in which country Sidon was: in the "third" century there was a church in this place, and Zenobius was presbyter of it, who suffered martyrdom under Dioclesian ; in the "fourth" century there was a bishop of the church here, at the synod held at Nice.

In the "fifth" century the bishop of the Sidonians, in the council of Chalcedon, declared his opinion with others against Dioscorus, whose name was Damianus.

In the "sixth" century, mention is made of a bishop of Sidon, in the acts of the council held at Rome and Constantinople, and in the same century a synod met at Sidon, in the 20th year of Anastasius the emperor : the account of the bishops of Sidon, as given by Reland , is as follows; Theodorus bishop of Sidon subscribed in the first Nicene council, in the year 325; Paulus subscribed in the first council at Constantinople, in the year 381; Damianus was

in the council held at Chalcedon, in the year 451; Megas is mentioned in the acts and epistles subjoined to the Chalcedon council; Andreas, bishop of this place, is taken notice of in a letter of John of Jerusalem.

ACTS 27:4. And when we had launched from thence, From Sidon:

we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary; that is, they sailed below the island of Cyprus; of which (see Acts 4:36, 13:4) whereas if the wind had been right for them, they would have sailed above the island; leaving it on the right hand, in a straight course to Myra; but now they were obliged to go below it, leaving it on the left hand, going in part about it, through the seas of Cilicia and Pamphylia to Lycia, as follows.

ACTS 27:5. And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, For these two seas joined, as Pliny says , "mare Pamphylium Cilicio jungitur", the Pamphylian sea is joined to the Cilician; and in another place he observes, that in the Pamphylian sea were islands of no note, and in the Cilician sea of the five chiefest was Cyprus (an island mentioned in the preceding verse), and a little after, the sea of Cilicia is distant from Anemurius fifty miles:

we came to Myra a city of Lycia; not Limyra in Lycia, though that lay by the sea side; for according both to Pliny and Ptolomy , Limyra and Myra were two distinct places in Lycia; which was a country, according to the latter, which had on the west and north Asia; (according to others, Caria on the west, and part of Lydia on the north;) on the east part of Pamphylia, and on the south the Lycian sea, or, as others, the Rhodian sea: much less was this the city of Smyrna, as some have said, which lay another way in Ionia, over against the Aegean sea; and still less Lystra, as the Alexandrian copy and Vulgate Latin version read, which was in Lycaonia, and in the continent many miles from the sea: Lycia was a country of the lesser Asia, and lay between Caria and Pamphylia, and so it is mentioned with Caria and Pamphylia, in: "And to all the countries and to Sampsames, and the Lacedemonians, and to Delus, and

Myndus, and Sicyon, and Caria, and Samos, and Pamphylia, and Lycia, and Halicarnassus, and Rhodus, and Aradus, and Cos, and Side, and Aradus, and Gortyna, and Cnidus, and Cyprus, and Cyrene.”

(1 Maccabees 15:23) and the Carians, Pamphylia, and Lycians, are frequently put together in history; and the Lycians are said to be originally of Crete, and to have their name from Lycus the son of Pandion; though some think that Lycia took its name “a luce”, from light, and of this country Myra was the metropolis.

Ptolomy calls it Myrra, as if it had the signification of “myrrhe”; and so Jerom or Origen reads it here, and interprets it “bitter”; but Pliny and others call it Myra, as here, and it signifies “ointment”; and here the apostle staying some time, though it cannot be said how long, no doubt opened the box of the precious ointment of the Gospel, and diffused the savour of it in this place; for in the beginning of the “fourth” century, in Constantine’s time, we read of one Nicolaus, a famous man, bishop of Myra in Lycia, who was present at the council of Nice, and there showed the scars and marks upon him, because of his constant confession of Christ under Maximinus.

In the “fifth” century there was a bishop of this place, whose name was Romanus, and was in two synods, in the infamous one at Ephesus, where he favoured Eutyches, and in that at Chalcedon; in the “sixth” century mention is made of a bishop of this church in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople; in the “seventh” century, Polyeuctus, bishop of Myra, was in the sixth synod at Constantinople, and in this century Myra was the metropolitan church of Lycia; in the “eighth” century, Theodorus, bishop of it, was in the Nicene synod; and in the ninth century this place was taken by the Saracens.

ACTS 27:6. And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria, Alexandria was the chief city in Egypt, built by Alexander the great, from whom it took its name; it was situated near the sea, and had a famous haven or port, which R.

Benjamin calls, “the port of Alexandria”; from hence ships were sent into several parts for trade and commerce, and one of these Julius found at Myra: the top sail was a distinguishing sign of a ship of Alexandria, for none might spread their top sails but ships of Alexandria; these were not obliged to strike sail when they came into a port.

The Jewish writers make frequent mention of, “a ship of Alexandria”; by which they intend a ship of a large bulk, which had a cistern in it for fresh water for a long voyage; and by this they distinguish ships of bulk from those small ones, that were used about their coasts; a ship of Alexandria with them was a ship that went from the land of Israel to Alexandria; whereas here it seems to design one that belonged to Alexandria, and went from thence to other parts: and this ship was

sailing into Italy; and it was usual for ships to go from Alexandria to Puteoli in Italy, and from thence to Alexandria upon trade and business

and he put us therein; the centurion removed Paul and his companions, and the rest of the prisoners, with whatsoever soldiers were under his care, out of the ship of Adramyttium, into the ship of Alexandria; that is, he ordered them to remove out of one into the other.

ACTS 27:7. And when we had sailed slowly many days, Because of contrary winds, as in (Acts 27:4) or else for want of wind, as somethink; the Syriac version renders it, “and because it sailed heavily”; that is, the ship being loaded with goods:

and scarce were come over against Cnidus; or “Gnidus”, as it is sometimes called; it was a city and promontory in Doris, in the Chersonese or peninsula of Caria, famous for the marble statue of Venus made by Praxiteles; it was over against the island of Crete, and is now called Capo Chio; it was the birthplace of Eudoxus, a famous philosopher, astrologer, geometrician, physician and lawgiver; it is made mention of in: “And to all the countries and to Sampsames, and the Lacedemonians, and to Delus, and Myndus, and Sicyon, and Caria, and Samos, and Pamphylia, and Lycia, and Halicarnassus, and

Rhodus, and Aradus, and Cos, and Side, and Aradus, and Gortyna, and Cnidus, and Cyprus, and Cyrene." (1 Maccabees 15:23)

Jerome says, it was a famous island over against Asia, joining to the province of Caria; some think it has its name from the fish "Gnidus", which is taken about this place, and which is of such an extraordinary nature, that when taken in the hand, it stings like a nettle; others derive it from "hanad", or "gnad", which, in the Phoenician language signifies "to join"; because, as both Pausanias and Strabo say, it was joined by a bridge or causeway to the continent: it had two ports in it, as the last mentioned writer says, but into neither of them did the ship put, in which the apostle was; nor do we read of the Gospel being preached here, or of a church in it until the "sixth" century, when mention is made of a bishop of Gnidus in the acts of the synod at Rome and Constantinople :

the wind not suffering us; to go right forward, as the Syriac version adds:

we sailed under Crete; or below it, as in (Acts 27:4) This is now called Candy; (see Gill on "Acts 2:11"), over against Salmone; now called Capo Salamone: this, by Pliny, Ptolomy, and Mela, is called Samonium or Sammonium, and by them said to be a promontory in the island of Crete, on the east side of it, over against the island of Rhodes; Strabo calls it Salmonion, an eastern promontory of Crete; and Jerom a maritime city of the island of Crete.

ACTS 27:8. *And hardly passing it*, That is, Salmone, with great difficulty, because of the winds:

came unto a place which is called the Fair Havens; called by other writers Cale Acte, or the fair shore, and is placed by Ptolomy in Eubaea, and by Herodotus in Sicily; but by Stephanus is said to be a city of the Cretians, and which agrees with this account;

nigh whereunto was the city of Lasae; there was a city in Crete called by Solinus Lisson, and by Ptolomy Lyssus, which he places on the south side of the island; and by Pliny Lasos, which comes pretty near to this name, but then

he places it in the midland part of Crete; who also makes mention of an island called Lasia over against Troezenium, and another that was one of the Cyclades; the Syriac version here read, "Lasia": Jerom says, Lasea is a city on the shore of the island of Crete, near the place which is called the Fair Havens, as Luke himself explains it; for which some corruptly read "Thalassa"; as do the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; and the Alexandrian copy "Alassa": Beza conjectures that it is the same with Eloea, which Pliny makes mention of in the above cited place, as a city in Crete.

ACTS 27:9. *Now when much time was spent*, In sailing against the wind, or by staying at the Fair Havens; for so the Syriac version renders it, "where we stayed a long time"; and the Ethiopic version, "and there we remained many days": it follows,

and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past; the Syriac version reads, "the fast of the Jews"; this was the day of atonement, which was the grand fast of the Jews, on which day they afflicted their souls, (Leviticus 23:27) in memory of the worshipping of the golden calf; on that day they neither eat nor drink, nor do any work, neither do they wash, nor are they anointed, nor do they bind on their shoes, or make use of the marriage bed; nor do they read anything but sorrowful things, as the Lamentations of Jeremiah, until the setting of the sun, and the rising of the stars.

Hence this day is called by them, "the day of fasting", and, "the great fast, and the day of the fast of atonement, and the fast of the atonement": now this day was on the 10th of the month Tisri, which answers to the latter part of our September, and the former part of October; so that it was now Michaelmas time, when winter was coming on, and sailing began to be dangerous; about this time of the year the Pleiades set, which brings on tempestuous weather, and unfit for sailing:

Paul admonished them, or gave them some advice to continue where they were.

ACTS 27:10. *And said unto them, Sirs, I perceive,* Not only by the tempestuous weather which they had met with, and still continued, and which they must expect to have, if they continued on their voyage; but by a spirit of prophecy, which he was endued with, by which he foresaw, and so foretold, as follows;

that this voyage will be with hurt, and with much damage not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives; or of our persons, or bodies, that is, of the health of them; for certain it is that it was revealed to the apostle, that not one life should be lost; but yet through the shipwreck, what with the fright of it, and being in the water, much damage must accrue to their persons, as well as the ship and all its freight be lost.

ACTS 27:11. *Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship,* Who were either one and the same person, or if two persons, the one was the owner, whose the ship was, and the other, he that was at the helm, and steered and directed it; or the one might be the captain, and the other the pilot.

The master, or “governor”, as he is here called with the ancients, was he who sat on an eminence in the stern of the ship, at the helm, and had the direction of it; he gave the orders, which others executed: what qualified him for his post chiefly lay in three things; in the knowledge of the constellations, and winds, of the former that he might direct the course of the ship according to them, and by them foresee future tempests, and of the latter, that he might be acquainted with the several points, from whence they blew; also in the knowledge of ports, and places to put into, and of rocks and sands, that they might be escaped; likewise in the knowledge of the use of the helm, and sails; for one part of his business, as Seneca observes, was to give orders after this manner; so and so move the helm, so and so let down the sails, etc. in every ship there was a governor, and in larger ones sometimes there were two.

Aelianus says, the Carthaginians had always two governors in a ship: the other word, is in

the glossary rendered “navicularius”, which signifies “the owner” of the ship; and so we render it; though perhaps he is the same with the “proreta”, who governed the prow or head of the ship, and was the next in dignity to the governor, and a kind of a sub-governor; and his business was to observe tempests, to explore promontories, rocks and sands, and show them to the governor; and so Isidore says, the owner of the ship is called Naucleros, because the ship is in his lot, “cleros” signifying lot: and as these best understood naval affairs, Julius gave more heed to what they said, and rather believed them,

than those things which were spoken by Paul; by a spirit of prophecy, which he had no notion of; for though he treated him civilly as a man, he had no regard to him as a Christian, or as one endued with the Spirit of God, which he knew nothing of.

ACTS 27:12. *And because the haven was not commodious to winter in,* Which was called the “Fair Havens”, (Acts 27:8) which name it might have by an antiphrasis, it being just the reverse; it might be a good summer haven, but not be fit for winter: perhaps it might be an open road or bay, and having nothing to shelter from the boisterous waves, was a place very improper for a ship to be in, in stormy weather; for in open places, as bays and roads, the sea tumbles in very violently in bad weather: this was a haven fit for fair weather only, and therefore might be so called:

the more part advised to depart thence also; the major part of the ship’s company were of the same opinion with the master and owner of it, and advised as well as they, to sail from the Fair Havens in quest of a better port; the Syriac version reads, “the most of ours”, of the apostle’s companions; so that they were against him, according to that version, which is not likely; however, the majority in the ship were for sailing:

if by any means they might attain to Phenice, and there to winter, which is an haven of Crete, and lieth toward the south west and north west: this place is called in the Syriac

version Phoenix; and Ptolemy makes mention both of the city and haven of Phoenix, as on the south side of the island of Crete: and whereas it is here said to lie towards the south west and north west, this may be reconciled to that, as well as to itself; for the haven considered in general lay towards the south, but having its windings and turnings, with respect to them it lay towards both the south west and the north west, and so was a very commodious haven to winter in.

ACTS 27:13. *And when the south wind blew softly,* Or moderately, which was a good wind for them:

supposing that they, had obtained their purpose; that things would succeed according to their wish, and favour their design:

loosing thence; from the Fair Havens; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it, "loosing from Assos"; which could not be Assos of Troas, mentioned in (Acts 20:13) which was many miles from hence; rather Asum, a town in Crete, of which Pliny makes mention, though, according to him, it seems to be an inland town; wherefore it is best to take the word, to be an adverb, and render it "thence", as we do; or join it with the next word, and render it,

they came near, or they sailed close by Crete; along the shore, the wind favouring them, that they were in no danger of being dashed upon it, it being a soft gentle wind.

ACTS 27:14. *But not long after,* They had not been long at sea, but

there arose against it; the ship, or the island of Crete, or both:

a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon; in the Greek text it is a "Typhonic" wind, so called, not from the name of a country from whence it blew; rather from Typho, the same with Python, an Heathen deity, who is said to be drowned in the lake Serbonis, or in the river Orontes; about which places this sort of wind is observed to be frequent, and which may take its name from him, being supposed to be raised by him.

This wind may very well be thought to be the same which is called Typhon, and is by writers

represented as a very tempestuous one, as a sort of whirlwind or hurricane, a violent storm, though without thunder and lightning; and Pliny calls it the chief plague of sailors, it breaking their sails, and even their vessels to pieces: and this may still have its name from Typho, since the Egyptians used to call everything that is pernicious and hurtful by this name; moreover, this wind is also called "Euroclydon".

The Alexandrian copy reads, "Euracylon", and so the Vulgate Latin version seems to have read, rendering it "Euro-aquilo, the north east wind". The Ethiopic version renders it, the "north wind"; but according to Aristotle, and Pliny the wind Typhon never blew in the northern parts; though some think that wind is not meant here, since the Typhon is a sudden storm of wind, and soon over; whereas this storm of wind was a settled and lasting one, it continued many days; and that it is only called Typhonic, because it bore some likeness to it, being very blustering and tempestuous: it seems by its name to be an easterly wind, which blew very violently, ploughed the sea, and lifted up its waves; hence the Arabic version renders it, "a mover" or "stirrer up of the waves"; which beat against the ship in a violent manner, and exposed it to great danger.

ACTS 27:15. *And when the ship was caught,* By the wind, snatched up by it, and forcibly carried away:

and could not bear up into the wind; and against it, or look it in the face, as the word signifies; could not ply to windward, the wind being so high and the sea so strong:

we let her drive; about the sea, at pleasure, it being in vain to attempt to get her forward against the wind, or to direct her course.

ACTS 27:16. *And running under a certain island,* Or below a certain island and hard by, it or under the sea shore of it, where the sea might be smoother, the wind not being there so strong:

which is called Clauda: by Ptolemy it is called Claudus, and was near the island of Crete, and

now called Gozo. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions, and some copies, read "Cauda"; and there was an island near to Crete, which was called Gaudos, and is thought to be the place here meant:

we had much work to come by the boat; which they had with them to go ashore in, or to betake themselves to in case of shipwreck; and which in this storm was in danger of being dashed to pieces against the ship, or lost; and it was with some difficulty that they came at it, and took it up into the ship.

ACTS 27:17. *Which when they had taken up*, When they had got the boat into the ship:

they used helps; the mariners made use of other persons, called in the assistance of the soldiers, and passengers, and prisoners; or for the help of the ship, they made use of cords, chains, and such like things:

undergirding the ship: with cords and ropes, which they drew under the keel of the ship, and so bound both sides of the ship, that it might not split and fall to pieces; which may be what is now called "frapping", and is done by putting large ropes under the keel, and over the gunwale; and is used when a ship by labouring hard in the sea breaks the bolts in her sides, and this keeps her from parting.

Horace refers to this use of ropes in tempests, when he says, "Nonne vides ut — sine funibus vix durare carinae possint imperiosius Aequor?" do not you see that without ropes the keels can scarcely endure the more imperious sea? Isidorus makes mention of several sorts of ropes made use of in storms; "spirae", he says, are ropes that are used in tempests, which the mariners after their manner call "curcubae; tormentum" is a long rope in ships, according to the same writer, which reaches from head to stern, by which they are bound faster together:

and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands: which were on the African coast, here called "Syrtes"; either from the conflux of sand and slime, and such like things, which made them very dangerous for shipping, and being covered with water, could not be seen

and guarded against, and especially in a storm; or from their drawing of vessels into them, which they retain, suck in, and swallow up; and such the mariners might know were not far off. there were two very remarkable ones on the coast of Africa, the one is called the greater "Syrtes", the other the lesser; the greater was more to the south than the lesser, and also more to the east, and the lesser was to the west: of these "Syrtes", Jerom says, they are sandy places in the great sea very terrible, and to be feared, because they use to draw all into them; they are near the Egyptian sea; the Lybian sea, which washes the African shore, is by Seneca called from them the "Syrtic sea": wherefore, ***they strike sail***; let down their sails; so read some manuscripts in New College, Oxford; in the Greek text it is, "they let down the vessel"; not the boat they had taken in, of which we read after; nor an anchor, or anchors, which would have been improper in a storm; nor the mast, it can hardly be thought that should be the first thing they should cut down, when they did not cast out the tackling till the third day; the storm was vehement on the first, more vehement on the second, when they lightened the ship, and most vehement on the third, when they cast out the tackling; and as Scheffer observes, the mast is never cut down before the loss of other things; wherefore this is to be understood of letting down the sail yard, and contracting the sails; the Syriac version renders it, "we let down the main sail"; or, "the sail", using the Greek word "Armenon", which signifies "a sail":

and so were driven; about in the sea, wheresoever the winds and waves carried them; or very likely the ship was driven before the wind under her bare poles.

ACTS 27:18. *And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest*, Sometimes being lifted up as it were to the heavens, and then presently sinking down, as if they were going into the bottom of the sea; such a condition at sea is described to the life by the Psalmist, in (Psalm 107:25-27).

the next day they lightened the ship; of its burden, its lading, the goods and merchandise that were in it; as the mariners did in the ship in which Jonah was, (Jon 1:5) the Ethiopic version renders it, "they cast the goods into the sea"; the Arabic version, the "merchandise".

ACTS 27:19. And the third day, From the time this storm began, and this tempestuous weather held:

we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship; by which seems to be meant their naval stores and instruments, as sails, ropes, cables, anchors, etc. and yet we afterwards read of their anchors and main sail: it may be rendered, "the furniture of the ship"; and yet it cannot design the ship's provisions, at least all were not cast away; for afterwards mention is made of casting out the wheat into the sea: many versions render it, "the armament of the ship"; and the Ethiopic version adds, "and arms"; the soldiers' arms, and others which belonged to the ship, which were brought with them to defend themselves against an enemy: these, the historian says, "we cast out"; the Apostle Paul's company, Luke and others; but not without the leave and order of the centurion and governor of the ship: the Alexandrian copy, and some others, and the Vulgate Latin version read, "they cast out": which seems most probable.

ACTS 27:20. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, The Syriac version adds, "nor moon"; which is an usual description of dark, cloudy, and tempestuous seasons; and which was not only uncomfortable to them, because they could not see these luminaries, and enjoy their beneficial light and influence; but because they had them not to guide and direct them; for the sun, moon, and stars, are useful to sailors, to steer their course by; especially they were to the ancients, before the invention and use of the loadstone.

Besides, by these they conjectured what weather it would be, as mariners still do; they observed the rising and setting of the sun, whether it shone with equal rays or not, and whether it was red and fiery, or pale; and the

like observations they made upon the moon, both as to its colour and size; and especially the constellations and stars were of singular use unto them; and above all, the two Bears, the greater and the lesser; the Greeks observed the former, and the Phoenicians the latter; and who are said by Pliny to have first found out the use of the constellations in navigation.

Particularly this is ascribed to the famous philosopher Thales, who is said to be a Phoenician; and from other constellations, as Arcturus, Orion, Hyades, etc. they foresaw rains, storms, and tempests: and now what made the case of the apostle and the ship's company the more distressing was, that it was not only dark and cloudy, but very tempestuous, as follows;

and no small tempest lay on us; and all this continued many days: so Virgil represents Aeneas and his company in a like condition at sea, as not able by the heavens to distinguish day from night, nor to direct their course, neither sun nor stars appearing, and so wandered about in the sea three days without the sun, and as many nights without a star; and Homer describes Ulysses in a violent storm at sea, and for the space of nine days tossed about, when on the tenth day he got to land; and Sosia, in Terence, is brought in saying, that he had been thirty days in a ship, expecting death every moment, so boisterous was the storm he was in; and so it was in this case, the winds blew hard upon them, and the rains fell with great violence, and everything was discouraging and distressing; insomuch that

all hope that we should be saved was then taken away; neither the master and owner of the ship, nor the mariners, nor the soldiers, nor prisoners, nor the apostle's companions, had any hope of being saved, but all expected to be lost. The apostle himself knew indeed, that though the ship would be lost, every man's life would be saved; and yet he could have no hope of this, as to the outward appearance of things, but on account of the revelation which the Lord had made to him, and he believed; otherwise, as to all human helps and means, there was no probability of an escape.

ACTS 27:21. *But after long abstinence*, From food, not for want of it, as appears from what follows, (Acts 27:36-38) nor in a religious way, in order to obtain the favour of God; but either for want of appetite, and a nauseousness and loathing of food, through the tossing of the ship, fright at the storm, and fears of death; and chiefly for want of time, being employed for the security of themselves and the ship.

Paul stood forth in the midst of them; that all might hear him:

and said, sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me: it would have been better for them to have taken his advice, and stayed at the Fair Havens, ***and not have loosed from Crete***; or sailed from thence:

and to have gained this harm and loss; whereby they would have shunned the injuries of the weather, the storm and tempest which they had endured, to the prejudice of their health, and the terrifying of their minds, and have prevented the loss of the goods and merchandise of the ship, and its tackling, utensils, instruments, and arms; the former of these is expressed by "harm" or injury, and the latter by "loss". The apostle addresses them in a very courteous manner, and does not use sharp reproofs, severe language, or upbraid and insult them, only reminds them of the counsel he had given, which had it been taken, would have been to their advantage; and the rather he mentions this, that since what he had foretold was in part already come to pass, they might give the more heed to what he was about to say to them.

Alexandria

from an article in the Thompson Chain Reference Bible.

Alexandria the birthplace of Apollos, was founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BC. Its palaces of the Ptolemies, its wonderful museum, its famed library, and its keenly intellectual populace of Greeks, Jews, and Egyptians made it one of the greatest intellectual and cultural centers of the Roman Empire.

The Septuagint version of the Old Testament (280 to 170 BC) was written at Alexandria, and here, during the first century, lived Philo Judaeus, a brilliant and devout Jew, whose writings on the Logos were in certain respects similar to those of John the Beloved.

from Encyclopedia Britannica:

Arabic AL-ISKANDARIYAH city and urban muhafazah (governorate), Lower Egypt. Once the greatest city of the ancient world and a centre of Hellenic scholarship and science, Alexandria was the capital of Egypt from its founding by Alexander the Great in 332 BC to AD 642, when it was subdued by the Arabs. It is now the second largest city, the centre of a major industrial region, and the chief seaport of Egypt. It lies on the Mediterranean Sea at the western edge of the Nile River delta, about 114 miles (183 km) northwest of Cairo.

Alexandria has always occupied a special place in the popular imagination by virtue of its association with Alexander and with Mark Antony and Cleopatra. Alexandria also played a key role in passing on Hellenic culture to Rome and was a centre of scholarship in the theological disputes over the nature of Christ's divinity that divided the early church. The legendary reputation of ancient Alexandria grew through a thousand years of serious decline following the Arab conquests, during which time virtually all traces of the Greco-Roman city disappeared. By the time Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798, Alexandria had been reduced to a fishing village. The modern city and port that flourished on the back of the cotton boom in the 19th century has, therefore, little in common with the Alexandria of the past.

The free port status granted Alexandria by the Ottoman Turks accentuated the cultural ambivalence inherent in the city's location--extended along a spit of land with its back to Egypt and its face to the Mediterranean. This idea of a free city, open to all manner of men and ideas, was something the new Alexandria had in common with the old. It was a theme the Greek writer Constantine Cavafy, drawing

heavily on its legendary past, developed in his poems of the city. This idea of Alexandria, and Cavafy's take on it in particular, was highlighted by the English writer Lawrence Durrell in his four-part novel, *The Alexandria Quartet* (1957-60).

The city site

The modern city extends 25 miles (40 km) east to west along a limestone ridge, 1-2 miles (1.6-3.2 km) wide, that separates the salt lake of Maryut, or Mareotis--now partly drained and cultivated--from the Egyptian mainland. An hourglass-shaped promontory formed by the silting up of a mole (the Heptastadium), which was built soon after Alexandria's founding, links the island of Pharos with the city centre on the mainland. Its two steeply curving bays now form the basins for the Eastern Harbor and the Western Harbor.

The prevailing north wind, blowing across the Mediterranean, gives Alexandria a markedly different climate from that of the desert hinterland. The summers are relatively temperate, although humidity can build up in July and in August, the hottest month, when the average temperature reaches 87 °F (31 °C). Winters are cool and invariably marked by a series of violent storms that can bring torrential rain and even hail. The mean daily temperature in January, which is the coldest month, is 64 °F (18 °C).

The city plan

Designed by Alexander's personal architect, Dinocrates, the city incorporated the best in Hellenic planning and architecture. Within a century of its founding, its splendors rivaled anything known in the ancient world. The pride of ancient Alexandria and one of the Seven Wonders of the World was the great lighthouse, the Pharos of Alexandria, which stood on the eastern tip of the island of Pharos. Reputed to be more than 350 feet (110 meters) high, it was still standing in the 12th century. In 1477, however, the sultan Qa'it Bay used stones from the dilapidated structure to build a fort (named for him), which stands near or on the original

site of the Pharos. In 1994 archaeologist Jean-Yves Empereur of the Centre for Alexandrian Studies (Centre d'Etudes Alexandrines) found many of the stones and some statuary that had belonged to the lighthouse in the waters off Pharos Island. The Egyptian government planned to turn the area into an underwater park to allow divers to see the archaeological remains of the lighthouse.

The Canopic Way (now Al-Hurriyah Avenue) was the principal thoroughfare of the Greek city, running east and west through its centre. Most of the Ptolemaic and, later, Roman monuments stood nearby. The Canopic Way was intersected at its western end by the Street of the Soma (now An-Nabi Danyal Street), along which is the legendary site of Alexander's tomb, thought to lie under the mosque An-Nabi Danyal. Close to this intersection was the Mouseion (museum), the city's academy of arts and sciences, which included the great Library of Alexandria. At the seaward end of the Street of the Soma were the two obelisks known as Cleopatra's Needles. These obelisks were given in the 19th century to the cities of London and New York. One obelisk can be viewed on the banks of the River Thames in London and the other in Central Park in New York City.

Between Al-Hurriyah Avenue and the railway station is the Roman Theatre, which was uncovered in 1959 at the Kawm al-Dikkah archaeological site. At the southwestern extremity of the ancient city are the Kawm ash-Shuqafah burial grounds, with their remarkable Hadrianic catacombs dating from the 2nd century AD. Nearby, on the site of the ancient fort of Rakotis, is one of the few classical monuments still standing: the 88-foot- (27-metre-) high marble column known as Pompey's Pillar (actually dedicated to Diocletian soon after 297). Parts of the Arab wall, encompassing a much smaller area than the Greco-Roman city, survive on Al-Hurriyah Avenue, but the city contracted still further in Ottoman times to the stem of the promontory, now the Turkish Quarter. It is the oldest

surviving section of the city, housing its finest mosques and worst slums.

The decline of the Ptolemies in the 2nd and 1st centuries BC was matched by the rise of Rome. Alexandria played a major part in the intrigues that led to the establishment of imperial Rome.

It was at Alexandria that Cleopatra, the last of the Ptolemies, courted Julius Caesar and claimed to have borne him a son. Her attempts at restoring the fortunes of the Ptolemaic dynasty, however, were thwarted by Caesar's assassination and her unsuccessful support of Mark Antony against Caesar's great-nephew Octavian. In 30 BC Octavian (later the emperor Augustus) formally brought Alexandria and Egypt under Roman rule. To punish the city for not supporting him, he abolished the Alexandrian Senate and built his own city at what was then the suburb of ar-Raml. Alexandria, however, could not be ignored, since it held the key to the Egyptian granary on which Rome increasingly came to rely; and the city soon regained its independence.

St. Mark, the traditional author of the second Synoptic Gospel, is said to have been preaching in Alexandria in the mid-1st century AD. Thenceforth, the city's growing Christian and Jewish communities united against Rome's attempts to impose official paganism. Periodic persecutions by various early emperors, especially by Diocletian beginning in 303, failed to subdue these communities; and, after the empire had formally adopted Christianity under Constantine I, the stage was set for schisms within the church.

The first conflict that split the early church was between two Alexandrian prelates, Athanasius and Arius, over the nature of Christ's divinity. It was settled in 325 by the adoption of the Creed of Nicaea, which affirmed Christ's spiritual divinity and branded Arianism--the belief that Christ was lower than God--as heresy. Arianism, however, had many imperial champions, and this sharpened the conflict between the Alexandrian church and the state. In 391 Christians destroyed the Sarapeum, sanctum of the Ptolemaic cult and what

Cleopatra had saved of the great Mouseion library. In 415 a Christian faction killed the Neoplatonist philosopher Hypatia, and Greek culture in Alexandria quickly declined.

After the ascendancy of the patriarchate of Constantinople--to which the see of Alexandria answered after the division of the Roman Empire in 364--the local church adopted Monophysitism (belief in the single nature and therefore physical divinity of Christ) as a way of asserting its independence. Although Monophysitism was rejected by the Council of Chalcedon (451), the Alexandrian church resisted Constantinople's attempts to bring it into line. An underground church developed to oppose the established one and became a focus of Egyptian loyalties. Disaffection with Byzantine rule created the conditions in which Alexandria fell first to the Persians, in 616, and then to the Arabs, in 642.

The Islamic period

The Arabs occupied Alexandria without resistance. Thenceforth, apart from an interlude in 645 when the city was briefly taken by the Byzantine fleet, Alexandria's fortunes were tied to the new faith and culture emanating from the Arabian Desert. Alexandria soon was eclipsed politically by the new Arab capital at al-Fustat (which later was absorbed into the modern capital, Cairo), and this city became the strategic prize for those wanting to control Egypt. Nevertheless, Alexandria continued to flourish as a trading centre, principally for textiles and luxury goods, as Arab influence expanded westward through North Africa and then into Europe. The city also was important as a naval base, especially under the Fatimids and the Mamluks, but already it was contracting in size in line with its new, more modest status. The Arab walls (rebuilt in the 13th and 14th centuries and torn down in 1811) encompassed less than half the area of the Greco-Roman city.

Alexandria survived the early Crusades relatively unscathed, and the city came into its own again with the development of the East-West spice trade, which Egypt monopolized.

The loss of this trade--which came about after the discovery of the sea route to India in 1498 and the Turkish conquest of Egypt in 1517--was the final blow to the city's fortunes. Under Turkish rule the canal linking Alexandria to the Rosetta branch of the Nile was allowed to silt up, strangling the city's commercial lifeline. Alexandria had been reduced to a small fishing village when Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798.

Alexandria, School of

The first Christian institution of higher learning, founded in the mid-2nd century AD in Alexandria, Egypt. Under its earliest known leaders (Pantaenus, Clement, and Origen), it became a leading centre of the allegorical method of biblical interpretation, espoused a rapprochement between Greek culture and Christian faith, and attempted to assert orthodox Christian teachings against heterodox views in an era of doctrinal flux. Opposing the School of Alexandria was the School of Antioch, which emphasized the literal interpretation of the Bible.

Roman Commerce

From "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul" by W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, Eerdmans

Though the Romans had no natural love for the sea, and though a commercial life was never regarded by them as an honourable occupation, and thus both experience of practical seamanship, and the business of the carrying trade remained in a great measure with the Greeks, yet a vast development had been given to commerce by the consolidation of the Roman Empire. Piracy had been effectually put down before the close of the Republic. The annexation of Egypt drew towards Italy the rich trade of the Indian seas. After the effectual reduction of Gaul and Spain, Roman soldiers and Roman slave dealers invaded the shores of Britain. The trade of all the countries which surrounded the Mediterranean began to flow towards Rome. ¹

¹ There seem to have been two great lines of inland trade through Asia Minor, one near the southern shore of the Black Sea, through the districts opened by the

The great city herself was passive, for she had nothing to export. But the cravings of her luxury, and the necessities of her vast population, drew to one centre the converging lines of a busy traffic from a wide extent of provinces. To leave out of view what hardly concerns us here, the commerce by land from the North, some of the principal directions of trade by sea may be briefly enumerated as follows. The harbours of Ostia and Puteoli were constantly full of ships from the West, which had brought wool and other articles from Cadiz a circumstance which possesses some interest for us here, as illustrating the mode in which St. Paul might hope to accomplish his voyage to Spain (Rom. 15:24).

On the South was Sicily, often called the Storehouse of Italy, and Africa, which sent furniture woods to Rome, and heavy cargoes of marble and granite. On the East, Asia Minor was the intermediate space through which the caravan trade passed, conveying silks and spices from beyond the Euphrates to the markets and wharves of Ephesus. We might extend this enumeration by alluding to the fisheries of the Black Sea, and the wine trade of the Archipelago. But enough has been said to give some notion of the commercial activity of which Italy was the centre: and our particular attention here is required only to one branch of trade, one line of constant traffic across the waters of the Mediterranean to Rome.

Alexandria has been mentioned already as a city, which, next after Athens, exerted the strongest intellectual influence over the age in which St. Paul's appointed work was done; and we have had occasion to notice some indirect connection between this city and the Apostle's own labours. But it was eminent commercially not less than intellectually. The prophetic views of Alexander were at that time receiving an ampler fulfilment than at any former period. The trade with the Indian Seas, which had been

campaigns of Pompey, and the other through the centre of the country from Mazaca, on the Euphrates, to Ephesus.

encouraged under the ptolemies, received a vast impulse in the reign of Augustus: and under the reigns of his successors, the valley of the Nile was the channel of an active transit trade in spices, dyes, jewels, and perfumes, which were brought by Arabian mariners from the far East, and poured into the markets of Italy.

But Egypt was not only the medium of transit trade. She had her own manufactures of linen, paper, and glass, which she exported in large quantities. And one natural product of her soil has been a staple commodity from the time of Pharaoh to our own. We have only to think of the fertilising inundations of the Nile, on the one hand, and, on the other, of the multitudes composing the free and slave population of Italy, in order to comprehend the activity and importance of the Alexandrian corn trade. At a later period the Emperor Commodus established a company of merchants to convey the supplies from Egypt to Rome; and the commendations which he gave himself for this forethought may still be read in the inscription round the ships represented on his coins.

The harbour, to which the Egyptian corn vessels were usually bound, was Puteoli. At the close of this chapter we shall refer to some passages which give an animated picture of the arrival of these ships. Meanwhile, it is well to have called attention to this line of traffic between Alexandria and Puteoli; for in so doing we have described the means which Divine Providence employed for bringing the Apostle to Rome.

The transition is easy from the commerce of the Mediterranean to the progress of travellers from point to point in that sea. If to this enumeration of the main lines of traffic by sea we add all the ramifications of the coasting trade which depended on them, we have before us a full view of the opportunities which travellers possessed of accomplishing their voyages. Just in this way we have lately seen St. Paul completing the journey, on which his mind was set, from Philippi, by Miletus and Patara, to Caesarea (Chap. 20). We read of no periodical

packets for the conveyance of passengers sailing between the great towns of the Mediterranean.

Emperors themselves were usually compelled to take advantage of the same opportunities to which Jewish pilgrims and Christian Apostles were limited. When Vespasian went to Rome, leaving Titus to prosecute the siege of Jerusalem, "he went on board a merchant ship, and sailed from Alexandria to Rhodes," and thence pursued his way through Greece to the Adriatic, and finally went to Rome through Italy by land. And when the Jewish war was ended, and when, suspicions having arisen concerning the allegiance of Titus to Vespasian, the son was anxious to rejoin his father, he also left Alexandria in a "merchant ship," and "hastened to Italy," touching at the very places at which St. Paul touched, first at Rhegium (28:13), and then at Puteoli.

Ships and Navigation of the Ancients

From "The Life and Epistles of St. Paul" by W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, Eerdmans

Before entering on the narrative of that voyage² which brought the Apostle Paul, through

² The nautical difficulties of this narrative have been successfully explained by two independent inquirers; and, so far as we are aware, by no one else. A practical knowledge of seamanship was required for the elucidation of the whole subject; and none of the ordinary commentators seem to have looked on it with the eye of a sailor. The first who examined St. Paul's voyage in a practical spirit was the late Admiral Sir Charles Penrose whose life has been lately published (Murray, 1851). His MSS. have been kindly placed in the hands of the writer of this Chapter, and they are frequently referred to in the notes. A similar investigation was made subsequently, but independently, and more minutely and elaborately, by James Smith, Esq. of Jordanhill, whose published work on the subject (Longmans, 1848) has already obtained an European reputation. Besides other valuable aid, Mr. Smith has examined the sheets of this Chapter, as they have passed through the press. We have also to express our acknowledgments for much kind assistance received from Admiral Moorsom and other naval officers.

manifold and imminent dangers, from Caesarea to Rome, it will be convenient to make a few introductory remarks concerning the ships and navigation of the ancients. By fixing clearly in the mind some of the principal facts relating to the form and structure of Greek and Roman vessels, the manner in which these vessels were worked, the prevalent lines of traffic in the Mediterranean, and the opportunities afforded to travellers of reaching their destination by sea, we shall be better able to follow this voyage without distractions or explanations, and with a clearer perception of each event as it occurred.

With regard to the vessels and seamanship of the Greeks and Romans, many popular mistakes have prevailed, to which it is hardly necessary to allude, after the full illustration which the subject has now received. We must not entertain the notion that all the commerce of the ancients was conducted merely by mean or small craft, which proceeded timidly in the day time, and only in the summer season, along the coast from harbour to harbour, and which were manned by mariners almost ignorant of the use of sails, and always trembling at the prospect of a storm. We cannot, indeed, assert that the arts either of ship building or navigation were matured in the Mediterranean so early as the first century of the Christian era. The Greeks and Romans were ignorant of the use of the compass: the instruments with which they took observations must have been rude compared with our modern quadrants and sextants³: and we have no reason to believe that their vessels were provided with nautical charts: and thus, when "neither sun nor stars appeared," and the sky gave indications of danger, they hesitated to try the open sea. But

³ We have no information of any nautical instruments at the time when we read of Ptolemy's mural quadrant at Alexandria; nor is it likely that any more effectual means of taking exact observations at sea, than the simple quadrant held in the hand, were in use before the invention of the reflecting quadrants and sextants by Hooke and Hadley. The want of exact chronometers must also be borne in mind.

the ancient sailor was well skilled in the changeable weather of the Levant, and his very ignorance of the aids of modern science made him the more observant of external phenomena, and more familiar with his own coasts. He was not less prompt and practical than a modern seaman in the handling of his ship, when overtaken by stormy weather on a dangerous coast.

The ship of the Greek and Roman mariner was comparatively rude, both in its build and its rig. The hull was not laid down with the fine lines, with which we are so familiar in the competing vessels of England and America, and the arrangement of the sails exhibited little of that complicated distribution yet effective combination of mechanical forces, which we admire in the East Indiaman or modern Frigate. With the war ships of the ancients we need not here occupy ourselves or the reader: but two peculiarities in the structure of Greek and Roman merchantmen must be carefully noticed; for both of them are much concerned in the seamanship described in the narrative before us.

The ships of the Greeks and Romans, like those of the early Northmen, were not steered by means of a single rudder, but by two paddle rudders, one on each quarter. Hence "rudders" are mentioned in the plural by St. Luke (Acts 27:40) as by heathen writers: and the fact is made still more palpable by the representations of art, as in the coins of Imperial Rome or the tapestry of Bayeux: nor does the hinged rudder appear on any of the remains of antiquity, till a late period in the Middle Ages.

And as this mode of steering is common to the two sources, from which we must trace our present art of ship building, so also is the same mode of rigging characteristic of the ships both of the North Sea and the Mediterranean. We find in these ancient ships one large mast, with strong ropes rove through a block at the mast head, and one large sail, fastened to an enormous yard. We shall see the importance of attending to this arrangement, when we enter upon the incidents of St. Paul's voyage (Acts

27:17, 19). One consequence was, that instead of the strain being distributed over the hull, as in a modern ship, it was concentrated upon a smaller portion of it : and thus in ancient times there must have been a greater tendency to leakage than at present; and we have the testimony of ancient writers to the fact, that a vast proportion of the vessels lost were by foundering. Thus Virgil, whose descriptions of everything which relates to the sea are peculiarly exact, speaks of the ships in the fleet of Aeneas as lost in various ways, some on rocks and some on quicksands, but “all with fastenings loosened:” and Josephus relates that the ship from which he so narrowly escaped, foundered ~ in “Adria,” and that he and his companions saved themselves by swimming through the night, an escape which found its parallel in the experience of the Apostle, who in one of those shipwrecks, of which no particular narration has been given to us, was “a night and a day in the deep” (2 Cor. 21:25). The same danger was apprehended in the ship of Jonah, from which “they cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it”; as well as in the ship of St. Paul, from which, after having lightened it the first day, they cast out the tackling on the second day, and finally “threw out the cargo of wheat into the sea” (27:8, 19, 38).

This leads us to notice what may be called a third peculiarity of the appointments of ancient ships, as compared with those of modern times. In consequence of the extreme danger to which they were exposed from leaking, it was customary to take to sea, as part of their ordinary gear, undergirders, which were simply ropes for passing round the hull of the ship and thus preventing the planks from starting ⁴. One

⁴ This is what is called “frapping” by seamen in the English navy, who are always taught how to frap a ship. The only difference is, that the practice is now resorted to much less frequently, and that modern ships are not supplied with “undergirders” specially prepared. The operation and its use are thus described in Falconer’s Marine Dictionary: “To frap a ship is to pass four or five turns of a large cable-laid rope round the hull or

of the most remarkable proofs of the truth of this statement is to be found in the inscribed marbles dug up within the last twenty years at the Piraeus which give us an inventory of the Attic fleet in its flourishing period; as one of the most remarkable accounts of the application of these artificial ‘helps’ (27:17) in a storm, is to be found in the narrative before us.

If these differences between ancient ships and our own are borne in mind, the problems of early seamanship in the Mediterranean are nearly reduced to those with which the modern navigator has to deal in the same seas. The practical questions which remain to be asked are these: What were the dimensions of ancient ships? How near the wind could they sail? And, with a fair wind, at what rate?

As regards the first of these questions, there seems no reason why we should suppose the old trading vessels of the Mediterranean to be much smaller than our own. We may rest this conclusion, both on the character of the cargoes with which they were freighted, and on the number of persons we know them to have sometimes conveyed. Though the great ship of Ptolemy Philadelphus may justly be regarded as built for ostentation rather than for use, the Alexandrian vessel, which forms the subject of one of Lucian’s dialogues, and is described as driven by stress of weather into the Pineus, furnishes us with satisfactory data for the calculation of the tonnage of ancient ships. Two hundred and seventy six souls were on board the ship in which St. Paul was wrecked (27:37), and the “Castor and Pollux” conveyed them, in addition to her own crew, from Malta to Puteoli (28:11): while Josephus informs us that there were six hundred on board the ship from which

frame of a ship, to support her in a great storm, or otherwise, when it is apprehended that she is not strong enough to resist the violent efforts of the sea.” In most of the European languages the nautical term is, like the Greek, expressive of the nature of the operation. In Spanish the word is *tortorar*: a circumstance which possesses some etymological interest, since the word used by Isidore of Seville for a rope used in this way is *tormentum*.

he, with about eighty others, escaped. Such considerations lead us to suppose that the burden of many ancient merchantmen may have been from five hundred to a thousand tons.⁵

A second question of greater consequence in reference to the present subject, relates to the angle which the course of an ancient ship could be made to assume with the direction of the wind, or to use the language of English sailors (who divide the compass into thirty two points), within how many points of the wind she would sail? That ancient vessels could not work to windward, is one of the popular mistakes which need not be refuted. They doubtless took advantage of the Etesian winds, just as the traders in the Eastern Archipelago sail with the monsoons: but those who were accustomed to a seafaring life could not avoid discovering that a ship's course can be made to assume a less angle than a right angle with the direction of the wind, or, in other words, that she can be made to sail within less than eight points of the wind

Pliny distinctly says, that it is possible for a ship to sail on contrary tacks. The limits of this possibility depend upon the character of the vessel and the violence of the gale. We shall find, below, that the vessel in which St. Paul was wrecked, "could not look at the wind," for so the Greek word (27:1515) may be literally translated in the language of English sailors, though with a less violent gale, an English ship, well managed, could easily have kept her course. A modern merchantman, in moderate weather, can sail within six points of the wind. In an ancient vessel the yard could not be

⁵ The ship must have been of considerable burden, as we find there were no less than 276 persons embarked on board her. To afford fair accommodation for troops in a transport expressly fitted for the purpose, we should allow at the rate of a ton and a half to each man, and as the ship we are considering was not expressly fitted for passengers, we may conclude that her burden was fully, or at least nearly double, the number of tons, to the souls on board, or upwards of 500 tons.

braced so sharp, and the hull was more clumsy: and it would not be safe to say that she could sail nearer the wind than within seven points.

To turn now to the third question, the rate of sailing, the very nature of the rig, which was less adapted than our own for working to windward, was peculiarly favourable to a quick run before the wind. In the China seas, during the monsoons, junks have been seen from the deck of a British vessel behind in the horizon in the morning, and before in the horizon in the evening. Thus we read of passages accomplished of old in the Mediterranean, which would do credit to a well appointed modern ship. Pliny, who was himself a seaman, and in command of a fleet at the time of his death, might furnish us with several instances. We might quote the story of the fresh fig, which Cato produced in the senate at Rome, when he urged his countrymen to undertake the third Punic war, by impressing on them the imminent nearness of their enemy. "This fruit," he says, "was gathered fresh at Carthage three days ago."

Other voyages, which he adduces, are such as these, seven days from Cadiz to Ostia, seven days from the straits of Messina to Alexandria, nine days from Puteoli to Alexandria. These instances are quite in harmony with what we read in other authors. Thus Rhodes and Cape Salmone, at the eastern extremity of Crete, are reckoned by Diodorus and Strabo as four days from Alexandria: Plutarch tells us of a voyage within the day from Brundisium to Corcyra: Procopius describes Belisarius as sailing on one day with his fleet from Malta, and landing on the next day some leagues to the south of Carthage. A thousand stades (or between 100 and 150 miles), is reckoned by the geographers a common distance to accomplish in the twenty four hours. And the conclusion to which we are brought is, that with a fair wind an ancient merchantman would easily sail at the rate of seven knots an hour, a conclusion in complete harmony both with what we have observed in a former voyage of St. Paul (Chap. 20), and with what will demand our attention at the close of

that voyage, which brought him at length from Malta by Rhegium to Puteoli (Acts 28:13).

The remarks which have been made will convey to the reader a sufficient notion of the ships and navigation of the ancients. If to the above mentioned peculiarities of build and rig we add the eye painted at the prow, the conventional ornaments at stem and stern, which are familiar to us in remaining works of art, and the characteristic figures of Heathen divinities, we shall gain a sufficient idea of an ancient merchantman. And a glance at the chart of the Mediterranean will enable us to realise in our imagination the nature of the voyages that were most frequent in the ancient world. With the same view of elucidating the details of our subject beforehand, we may now devote a short space to the prevalent lines of traffic, and to the opportunities of travellers by sea, in the first century of the Christian era.

Sidon

From International Standard Bible Encyclopedia
SIDON. [Heb. šîḏôn; Akk. šidunnu; Gk. Sidōn]; AV also ZIDON. A city-state on the Mediterranean coast, 40 km (25 mi) N of Tyre, the modern city of Şaida'. The name was explained by the ancients as derived from that of an eponymous hero, founder of the city (Side or Sidon in classical versions of the legend; cf. also Gen. 10:15, where Sidon is the "first-born" of Canaan); but since Justin the name of the city has been recognized as the Phoenician word for "fish." Today it is commonly thought that the etymology is to be sought in the root šwd, "to hunt," also "to fish," therefore the toponym signifies "fish market" or something similar; or else the name of the Phoenician deity Šid is cited from which the toponym can be derived.

I. Topography and Archeological Exploration

The city sprang up in a small costal plain near the mouth of the Nahr el-'awali (Bostrenus), in a region long known for luxurious gardens and orchards. The topography is rather complex and scattered; the local inscriptions name various quarters: Šdn ym "Sidon by the sea," probably on the site of the modern city; šmm

rmm, "elevated heavens," or šmm 'drn, "powerful heavens," evidently on the hill; 'rş rşp, "land of Resheph"; šdn mšl, šdn šd, of uncertain locations; and the mountain sanctuary of 'n ydll, "source (spring) of Yaddal." Likewise the Assyrian texts distinguished a "Great Sidon" (cf. the identical expression in Josh. 11:8 and 19:28) and a "Little Sidon," besides various villages of the interior and the new city, Kār-Aššur-aḥ-iddina, "Fort Esarhaddon," founded by the Assyrians very near that Phoenician city.

The archeological recoveries confirm the dispersion not only obviously of the necropoleis (from Phoenician royal tombs of the 5th cent. at Maġarat 'ablun, to the various necropoleis of the Bronze Age at Kafr Ġarra, Lebe'a, Quraya, and of the Roman era), but also of the sanctuaries (the monumental one of Eshmun at Bustān eš-Šaiḥ, the identification of which with 'n ydll is demonstrated by the inscriptions of Ba'al-šillem that have been recovered) and of the same city.

The nucleus of this city was, however, on a promontory which was joined to a line of rocks that assured protection from the wind. South of the promontory a round little bay was located, possibly used as a landingplace but not serving regularly as a seaport in ancient times; the real port was north of the promontory, joined to two internal basins (on the site of the modern port) enclosed by a system of man-made jetties, and a more ample external roadstead.

II. History

The earliest attestation of Sidon dates from the 15th–14th cents B.C. with the Amarna letters: the king of Sidon, Zimrida, was submissive to Egypt (as was the entire region at that time), and was involved in local battles, Sidon being allied with Arwad and Amurru against Byblos and Tyre; in particular Sidon was attempting to take from Tyre all the mainland possessions as well as a considerable portion of its territories to the south (cf. AmTab 147–49). The Akkadian texts from Ugarit preserve a pair of names of kings of Sidon (Yapaḥ-Addu and Imtu) datable to the 13th century. Egyptian texts name the

city in Papyrus Anastasi I (cf. ANET, p. 477) and in the account of Wen-Amon (cf. ANET, p. 27). Egyptian domination came to an end toward 1200; in the 12th–11th cents Sidon apparently gained a certain political preeminence, which seems necessary to explain the use of the term “Sidonians” to indicate the “Phoenicians” in general. Perhaps passages such as Josh. 13:4–6 and Jgs. 18:7 imply control by Sidon to the southern end of ‘Ara S of the Carmel and toward the interior as far as Laish. About 1100 the Assyrian Tiglath-pileser I mentioned only Sidon (and not Tyre) as a Phoenician center S of Byblos. But this place of predominance was cut off by the establishment of the kingdom of Israel and by the political growth of Tyre toward 1000 B.C.

In the 9th cent. the inscriptions of Ashurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III concerning expeditions in Syria show that Sidon was an autonomous kingdom alongside of Tyre. On the other hand the situation seems to have been altered by the time of Tiglath-pileser III (747–727) when there was no kingdom of Sidon and the city was certainly included in the territory of Tyre, where Hiram II reigned with the title of “king of the Sidonians” (Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum I, 5).

The same situation pertained at the time of Sennacherib, who conducted an expedition (701) against Luli king of Sidon, whom Josephus (Ant. ix.14.2 [283f]) called Elulaios and considered king of Tyre. According to the Assyrian texts, Luli fled from Tyre to Cyprus; Sennacherib replaced the fugitive with the Assyrophile Tubalu (* Itto-ba‘al) on the throne of Sidon. In 677 the king of Sidon, Abdi-Milkutti, rebelled against the Assyrian Esarhaddon, who intervened, conquered and destroyed Sidon, put Abdi-Milkutti to death, transformed the kingdom of Sidon into an Assyrian province, and founded a new capital (near or on the same site of the destroyed city) with the name of Kār-Aššur-aḥ-iddina (“Fort Esarhaddon”). For the events of 701 or those of 677, one might refer to Isa. 22:1–4, 12–14 (on the destruction of

Sidon, integrated with vv 5–11 and 15–18 relative to Tyre, probably later).

Included thus in the Assyrian empire and then in the Neo-Babylonian, Sidon remained notably central, and then received particular impetus by the works of the Achemenids, who made it the principal Phoenician center of the 5th–4th cents: at Sidon there was a residence of the Persian kings with a park (Diodorus xvi.41); the Phoenician fleet, principal nucleus of the Persian, was commanded by the king of Sidon (Diodorus xiv.67); the king of Sidon was first in rank of the vassals of Xerxes (Herodotus viii.67), and he sailed aboard a Sidonian ship (Herodotus vii.128). The funerary inscriptions and monuments recovered at Sidon permit the reconstruction in part of the local dynastic succession: Eshmunazar (‘šmn ‘zr) I, Tabnit (tbnt), Eshmunazar II, Bodashtart (bd‘štrt) are to be placed at the end of the 6th cent. and in the first half of the 5th. From Tabnit and Eshmunazar II we have the inscriptions on their sarcophagi, from Bodashtart inscriptions of the temple of Eshmun at Bustān eš-Šaiḥ constructed by him (see picture in PHOENICIA).

At the same temple of Eshmun a statue was successively dedicated by Prince Ba‘al-shillem (b‘lšlm) recording the names of the father Ba‘ana (b‘n’), of the grandfather Abdemon (‘bd‘mn), and of the great-grandfather Ba‘al-shillem, all kings of Sidon during the the second half of the 5th century. In the 4th cent. reports of classical authors, confirmed in part by numismatic data, give credibility to the sequence of ‘Abd-‘Ashtart I, Bod-‘Ashtart, ‘Abd-‘Ashtart II (Straton the Philhellene, of whom Greek inscriptions [CIG, I, 87] recorded close ties and assistance in Attica), Tennes, ‘Abd-‘Ashtart III, ranging between 400 and 332. Crucial moments of this period are the anti-Persian revolt of Straton in 362, the more serious revolt of Tennes in 351, ending with the destruction of Sidon, and finally the submission to Alexander in 332.

In the conflicts between the Seleucids and the Lagides Sidon was annexed to the latter and was made part of the Ptolemaic kingdom from

The Acts of the Apostles	Page 22
ACTS 407: Acts 27:1-21	a Grace Notes study

307 to 197, then of the Seleucid from 197 to 64, when it became part of the Roman province of Syria. In all this period a municipal government and a certain autonomy (hierá kaí ásylos) were preserved, at least from 111 when an era of dating was initiated “according to the people of Sidon”; but in 20 B.C. Augustus brought an end to the autonomy of the Phoenician cities, and Sidon progressively declined. Itineraries and travelers of the 4th–6th cents A.D. considered the city a secondary center (less important than Sarepta), but with a local bishop; it had a limited role at the time of the Crusades, as did all the ports of the region, after which its horizons became exclusively local and remain so today.

M. LIVERANI; W. S. LASOR
