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"THE ANGEL, AND GOD'S MESSAGE OF DELIVERANCE TO PAUL"

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS
NUMBER 138
ACTS 27:22-24

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ACTS 27:22-24 "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

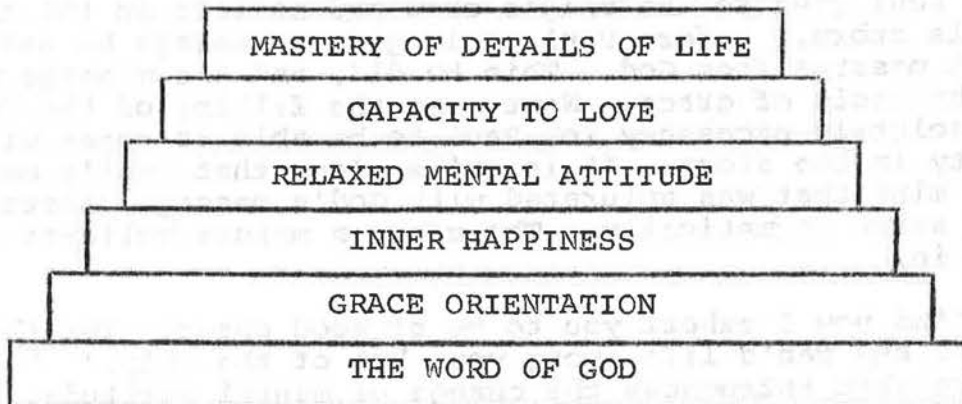
I like to call this "Paul, The Man For The Crisis". Paul and his companions were born again men and these others were not. Paul and his companions knew Bible doctrine and lived by it. This had come to be the pattern of their lives and they lived every day under divine direction. Paul had the written word and years before he had been taught in Arabia by a teaching angel. In verse 23 we will meet this teaching angel again and will see the source of Paul's authority. Jesus Christ also spoke directly to Paul on a number of occasions and communicated doctrine to him. Now today it is quite different. You don't need a teaching angel or a direct word from Christ, because all we will ever need is found in the Word of God. Every need for your life has been met by the instruction in the Bible. There has never been a human problem and will never be a human problem which has not been adequately covered by instruction in the Word of God. God The Holy Spirit, even in the midst of this storm, was in control of Paul's life and could take Bible truth and use it in giving accurate guidance to Paul. So Paul had a vast storehouse of doctrinal truth as a source of reference and could call on it at any time. He was the only man on that ship who had an adequate storehouse of doctrinal truth adequate for the situation. It made it possible for Paul to clearly understand what the teaching angel was trying to say to him in the storm. In the storm he was able to take the norms and standards in his conscience and use them as a basis for understanding the message of the angel. Paul's knowledge of doctrine also taught him how to think according to divine viewpoint. In 2 Cor. 10:5-6 we read how Paul says that every thought of his was brought unto captivity for Christ. This was the basis for the message Paul gave to the ship's crew and sailors in the midst of that terrible storm. Before Paul could give a message he had to receive that message from God. This he did, and the message was given to him on the basis of grace. Next came the filling of the Spirit for this was absolutely necessary for Paul to be able to speak with power and authority in the storm. It is quite clear that Paul's message came from a mind that was saturated with God's message, therefore he was able to speak dogmatically. Therefore a mature believer was the man for the crisis.

Acts 27:22 "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship." "Now" is the word here that introduces the change of mental attitude. I exhort is from "paraineo" and is a verb of authority. It is a command verb and possibly should be translated "I advise" or "I urge". So you see how important it was to have someone speak with authority when there was a despondent captain and crew and a storm that was about to destroy them. "Be of good cheer" is a present, active, infinite of "euthumeo", but it doesn't mean to be of good cheer. It means "to have courage".

Possibly the best translation here is "Get your nerves back for you are going to need them". "There shall be no loss of life" is a future, active, indicative and is a dogmatic statement. Quite often in Greek the future tense is used for a dogmatic statement. When the ten commandments were translated into Greek they were put into the future tense to emphasize their dogmatic demands. Many people don't like dogmatic statements, but the Word of God is always dogmatic. So here Paul speaks dogmatically that there will be no loss of life. The word for loss is "apoballo" and it means to cast away. And the word for life is "Psuche" and this is the word for soul. In other words, no souls are going to leave the bodies. No one is going to die in that storm. So any way you take it this is a dogmatic statement.

Let us get a correct translation of this verse--"And now I advise you to have absolute courage, for there will be no casting away of souls, no one among you will die, only the ship will be lost." That captain sailed out into the sea against the advice of Paul, and now the captain realized that his decision is going to cost him his ship.

Acts 27:23 "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve," Here is Paul's explanation for his authority. "There stood by me" is from "paristemi" and it is a technical word. In 2 Timothy 4:17 Paul used the same word when he said "The Lord stood by me". Here the teaching angel communicated this information to Paul. In Galatians 1:17 Paul referred to this teaching angel. So this angel was familiar to Paul, just like Gabriel showed up when Daniel was in a bind and needed information. Paul knew this angelic voice quite well, and when that angel spoke Paul knew immediately who he was. Paul had to have a source of information in order to have such dogmatism in the midst of that storm. Your source of information and mine must be the Word of God stored up in our minds. When the crisis comes you will either be ready or you will not be ready. It all depends on how much study you have done prior to the crisis. Just being in a crisis is not important. But the objective of the Christian life is the intake of Bible truth daily which eventually results in what we call THE EDIFICATION COMPLEX.



Man is the image of God by physical birth but man can only be the glory of God by the new birth and the knowledge of Bible truth. There is absolutely no other way. And we must not be satisfied with some cheap

substitute for the Word of God. If you accept emotion or some ecstatic experience like speaking in tongues or some other wierd activity instead of knowledge of the Word of God you cannot expect to grow and develop into strong characters. One interesting point to remember is this: the ship had reached that most dangerous point in the entire journey. All hope of saving the ship or saving their lives was gone, as we read back in verse 20. Now God knew about this millions of years ago and he designed for that teaching angel to appear on the scene just at the right moment. God's plan called for the angel to visit a prepared man. Paul was the man for the crisis. Earlier Paul spoke dogmatically and his message was bitterly resented and rejected. But everything was fine then and there was no storm. But now everything was different and Paul's dogmatic message was like music to their ears. The storm made all the difference. Earlier those sailors were completely negative to the message from Paul. But the storm had changed all that, and the sailors were now ready to listen. If you are positive toward doctrine then you don't resent dogmatism. If you are negative toward doctrine then you bitterly resent dogmatism. So Paul advised them to shape up mentally so they could survive. This is an aorist, active, indicative of "paristemi". It is as emphatic as a statement can be. Please notice in passing that this Angel is not Jesus Christ. In Old Testament times Jesus did appear quite often as an angel. But once Christ had been born in Bethlehem, he never again appeared as an angel, but always appeared as Jesus Christ. This is the way he appeared to Paul on the Damascus Road, not as an angel but in his physical presence, a light brighter than the noonday sun. "The Angel of God" is Paul's teaching angel of Galatians 1:17. Daniel had a similar experience with Gabriel. All that Paul needed was the exact plan of God for that ship and that crew and the teaching angel provided that missing link in Paul's information. Once Paul received divine information he took charge dogmatically. Please note this point: Paul learned God's plan before he started his speech. It is easy to spout off and not know God's plan. Many people today in our very sick and misled world are speaking without authority. This is both true in the pulpit and out of it. You cannot teach the plan of God unless you know the Word of God. The plan is available in writing, in the book we call The Bible. Paul will issue commands in verses 31 and 33 and 42 and 43. In verse 31 he tells them "The sailors must stay in the ship". In verse 33 he tells them that they must eat so they will have strength to combat the storm. In verse 42 he will remind them that no one can be permitted to escape and in verse 43 he will stop them from their escape. Paul was in command all the way through. As a result of Paul's dogmatism, all 276 were delivered. Now Paul also had a personal testimony and he gave it at this point. He wanted them to know that he was a follower of Christ. So he said "Whose I am". This is a present, active, indicative of "eimi". It means "I belong to Christ and I will ever keep on belonging to him". "Whom I serve" is a present, active, indicative of "latreuo" and it means to render spiritual service. So Paul covered much ground in a very short testimony. He belonged to Christ, but he didn't stop there. He moved on into phase two, and that was the phase of service. In between those two short statements were many years of preparation. Now what is the lesson here? Just this--don't grab up a new believer and put him up to give a testimony before he knows anything. A new convert is not able to "Latreuo". He needs to learn something first, then he can serve. "Whose I am" was Paul's Damascus road experience.

"Whom I serve" was many years later, after three years of teaching in Arabia and many silent years back in Tarsus. Then he was ready for missionary service. Paul was qualified to talk to an angel and get information.

Acts 27:24 "Saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." Fear not is from "Phobeo me". It is a present, middle imperative and means "Stop being frightened Paul. There is no sense in your being afraid". The middle voice means that Paul was going to be benefited by not being afraid and the imperative means, "You better face it, Paul. I'm your teacher and you better obey me. I've got the right to be your teacher so you listen to me. Stop being frightened!" You see when you are frightened you can't think and you can't exercise your faith. "Thou must" should be translated "It is necessary for you to be brought before Caesar". To be brought before is our old friend "Paristemi". He was going to stand up before Caesar, who at that time happened to be Nero.

Not only was this storm an opportunity for God to deliver Paul and the whole crew from the storm, but it was God's opportunity to train Paul to be prepared for the storm that would break upon him when once he stood before Caesar. God also was going to give Paul a magnificent present. Not only was Paul going to be spared personally, but God was going to give Paul the 275 others who were with him on the ship. Down in verse 37 we read that number. So in this incident Paul really was a fulfillment of the words of Jesus, "Ye are the salt of the earth and the light of the world".