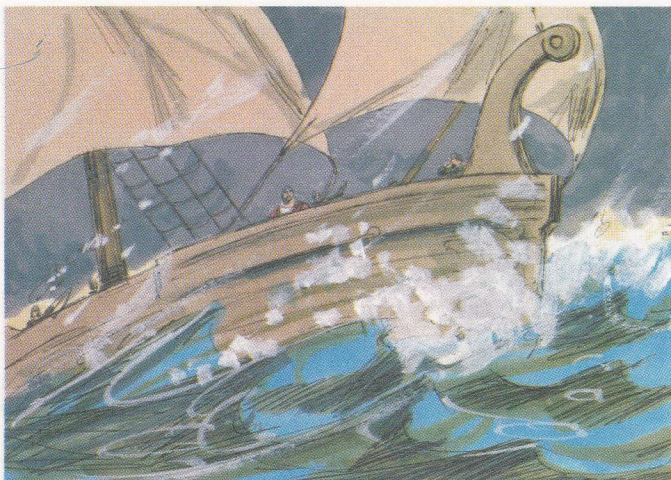


Shipwreck on Malta



1 The ship carrying Paul and the other prisoners to Italy was caught in a terrible storm.



2 About midnight on the fourteenth day, the sailors sensed that land was nearby. When they first measured the water, it was a hundred and twenty feet deep.



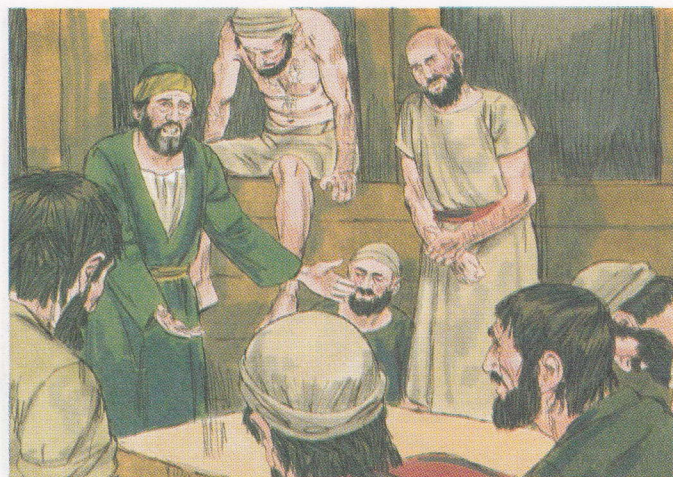
3 A short time later they measured it again. Now it was just ninety feet deep. They were afraid they would be thrown against rocks, so they dropped four anchors and prayed.



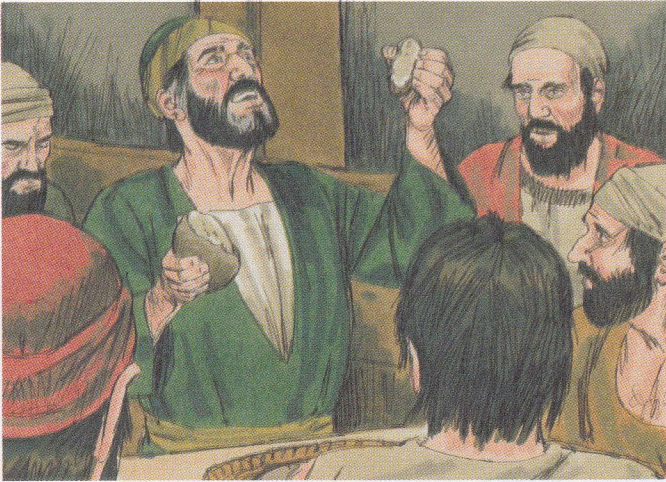
4 Some of the sailors attempted to escape from the ship. They pretended they were going to lower some anchors. But in fact they were trying to lower the lifeboat.



5 Paul said to the Roman centurion, "Unless these men stay with the ship, you cannot be saved!" So the soldiers cut the ropes that held the lifeboat and let it fall away.



6 Just before dawn Paul urged them all to eat. "You have gone without food for fourteen days. I urge you now to eat. You need the strength! Not one of you will be harmed."



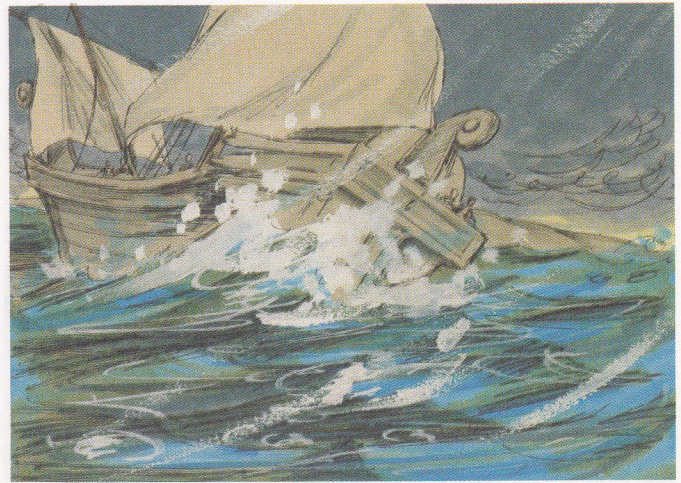
7 After he said this, he took some bread and gave thanks to God in front of them all. Then he broke it and began to eat. They were all encouraged and ate some food themselves.



8 When daylight came, they could not recognize the land, but they saw a bay with a sandy beach. They decided to run the ship aground on the beach if they could.



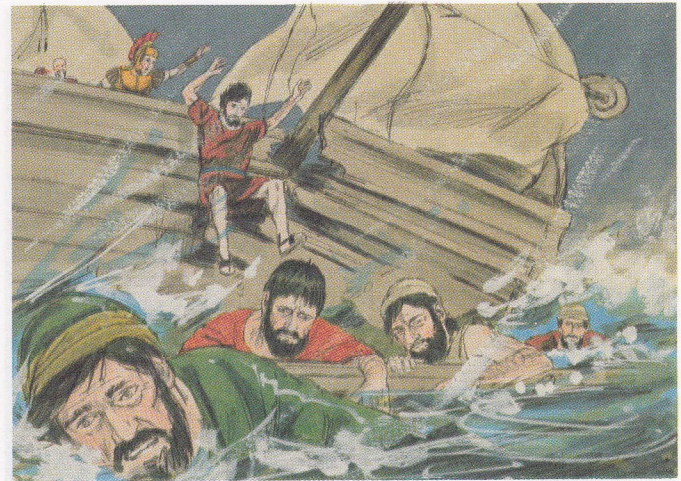
9 They cut loose the anchors and untied the ropes that held the rudders. Then they raised the foresail to the wind and headed for the beach.



10 But the ship struck a sandbar and ran aground. The bow was stuck and would not move, and the stern was being broken to pieces by the pounding of the waves.



11 The soldiers intended to kill the prisoners to prevent any of them from escaping. But the centurion wanted to spare Paul's life and kept them from carrying out their plan.



12 He ordered, "If you can swim, swim for shore now! If you cannot swim, hold to boards or pieces of the ship!" In this way everyone was able to get to the shore safely.