



Jerusalem Detour

Paul's unfortunate decision to detour to Jerusalem before going to Rome is overcome by God at all odds. The story is told to show that "Lord" Jesus, not "Lord" Caesar, is Paul's ultimate protector, even as Jesus had promised in the Antonia Vision in Jerusalem (23:11).

Paul and God's Will

In a sense, Paul's journey to Rome is a journey back into God's will. In the real life story of the captain and his crew and the storm at sea, Paul vicariously will experience what he himself has generated for his own companions in Jerusalem. God's vision at sea, however, assures Paul of his divine date with destiny in Rome.



Luke Rejoins Paul

The third “we section” in Acts picks up right where the second “we-section” left off—after the Jerusalem detour. Luke has rejoined Paul. The sudden appearance of a “we section” immediately as Paul is on his way to Rome is Luke’s own implicit authorial affirmation that Rome always was God’s will for Paul’s life.



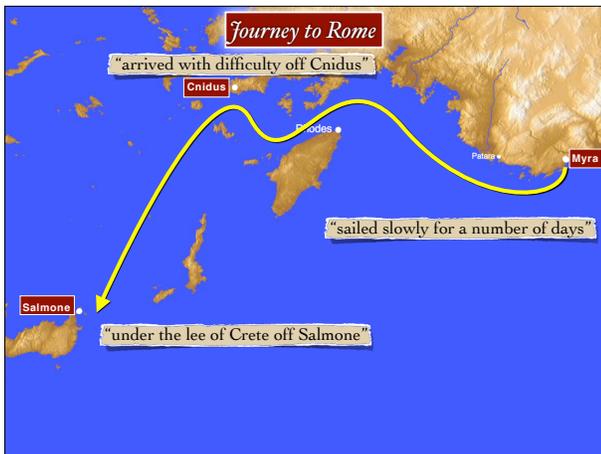


Julius's Treatment of Paul

Julius's kind treatment of Paul is noted carefully by Luke on more than one occasion as showing unusual courtesy to a prisoner. Sidon is one example. In such treatment, Luke shows that those in charge of Paul know he is innocent, just as already acknowledged repeatedly by Lysias, Festus, and Agrippa II.









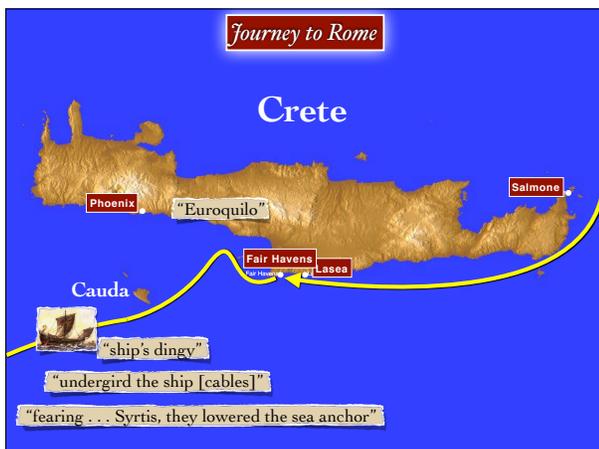
Acts 27: Voyage

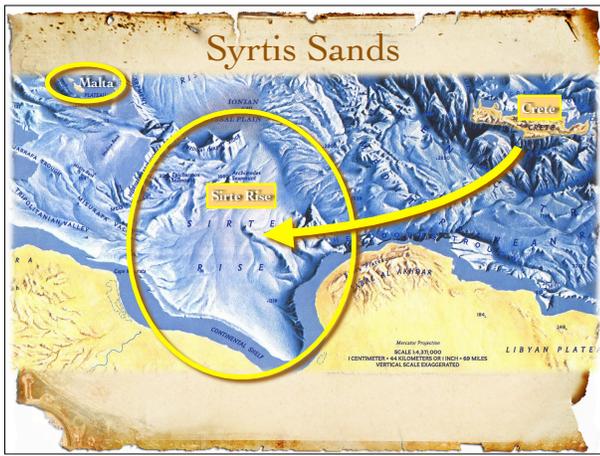
Note the many statements of difficulty: "sailed slowly for a number of days," "arrived with difficulty off Cnidus," and "the wind was against us" at Cape Salmone (27:7), which meant "sailing past it with difficulty" (27:8). The implication? "Since much time had been lost and sailing was now dangerous, because even the fast already had gone by" (27:9). The stormy winter season made Mediterranean sailing impossible. They needed a winter harbor. Fair Havens did not have the wintering facilities of Phoenix. The captain wanted to make Phoenix. Paul advised staying put. The centurion heeded the captain—a fateful decision.

The Storm at Sea

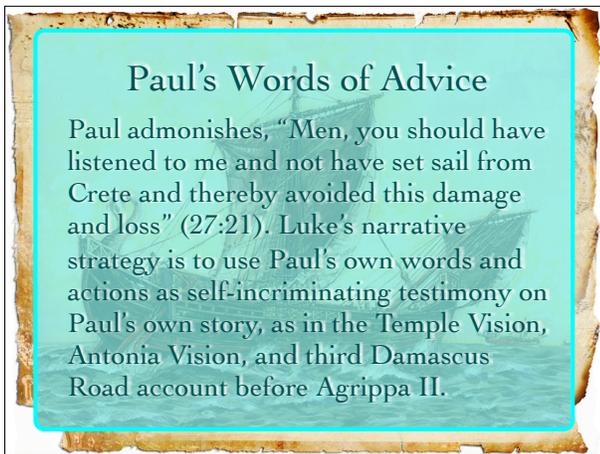
Luke develops the storm at sea as a metaphor of Paul's recent life story, particularly his fateful decision to insist on going to Jerusalem against God's will. Notice the parallel in the military captain in charge of the ship refusing advice not to push on, and sailing straight into a disastrous storm, imperiling all on board.















Paul's Sea Vision

Luke's climatic placement of Paul's last vision ties the knot on the Stephen Speech themes. Paul's visions in Acts that are life changing are to redeem a man fighting against God. This sea vision appeals to faith when all hope is lost. Not even Lord Caesar can help. Paul trusts Jesus alone to save, and encourages all others to do the same.

Paul's Protection Visions

Paul has two visions in which he is promised divine protection during the storms that swirl around him, threatening his life, and jeopardizing God's purposes for Rome. One is the Antonia Vision during the storm in Jerusalem (23:11). The other is the Sea Vision during the storm at sea (27:23-24). Both assure him he will fulfill God's commission to Rome.









