

The Sunday-School.

SECOND QUARTER,  
LESSON X.—June 7.

PAUL'S VOYAGE AND SHIPWRECK.

ACTS 27: 33-44.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.*—Psa. 107: 28.

THE LESSON includes Acts 27, the story of the voyage and shipwreck.

LEARN BY HEART.—Psa. 46: 1-3; Psa. 107: 28-31.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

1. Journal of Paul's Voyage.

	LEWIN. A.D. 60.	RAMSAY. A.D. 59.
Left Cesarea, . . . . .	Aug. 21.	Aug. 17.
Sidon, . . . . .	Aug. 22.	Aug. 18.
Myra, . . . . .	Sept. 4.	Sept. 1.
Left Myra, . . . . .	Sept. 4.	Sept. 1.
Cnidus, . . . . .	Sept. 19.	Sept. 25.
Fast day, . . . . .	Sept. 23.	Oct. 5.
Ar. Fair Havens, Sept. 26.		Sept. 25.
Left Fair Havens, Oct. 18		Oct. 5 and 10.
The storm, . . . . .	Oct. 19 to Nov. 1.	
The shipwreck, . . . . .	Nov. 1.	Early in Nov.

2. Place in the History.—On the voyage to Rome.

THE VOYAGE FROM CESAREA TO CRETE.—Vss. 1-13. The ship in which they first embarked belonged to Adramyttium, a seaport of Mysia on the western coast of Asia Minor. *The Ship's Company.* Paul's party consisted of himself, Luke, and Aristarchus. There were other prisoners beside Paul. They were under the charge of a centurion named Julius. *A Change of Ships.* At Adramyttium the passengers for Rome changed vessels and embarked in an Alexandrian vessel loaded with wheat. The Alexandrian ship was very large for those times, and had on board two hundred and seventy-six persons, besides the freight. After they had entered the new ship, the voyage was slow, because the prevailing winds were against them. They reached Fairhavens, on the south of Crete, about the 25th of September. The dangerous season for navigation lasted from September 14 to November 14. At Fairhavens Paul advised not to go on until spring. But the weather appearing favorable, it was decided to continue the voyage and set sail for the more commodious port of Phenice in Crete.

THE LONG-CONTINUED HURRICANE. PAUL'S CONDUCT IN A STORM.—Vss. 14-26. *The Typhoon or Levanter.* The ship had sailed but a short time along the south of Crete, when there struck them a tempestuous wind, like a whirlwind or cyclone, called Euro-lydon, an east wind raising great waves. This wind "caught" the ship and made her unmanageable.

Efforts to Save the Ship. 1. They undergirded the ship by passing ropes

or chains around the vessel, on account of the strain of the mast with its great sail. The vessel was probably springing a leak.

2. They lowered the gear, the upper fair weather sails, reefing the main sail into a storm sail.

3. They lightened the ship, beginning to throw some of the freight overboard.

4. They cast into the sea "the tackling," its fittings and equipment, anything moveable lying on the deck upon which the passengers could lay their hands.

*Paul's Vision of Cheer.* The storm had continued nearly two weeks without sight of sun or stars, which, in those days, before the invention of the compass, were the only guides to sailors who were out of sight of land. They were almost in despair during the latter part of this long struggle for life. Then one morning Paul, standing among the sailors and soldiers and passengers, told them of a message of cheer God's angel had brought to him in the night. To their own damage they had refused to listen to Paul's advice two weeks before, and now he gave them another message. God had said to him, "Fear not." Paul's life must be preserved, and God had given him the lives of all on the ship. Doubtless Paul prayed earnestly for the safety of those who were in the ship with him. The good man is never selfish in his prayers. How one godly man saves many ungodly men. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom. Potiphar and the Egyptian jailer were blessed for Joseph's sake.

THE SHIPWRECK AND RESCUE. PAUL'S CONDUCT IN THE WRECK.—Vss. 27-44. At the end of fourteen days the ship drifted near to land. They anchored and longed for the dawn. Seeing their danger the sailors tried to escape in the small boat, under pretense of laying out anchors from the foreship. Paul appealed to the centurion to stop this selfish plan, for otherwise all but the sailors would be lost. Therefore the soldiers cut the ropes which held the boat and let it drift away.

*Paul and the Passengers.* While the day was coming on, the tedious time when nothing could be done but wait for the dawn, Paul besought them all to take meat. Food. *The fourteenth day. . . . continued fasting.* The language does not imply a fourteenth day of continuous fasting, but fourteen successive nights of anxious watching for the dawn, all spent in restless, hungry expectation of what the day might reveal. *Having taken nothing.* No regular food or meals. They had only such scraps of food as they could pick up. *For your health,* the preservation of physical life. *Not a hair fall from the head of any of you.* This was the proverb denoting exemption from the slightest harm. *He took bread, and gave thanks to God,* as every pious Jew and Christian was accustomed to do. *Then were they all of good cheer.* From two sources: (1) The hearty cheerfulness of the apostle had communicated itself to his companions. (2) The food strengthened them. *Two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.* Perhaps the muster roll was called

by the captain before abandoning the ship. *They lightened the ship,* for the third time. The object was to enable them to approach nearer the shore. *The wheat.* The main cargo was retained as long as possible. *They knew not the land.* This part of it was out of their regular course. *Discovered a certain creek with a shore.* A sandy beach, upon which they could run the ship. *When they had taken up,* loosed the anchors, they cut the cables and committed not themselves, but the anchors, i.e., left the anchors in the sea. *And loosed the rudder bands.* Ancient ships were steered by two large paddles, one on each quarter. These had been secured by lashings, when drifting, or at the time of anchoring. These lashings were cut so that the paddles could be used for steering. *Mainsail.* Rather "foresail," as in R.V. *A place where two seas met.* These words may refer to the channel, not more than a hundred yards breadth, which separates the small island Salmonetta from Malta. *The forepart stuck fast.* The stern was exposed to the force of the waves. *The soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners.* The Roman soldiers were answerable for the prisoners. *But the centurion, willing, wishing to save Paul,* who had done so much for them. *And the rest (those who could not swim), some on boards.* The planks that were in use in the ship for various purposes. *Broken pieces of the ship,* which the waves had scattered over the water.

SOME TEACHINGS OF PAUL ILLUSTRATED.—*First. God's guiding providence* is shown. Under safe protection, without expense, with special opportunities of service which would aid his cause, Paul is carried to Rome by the Romans themselves. *Second. God and Man Working Together.* An example of free-will and divine purpose.

*Third. God's Presence and Help in Trouble.* See his list of troubles and another shipwreck in 2 Cor. 11: 23-28; and his joy and peace, Phil. 4: 4-7; Eph. 5: 19, 20; 2 Cor. 7: 4. *Fourth. Comfort, in Order to Comfort Others (2 Cor. 1: 4).* God's vision came to Paul, but Paul used it to comfort and cheer the whole ship's company.

*Fifth. Christianity cares for the body as well as for the soul.* It helps the spiritual life by its thoughtfulness for the natural life. The foot of the ladder of life is on the earth, though the top reaches to heaven.

*Sixth. Godliness tends to give wisdom and common sense.* God's spirit of wisdom dwells in and guides his true children.

ILLUSTRATIVE THOUGHTS.—1. The voyage of life. Most of the voyage may be in peaceful waters. But storms and dangers are sure to come. But in them we may have visits from God's angels. 2. The ship is safe in the water, so long as the water is not in the ship. The Christian is safe in the world so long as the world is not in the Christian.



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