

Today: 12 Oct 2014



# THE STORMS OF LIFE

*by Rev Dr Ng*

- Nov. 8, 1994
- Pastor Scott & Janet Willis
- 6 out of their 9 children family outing
- Highway I-94
- Voyager Van
- @ 10:30 a.m.



**Peter 6w,  
Elizabeth 3;  
Hank, 7;  
Sam, 9, Joe, 11  
& Ben, 13.**



**Acts 27:9-26**

# THE STORMS OF LIFE

## Acts 27:9-26

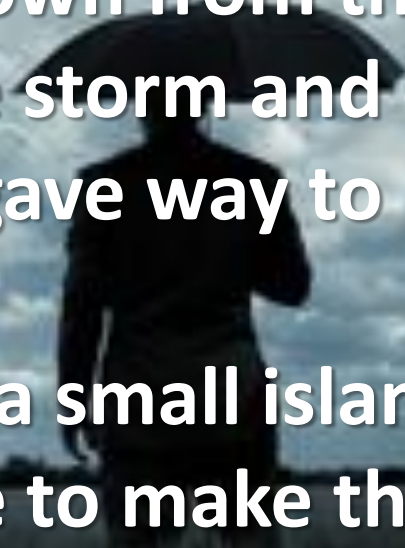
<sup>9</sup> Much time had been lost, and sailing had already become dangerous because by now it was after the Fast. So Paul warned them,

<sup>10</sup> "Men, I can see that our voyage is going to be disastrous and bring great loss to ship and cargo, and to our own lives also."

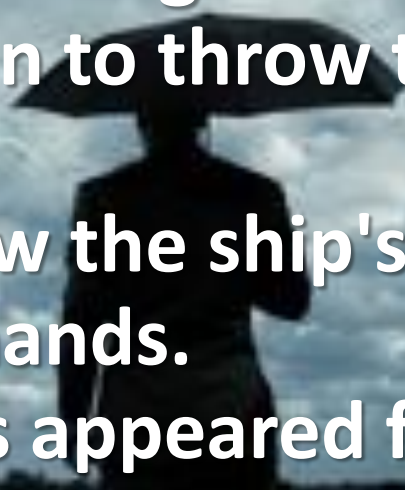
<sup>11</sup> But the centurion, instead of listening to what Paul said, followed the advice of the pilot and of the owner of the ship.

<sup>12</sup> Since the harbor was unsuitable to winter in, the majority decided that we should sail on, hoping to reach Phoenix and winter there. This was a harbor in Crete, facing both southwest and northwest.

## Acts 27:9-26

- 13** When a gentle south wind began to blow, they thought they had obtained what they wanted; so they weighed anchor and sailed along the shore of Crete.
- 14** Before very long, a wind of hurricane force, called the "northeaster," swept down from the island.
- 15** The ship was caught by the storm and could not head into the wind; so we gave way to it and were driven along.
- 16** As we passed to the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were hardly able to make the lifeboat secure.
- 
- A silhouette of a person holding an umbrella against a stormy sky with lightning. The person is standing in the foreground, facing away from the viewer, looking towards the horizon. The sky is dark and filled with multiple bright lightning bolts striking down. The overall mood is dramatic and ominous.

## Acts 27:9-26

- 17** When the men had hoisted it aboard, they passed ropes under the ship itself to hold it together. Fearing that they would run aground on the sandbars of Syrtis, they lowered the sea anchor and let the ship be driven along.
- 18** We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard.
- 19** On the third day, they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.
- 20** When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.
- 
- A silhouette of a person holding an umbrella against a stormy sky with lightning. The person is standing in the foreground, facing away from the viewer, looking towards the horizon. The sky is dark and filled with multiple bright lightning bolts striking down. The overall mood is one of a severe storm.

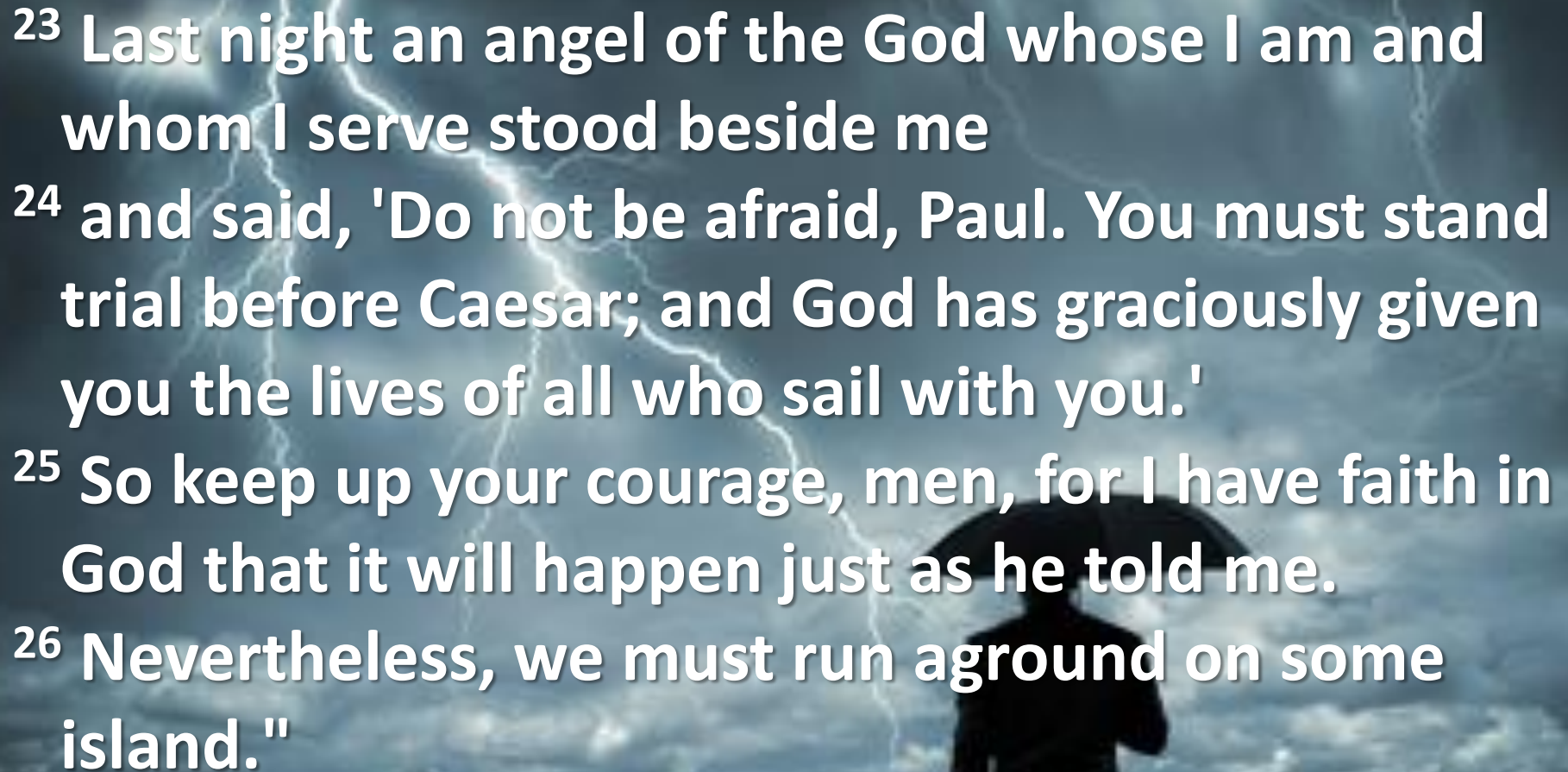
## Acts 27:9-26

**21** After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

**22** But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.



## Acts 27:9-26

- 23** Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me
- 24** and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.'
- 25** So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.
- 26** Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."
- 
- A silhouette of a person holding an umbrella, standing in a field under a stormy sky with lightning.



# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

Introduction:

**Q: WHY did Dr Luke write such a detailed account of the storm and shipwreck – 1 chapter with 44 verses?**

- **2 Cor (written before this incident) – Paul had already had 3 shipwreck experiences ...**
- **explain how Paul finally arrived in Rome**
- **many lessons to be learned – see life as a voyage and encountering storms**

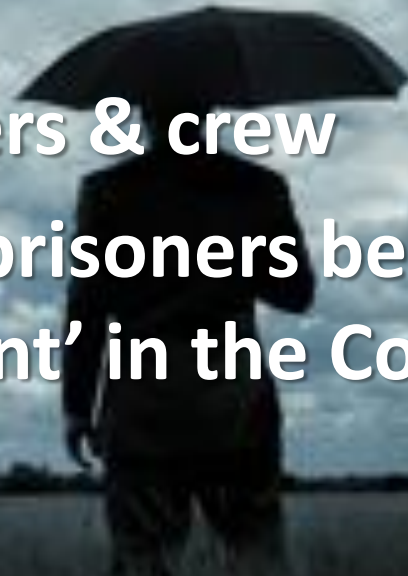
**NB : Not an allegory – church as the boat etc**

- **Storms of life will come prepared or not**

# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

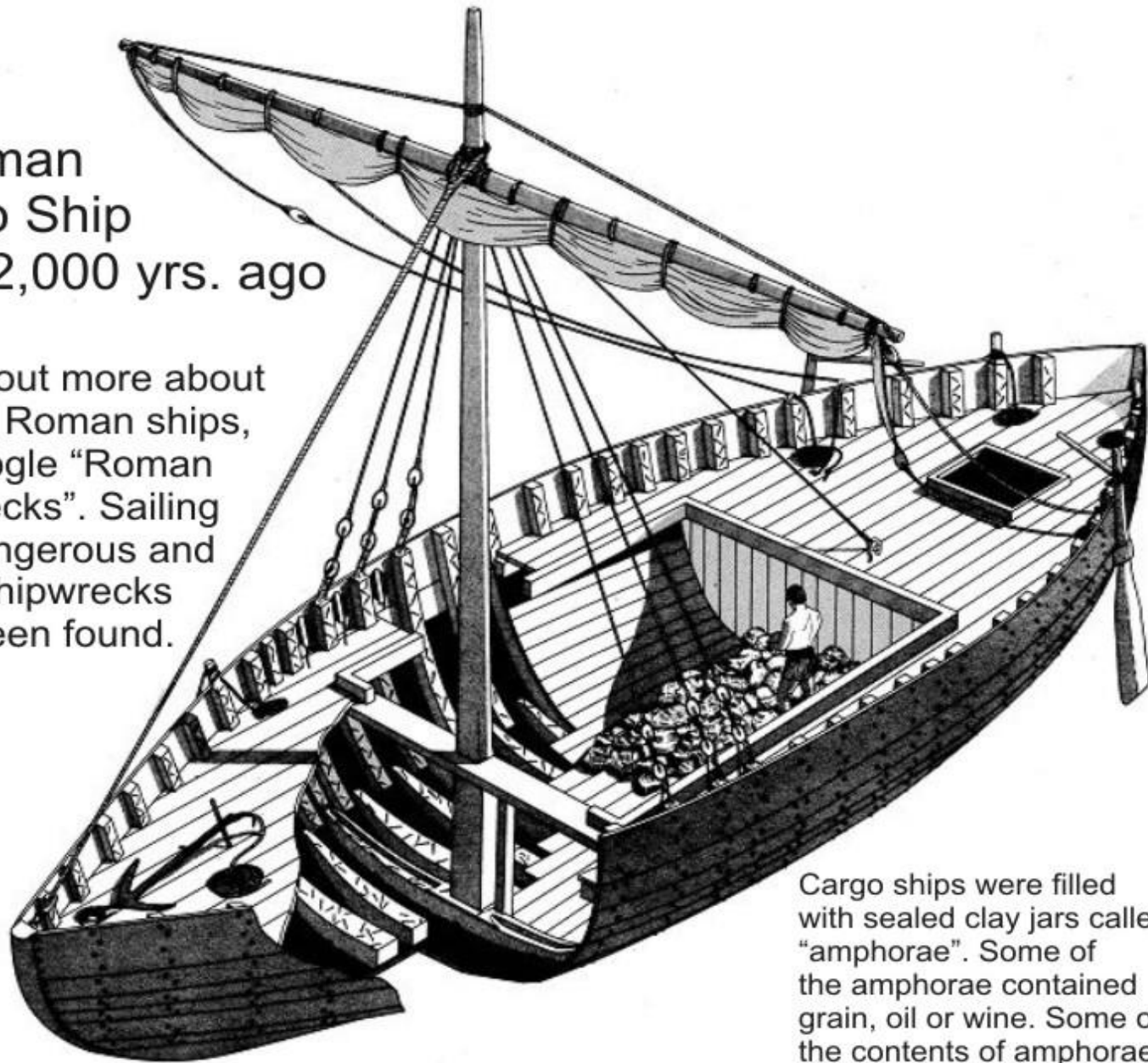
## THE BOAT :

- Most probably a grain ship carrying wheat or corn from Egypt to Rome
- About 140-150 ft long, 30-40 ft wide & 20-30 ft high
- Had total of 276 passengers & crew
- Passengers – many were prisoners being taken to Rome for ‘entertainment’ in the Coliseum

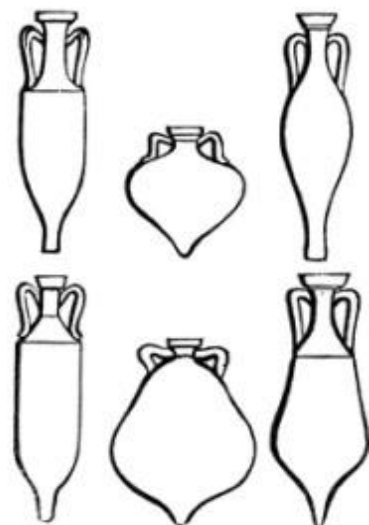


# A Roman Cargo Ship from 2,000 yrs. ago

To find out more about ancient Roman ships, just google "Roman shipwrecks". Sailing was dangerous and many shipwrecks have been found.



Cargo ships were filled with sealed clay jars called "amphorae". Some of the amphorae contained grain, oil or wine. Some of the contents of amphorae are still intact after 2,000 years of being buried at the bottom of the sea.





# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

## THE STORM :

During the time of Jesus

Sailing in the Mediterranean Sea

- Oct to mid-Nov : Dangerous
- Mid-Nov to Feb : Impossible
- Timing : v9 ‘... after the Fast’ ie the Feast of Atonement or Yom Kippur – usually end Sept or early Oct
- V7 & 8 already revealed that sailing conditions were not ideal....



# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

## 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

- May lose the cargo and the boat...  
but not the people of God...



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

## ➤ What Causes “STORMS” ?

(Defn “STORMS” – upheavals, interruptions, happenings that disrupt everyday normal life)

## ➤ Storms can result from...

### 1. OURSELVES THROUGH DISOBEDIENCE

Classic example - Jonah





# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

➤ Storms can result from...

## 2. GOD FOR DISCIPLING / LEARNING

Ref Mark 6:45-52

➤ Jesus knew the storm was coming  
YET Jesus still sent His disciples  
out into the storm...



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

➤ Storms can result from...

## 3. DEMONS TO DESTROY or DISTRACT

Ref Matt 8:23-27

Vicious storms even for seasoned  
fisherman

Panic stations ....

Jesus was asleep ...

Q: Was it to prevent the Deliverance of  
the Gerasene demoniac ?



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

➤ Storms can result from

## 4. OTHERS AND WE ARE WITH THEM

- Storms caused by parents and children having to go through it & vice-versa
- Pastors causing storms for the church members & vice-versa
- Employer & Employees
- Government & People



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

➤ Storms can result from

## 5. NATURAL 'STORMS' & DISASTERS

because we live in a fallen sinful world

➤ Natural Disasters :

➤ Earthquakes

➤ Cyclones / Hurricanes / Typhoons

➤ Famine / Drought / Floods

➤ Wars, Destruction, Refugees & IDPs

➤ Illness & Accidents ....

➤ Economic, Occupational ...

➤ Relationships, Psychological, Emotional ...



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Why did the Centurion decide to sail ??

FIVE FACTORS :

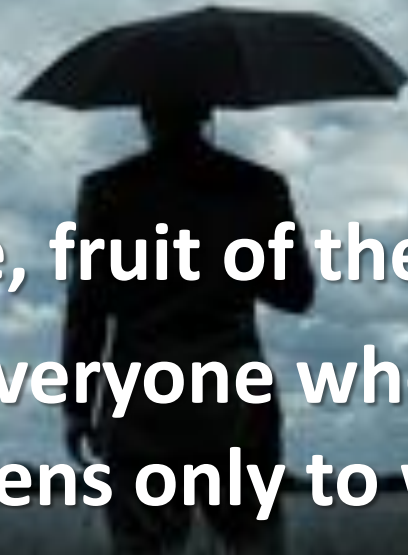
**A. IMPATIENCE** – v9 *‘much time had been lost...’*

Application of “Impatience”

- to leave school and work
- get married
- change jobs

Patience is a Godly virtue, fruit of the Spirit

Prov 21:5 (Message) “...everyone who is impatient *and* hasty hastens only to want (poverty).”



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

## B. **EXPERT ADVICE** – v11 *‘pilot & the boat owner..’*

- Both were experienced in sailing...
- Keen to leave despite warning of bad weather

### Application:

- Godly basic principles must be kept
  - Eg marriage counseling
  - sex education standards
- Experts are not right all the time
- Good to seek expert advice but need much wisdom & discernment

**“Your Halo Is Too Tight!”**

# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

## **C. DISCOMFORT.** – v12 ‘unsuitable to winter in’

- *Not comfortable*
- *Nearest town 7 miles away*

### *Application:*

- *Uncomfortable at home – go out and get married*
- *Uncomfortable in the office – we leave.*  
*NB: Do not leave until God tells you to leave...*
- *Uncomfortable in Malaysia – migrate ...*  
*NB: Do Not Migrate unless God tell you to ...*

**Quote : Christians Do Not Move From,  
He Moves To Because God Calls Him.**

# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

## ***D. MAJORITY VOTE*** – v12 ‘majority decided’

*? 273 Versus 3*

- *Taking a vote is sometimes good & right*
- *BUT the majority is not always right ...*

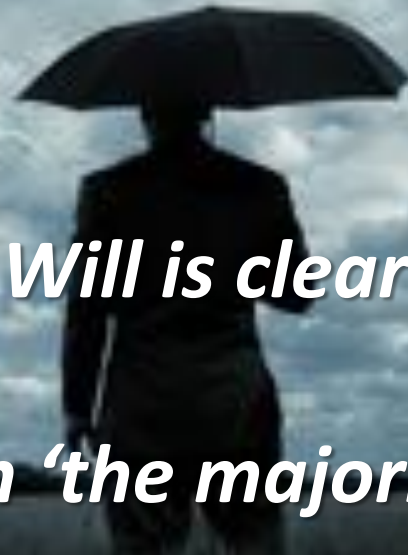
*Moses & the 12 spies ...*

*Asking for a king ...*

*Asking for Barabbas...*

- *In situations where God’s Will is clear or has spoken ...*

*“Obey God rather than ‘the majority’”*





# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

## *E. SEEMINGLY FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.*

*V13 'when a gentle south wind began to blow...'*

- *Seen as a confirmation from the 'gods'*
- *Be Careful when the conditions or 'opportunity' appear favorable ...*
- *When there are so many good reasons to quit and change job, or migrate or even divorce your spouse ...*
- *When circumstances contradict the Word of God – Choose to Obey God in spite, even despite the seemingly 'favorable circumstances'*

# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

*BEWARE OF ...*

*A. Impatience*

*B. Expert Advice*

*C. Discomfort*

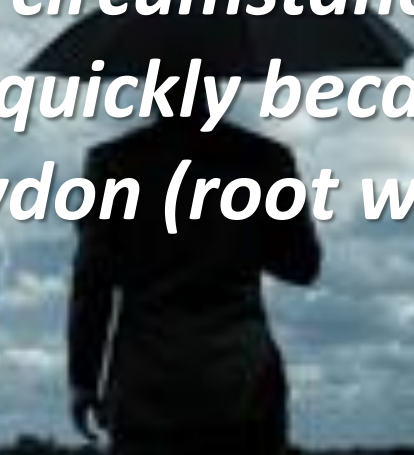
*D. Majority Vote*

*E. Seemingly Favourable circumstances ...*

- the gentle south wind quickly became a violent storm – euroclydon (root word for cyclone)*

*Yet the violent storm –*

*cannot harm the people of God.*



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

*God spared the others ...*

*because of God's children on board.*

*God is seemingly holding this world together...*

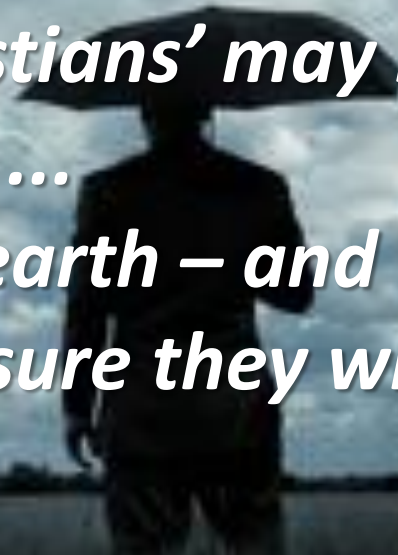
*because of His People and*

*His Plan of Salvation*

*“The “world” & ‘non-Christians’ may laugh at  
Christians & the Church ...*

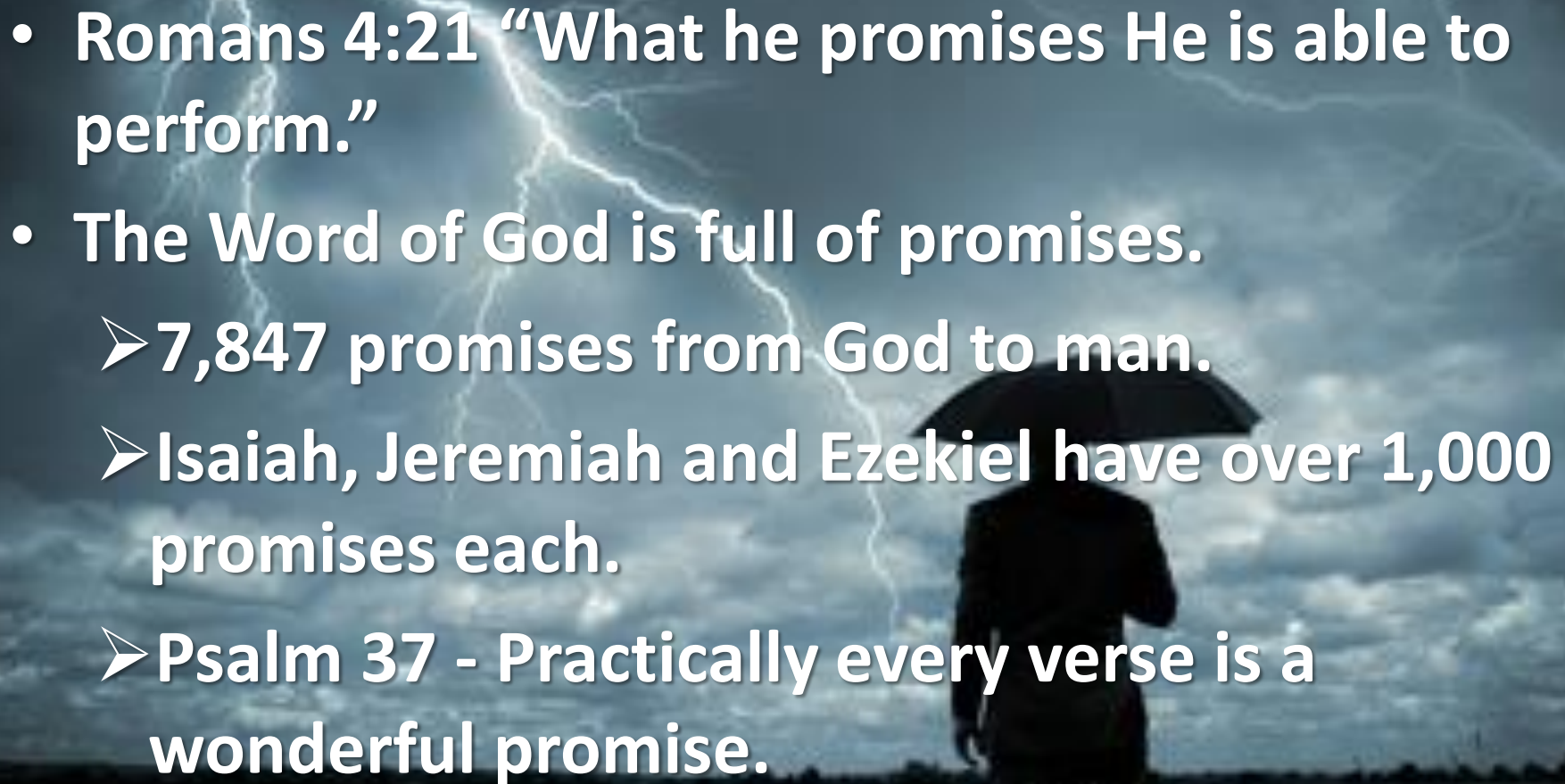
*but once we leave this earth – and*

*judgment comes, I am sure they will wish  
we were still around.”*



# 1. STORMS cannot HARM THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Our God is a PROMISE MAKING & KEEPING GOD!

- Romans 4:21 “What he promises He is able to perform.”
  - The Word of God is full of promises.
    - 7,847 promises from God to man.
    - Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel have over 1,000 promises each.
    - Psalm 37 - Practically every verse is a wonderful promise.
- 

# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

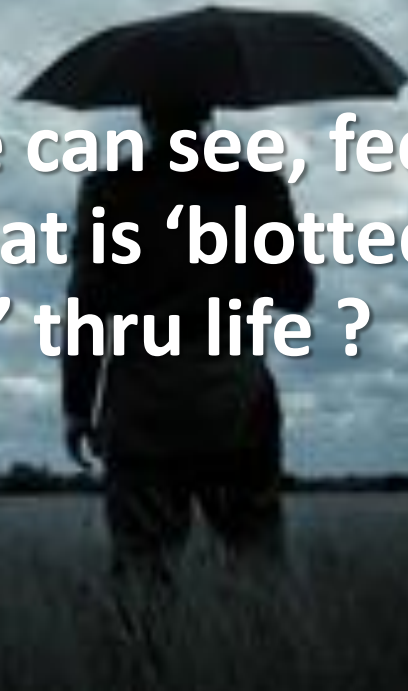
## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

Acts 27:20 When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved.

- No radar or even a compass ...
- Navigation only by the sun and stars ...

Application:

- Going thru life by what we can see, feel, touch ...
- What happens when all that is 'blotted out'
- How then do we 'navigate' thru life ?
- Where do we go ?



## **2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD**

**BUT for God's people it's different**

- **God is not hidden**

**GOD CANNOT BE HIDDEN**

- **God will guide if**
  - we will seek His Face
  - if we will listen
  - if we will obey

**Psalms 121**

**I lift up my eyes to the hills —  
where does my help come from?  
My help comes from the Lord ,  
the Maker of heaven and earth....**

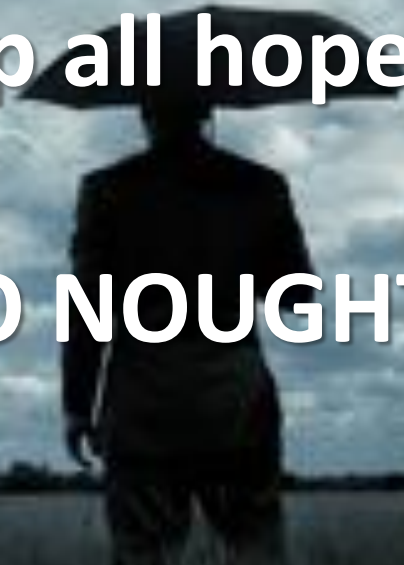


## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

Storms can cause people to...

- Drift along ...
- Discard to lighten ...
- Do all they can...
- Despair – gave up all hope ...
- Escape (v30)

**BUT ALL COMES TO NOUGHT.**



## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

In the STORMS of LIFE as well, we can ...

- do all we can, and we should
- just drift along ...
- take stock of what's important in life ...
- just moan and groan...
- escape – boats by different names  
eg alcohol, drugs, wealth, sex, entertainment

All this cannot, did not & will not save...

What saved was God's People & Promise...

Paul, Luke & Aristarchus must have looked very different from all the other passengers & crew



## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

Acts 27:21-26

*<sup>21</sup> After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.*

- Not out of pride

but just to refresh their memories

- Now they know that Paul was right & they were wrong ...

more inclined to listen ...



## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

Acts 27:21-26

***22 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed.***

- The 'good news' –  
not one of you will be lost
- The 'bad news' –  
only the ship will be destroyed



## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

Acts 27:21-26

*23 Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me*

- Paul's testimony about God
- **WHOSE I AM**  
**& WHOM I SERVE**

Q: Who 'owns' you ?

Q: Who do you 'serve' ?



## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

Acts 27:21-26

*<sup>24</sup> and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar; and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.'*

- God's Promises will be fulfilled
- Paul's presence made the difference
- Because of Paul – the rest were 'saved'
- Your Christian presence can and must make a difference
  - In your family
  - In your school, college, university
  - In your office or community

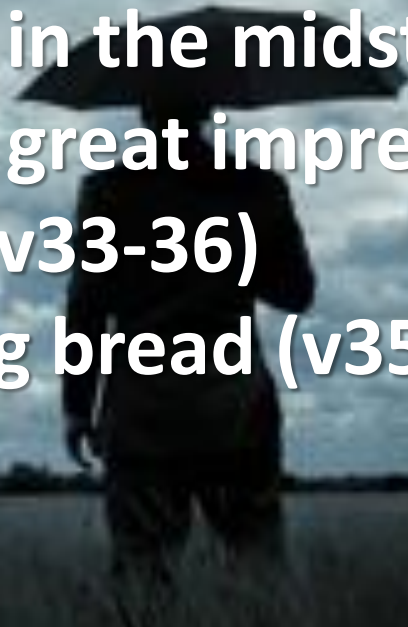
## 2. STORMS cannot HIDE THE FACE OF GOD

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*<sup>25</sup> So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me.*

*<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."*

- Paul's confidence & faith in the midst of the storm must have made a great impression...
- Also an encouragement (v33-36)
- Saying grace and breaking bread (v35)



# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

## 3. STORMS cannot HINDER THE PURPOSE OF GOD

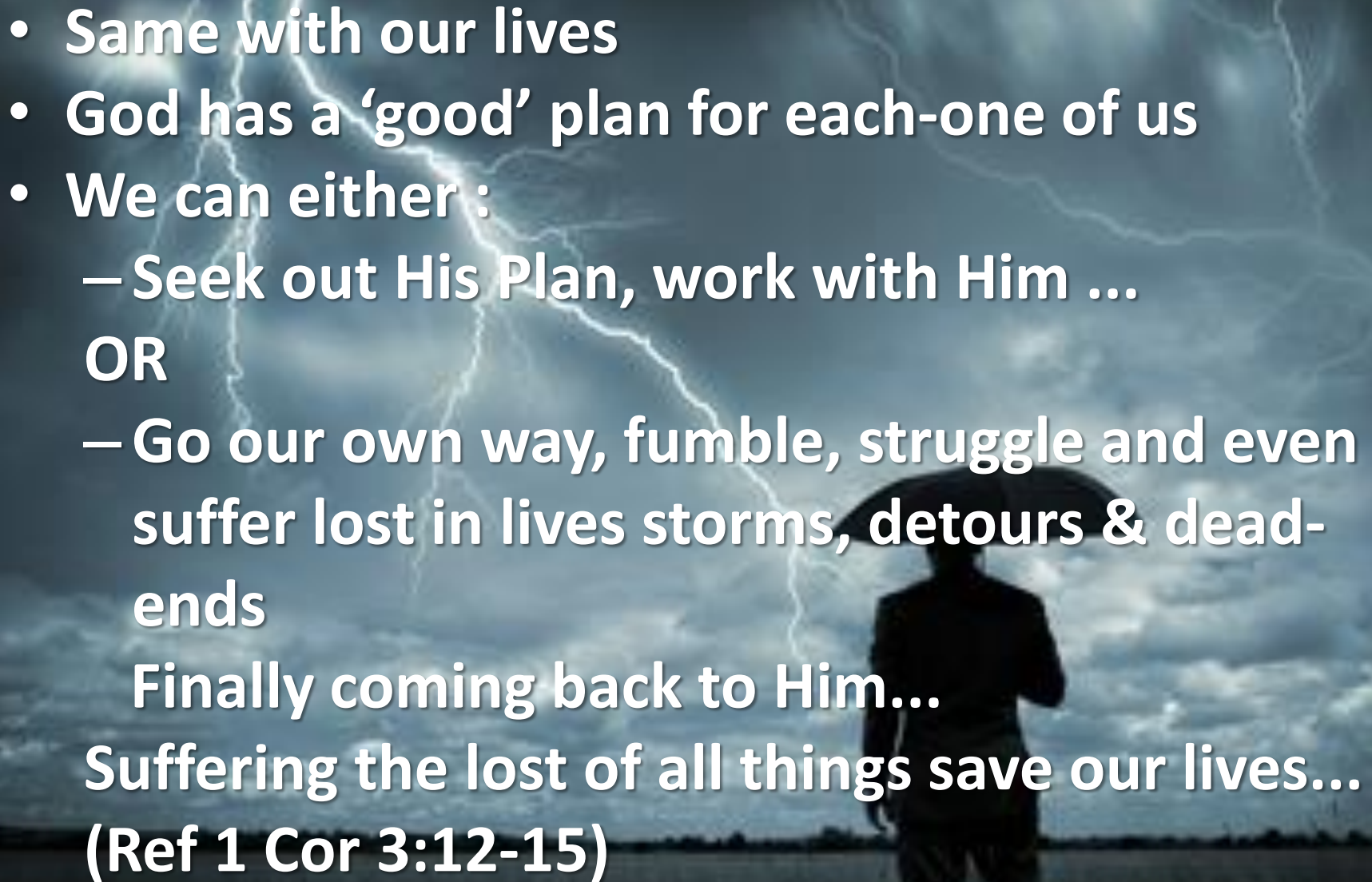
Q: Human Responsibility Vs Divine Sovereignty

Spurgeon wise answer :

“I never try to reconcile friends”

- On that boat in the storm was Paul & Luke
    - Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians & Philemon
    - Gospel of Luke and book of Acts
  - God knows His plans & it will come to pass
  - Paul/man can make detours & blunders ...  
BUT GOD’S PURPOSE WILL COME TO PASS.
- Quote: “Where God cannot rule, He overrules”

### **3. STORMS cannot HINDER THE PURPOSE OF GOD**

- Same with our lives
  - God has a 'good' plan for each-one of us
  - We can either :
    - Seek out His Plan, work with Him ...
- OR**
- Go our own way, fumble, struggle and even suffer lost in lives storms, detours & dead-ends
- Finally coming back to Him...  
Suffering the lost of all things save our lives...  
(Ref 1 Cor 3:12-15)
- 
- A silhouette of a person holding an umbrella, standing in a field under a dark, stormy sky with lightning bolts.

### 3. STORMS cannot HINDER THE PURPOSE OF GOD

- God is Sovereign & Rules...
- God's WILL will be effected in this world ...
- God is not pacing the floor in heaven fidgeting over :

➤ *Earthquake in China*

➤ *Volcano eruption in Japan*

➤ *Allah issue in our Nation*

➤ *Ebola epidemic or pandemic*

➤ *ISIS problem in the Middle East*

Ref Isaiah 6 – *the year that King Uzziah died...*





# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

**Joseph Parker ...**

***"Paul began the voyage as a prisoner...  
he ended as the 'captain'."***

**Paul "took over" the situation when it was  
obvious that nobody else knew what to do.**

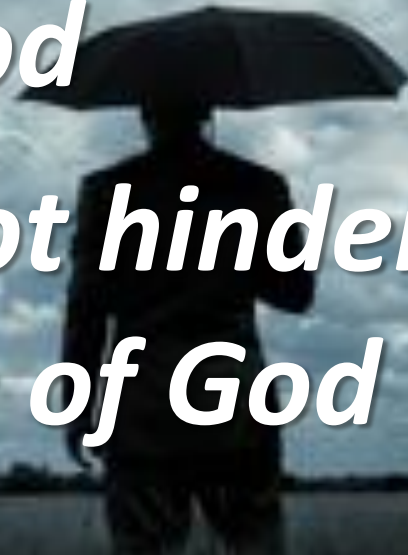
**Quote : A crisis does not make a person; a crisis  
shows what a person is made of.**

# **The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26**

*1. Storms cannot harm the people of God*

*2. Storms cannot hide the face of God*

*3. Storms cannot hinder the purpose of God*



# The Willis Family

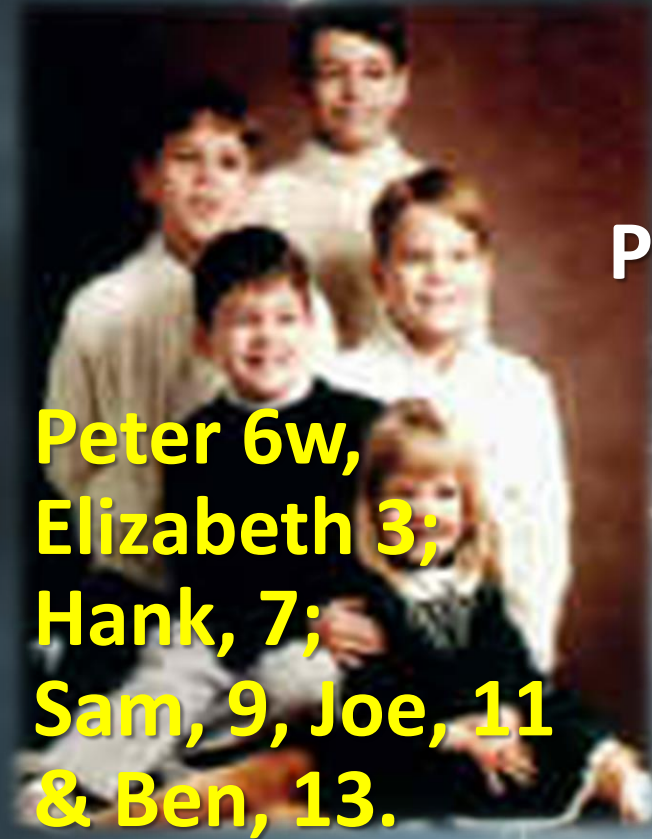
Pastor Scott Willis

*"Psalm 34 says, "I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth. Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good."*

**Peter 6w,  
Elizabeth 3;  
Hank, 7;  
Sam, 9, Joe, 11  
& Ben, 13.**

Janet and I want to praise and thank God. There is no question in our minds that God is good, and we praise Him in all things.

God is a great God.



# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

I do not know what STORMS

- you have been through...
- you are going through now ... or
- you will be facing in the coming days ...

**BUT**

**God Knows ...**

**God Cares ...**

**God's There.**

*Quote :*  
*All of us are either IN a storm...  
just coming OUT of a storm...  
or headed FOR a storm.*

# The Storms of Life Acts 27:9-26

Quote :

*Sometimes God calms the STORM  
Sometimes He lets the STORM rage  
and calms His Child.*



**You Can Tell God  
How Big Your Storm Is**

**but it's better**

**To Tell The Storm How Big Your God Is**

