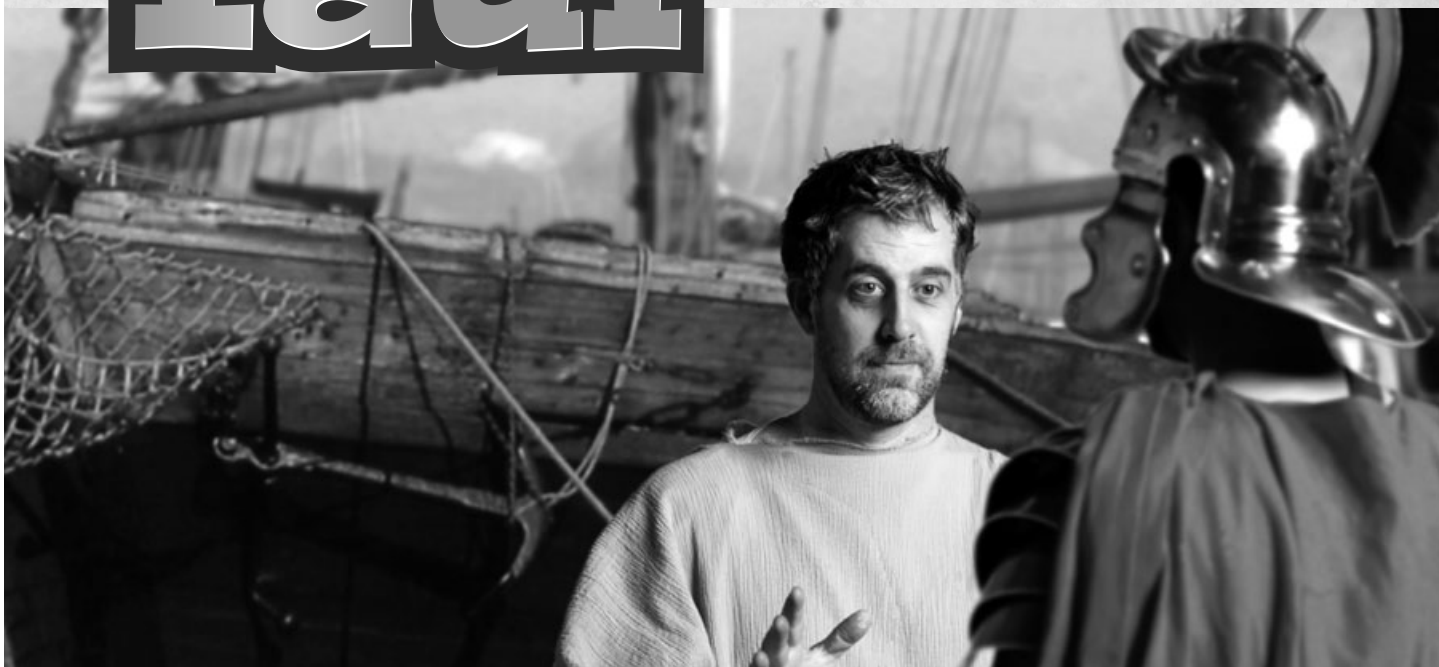


# Paul



Track 45

## Stays Strong at Sea



“All aboard!” called the captain.

Paul and the other prisoners climbed onto the ship. Once more, Paul was a prisoner for preaching about Jesus. Now he must go to Rome and stand before Caesar, the emperor.

But Paul sensed danger ahead. “Sirs,” he said to the men in charge. “Winter weather is

coming. If we travel now, we will lose our ship and even our lives!”

“I like you Paul,” said Julius, the kind Roman officer. “But both the captain and the ship’s owner think we can make it. I’ll listen to them.”

The captain shouted to his crew. “Pull up the anchors, men! Let’s set sail!”



At first, the ship glided along, close to the shore. But then, a wind like a hurricane snatched the ship and whirled it out to sea!

“Prepare the ship!” yelled the captain. “We’re riding into the worst storm of our lives!”

The sailors scurried across the deck. They wrapped strong ropes around the bottom of the ship to keep the wood from breaking apart. They lowered the sails to slow the ship down.

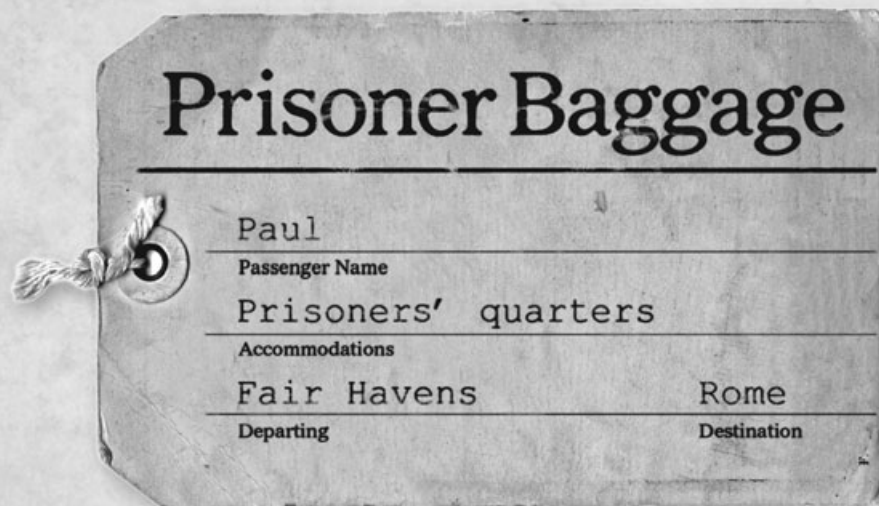
But day and night the boat rocked like a wild circus ride. Giant waves smashed over the deck.

“We’re sinking fast!” screamed the passengers.

“1-2-3-HEAVE!” The sailors picked up heavy boxes and tools and threw them into the sea.

But the angry winds kept blasting. The people looked up at the dark, cloudy sky. For many days they could not see the sun or even one single star at night.

“We’re going to DIE!” cried the sailors, the soldiers, the prisoners and the other passengers on board. There were 276 people in all!



They threw down four anchors to hold the ship in place until morning when they could see.

“I hope we don’t hit the rocks!” they worried.

Paul stood up before the crowd.

“Men, you should have listened when I told you not to set sail.”

“But cheer up!” said Paul. “None of us will die – we will only lose our ship. Last night, an angel of my God told me not to be afraid. God wants me to tell the good news of Jesus in Rome.<sup>1</sup> And He will keep all of you who are sailing with me safe too.”

On the 14<sup>th</sup> night of the storm, the sailors heard waves crashing on rocks.

“Land!” cried the sailors.

Just before sunrise, Paul spoke to the crew and the others on the ship. “Please eat. You haven’t had a good meal in days! And stop worrying – God will keep us safe, just as He said.”

Then Paul held up bread and gave thanks to God. Everyone felt better and sat down to eat with Paul.

At daylight, they sailed for the beach. But on the way, the boat got stuck on a sandbank and started to split apart.

“Jump ship!” shouted Julius, the Roman officer.



Soon everybody was splashing into the water. Some swam. Some floated on planks. But, in the end, each and every one of the 276 passengers reached the shore safely!

Paul flopped onto the sandy beach. Once more, God had made him strong during a hard and scary time. And once more, God had kept His word. Paul and all those sailing with him were safe, just as God promised.

<sup>1</sup>See Acts 23:11 and 28:30-31.

### Learn from Paul's biography:

- God always keeps His word – no matter how bad things seem.
- Like Paul, you can be strong in the Lord during hard times.

# Parent Ideas

## Paul Stays Strong at Sea

Scripture: Acts 27

### KEY LEARNING POINTS

- God always keeps His word – no matter how bad things seem.
- Like Paul, you can be strong in the Lord during hard times.

#### 1. Read-together activity

Tell your child to use his imagination to build a ship somewhere in your house. He could make it out of pillows, blocks, couches or chairs. Sit in this ship together while you listen to the biography on the CD (Track 45). The sound effects added to this track are especially helpful in bringing the biography to life. Before you listen, ask your child to pay attention to the differences between how Paul acted and how the other people on the ship acted.

#### 2. Discussion activity

Draw a large “T” on a sheet of paper. In the space to the left of the T, write the heading “People on the Ship.” In the space to the right of the T, write the heading “Paul.” Ask your child to write words or phrases that describe the ship passengers (captain, sailors, soldiers, etc.) in the left column. She may list items like *didn’t listen to Paul, worried, wouldn’t eat, didn’t trust God*. Ask your child to write words or phrases in the right column that describe Paul (e.g., *calm, leader, listened to God, encouraged others, etc.*).

Ask your child the following questions:

- If you were on the ship, who would you have been most like – Paul or the other passengers? Why?
- What made Paul so strong? Why wasn’t he afraid? (*God helped Paul to be strong. Paul didn’t fear because he believed God would keep His Word.*)
- Why do you think Paul believed God’s Word?
- Why should you believe God’s Word?

#### 3. Application activity

Ask your child to tell you about the worst weather he has ever experienced. Where was he? What kind of weather was it? How did he feel?

Explain that sometimes we face other kinds of “storms.” These are not weather storms, but times when we feel afraid or sad or too tired or weak to keep going. Ask your child when he has felt like this. Give him a few examples if necessary (e.g., when we moved to a new place, when grandma died, when Dad lost his job, etc.).

# Parent Ideas

## Paul Stays Strong at Sea

Scripture: Acts 27

Then each of you will make “storm survival kits” out of shoe boxes or laundry detergent boxes. Cover the boxes with wrapping paper or colored paper and stickers. Inside the boxes put note cards of Scripture verses to remember in hard times (e.g., Sparks handbook verses, like Psalm 23; 1 Peter 5:7; Deuteronomy 31:8, 2 Corinthians 12:9, etc.). Include other items that will comfort you, such as a favorite non-perishable snack, photograph, praise CD, journal, card from a loved one, etc. When you or your child face a hard time, bring out the boxes and remember God’s Word.

#### 4. Application activity

Simulate a storm with two empty 2-liter soda bottles. First, remove caps and all labeling from the bottles. Fill one of the bottles about 2/3 full of water. Attach the openings of the bottles together with a tornado tube connector (available from toy stores or science stores). You could also tape the openings securely together with a flat washer between them. Use electrical tape and a washer with a 3/8” (9.5 mm) hole in the center.

Stand the two bottles on a table with the filled bottle on top. Twirl the bottles a few times. As the top bottle drains, you will see a “hurricane” forming in the bottles. For effect, add a few drops of food coloring, small shells and plastic confetti fish to the water in advance.

Use this visual to start a discussion about storms, as explained in the first application activity. In the storms of life, encourage your child to find comfort in God’s promises in Scripture.

