

## **Salvation through Paul**

"The soldiers were about to kill the prisoners to prevent them from swimming away, but the centurion wanted to save Paul and kept them from carrying out their plan; he commanded those who could swim to jump overboard first and get to land." (Acts 27:42-43)

### **Facing the Euroclydon**

They had to overcome the Euroclydon, a storm blowing from the northeast. The crew attempted to turn the ship into the wind to drop the anchor, but the wind and waves were too violent to do so. Efforts to avoid sudden sandbanks proved futile. In this situation, fear gripped everyone. It was a force beyond human control.

### **Approaching Land**

For fourteen days, they were tossed helplessly by the violent storm, unable to take action, driven wherever the wind and waves pushed them. Dark clouds and crashing waves prevented any clear sight, yet they sensed land was near. The sailors measured the water depth, confirming it was getting shallower. Once it reached fifteen fathoms, they lowered four anchors at the stern to prevent the ship from running aground and waited until dawn to properly assess the situation.

### **Advice to the Navigation Experts**

The sailors, realizing the ship was near land, prepared their lifeboat to escape unnoticed. Paul forbade them from doing so, warning that in such poor visibility, a small boat could be smashed against rocks by the waves. He also reminded them that, according to God's promise, no one's life would be lost, so there was no need for reckless actions. The centurion and the soldiers listened and cut the lifeboat's ropes. Paul's prudence protected not only the travelers but also the sailors' lives.

### **Leaving the Outcome in the Lord's Hands**

As dawn approached, Paul prepared everyone for landing. After fourteen days of hunger, he encouraged them to eat, explaining that the food would strengthen them for salvation. He took the first portion, gave thanks to God, and everyone followed his example. All 276 on board ate their fill, and the remaining grain was thrown into the sea. Paul's act of blessing and sharing the food is reminiscent of the Lord's Supper, demonstrating Christ's resurrecting power at work even in this life-threatening situation. The people on the ship were entrusted to Paul by God, and he was tasked with bringing them to safety. Likewise, God entrusts people to us.

### **Saving Life Is God's Will**

At daybreak, they checked whether they could enter the harbor. They cut the anchor ropes, freed the rudder, and steered toward the harbor as best as possible. Reaching the meeting of two seas, the ship could no longer advance and began breaking apart, giving the people the chance to jump into the water and swim to land. The soldiers wanted to kill the prisoners to avoid responsibility, but the centurion, desiring Paul's life, prevented them. Everyone swam or clung to debris and reached land safely.

**Reflection**

Paul and his companions survived the storm and violent waves. This was God's plan, foreseen and certain. The centurion, who had accompanied Paul from Jerusalem and observed all his actions, grew favorably toward him. In saving Paul, others' lives were saved as well. Physical salvation is important, but spiritual salvation is even more crucial. God commands us to save others. Even amid the storms and waves of life, the work of salvation must continue.