

# Acts 27:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.

## Analysis

**When it was determined that we should sail into Italy**—Luke's "we" marks his personal presence on Paul's journey to Rome. The Greek ekrithē (ἐκρίθη, "it was determined") indicates official Roman decision, yet reveals divine sovereignty directing Paul's long-anticipated Roman ministry. **They delivered Paul and certain other prisoners unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.** The title speira Sebastē (σπείρα Σεβαστή, "Augustan cohort") was an elite imperial unit. Julius's later kindness to Paul (vv. 3, 43) suggests God providentially placed a sympathetic officer in charge.

Paul's prisoner status fulfilled Christ's prophecy: "thou must bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23:11). What appeared to be defeat—chains, trial, custody—actually advanced gospel purposes. Reformed theology emphasizes God's sovereignty over human affairs: Roman imperial machinery unknowingly served divine ends, transporting the gospel's greatest missionary to empire's heart at state expense. Paul's arrival in Rome would fulfill his long-cherished desire (Romans 1:10-15, 15:22-29), though not as envisioned.

## Historical Context

This voyage began around AD 59 from Caesarea after Paul's two-year imprisonment (Acts 24:27). The "Augustan cohort" may have been an auxiliary unit tasked with official communications and prisoner transport. Sea travel dominated

Mediterranean commerce and military movement. Autumn sailing (this departed late in the season, v. 9) was notoriously dangerous—ancient ships lacked compasses, relied on coastal navigation, and feared winter storms.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does Paul's arrival in Rome as a prisoner rather than a free missionary challenge your expectations of how God answers prayers?
2. What does God's use of Roman imperial structures to advance the gospel teach about His sovereignty over earthly powers?

## Interlinear Text

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Ἐντίπατον τοῦ ἀποπλεῖν ἡμᾶς εἰς τὴν  
when And it was determined G3588 should sail that we into G3588  
G5613 G1161 G2919 G636 G2248 G1519

Ἐπειδή παρεδίδοντο τόν τε Παῦλον καί τινας ἔτερους  
Italy they delivered G3588 G5037 Paul and certain other  
G2482 G3860 G3972 G2532 G5100 G2087

δεσμώτας ἐκατοντάρχη ὄνόματι Ἰουλίων σπείρης  
prisoners a centurion unto one named Julius band  
G1202 G1543 G3686 G2457 G4686

Σεβαστῆς  
of Augustus  
G4575

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 25:25** (Parallel theme): But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.

**Acts 25:12** (Parallel theme): Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go.

**Acts 10:1** (Parallel theme): There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

**Acts 27:11** (References Paul): Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul.

**Acts 18:2** (Parallel theme): And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them.

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