

Acts 27:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.

Analysis

When the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind—The Greek ἀντοφθαλμεῖν (antophthalmein, 'face into') suggests the ship couldn't turn its bow into the wind, the safest storm position. **We let her drive** (ἐπιδόντες ἐφερόμεθα, epidontes epherometha)—'giving way, we were carried along.' Human control surrendered to nature's violence. Luke shifts to 'we,' indicating his presence and participation in the terror. This forced drift mirrors spiritual reality: without Christ's anchor, we're driven by every wind of doctrine (Eph 4:14). The crew's helplessness foreshadows humanity's inability to save itself—only divine intervention (Paul's prophecy in 27:22-24) will rescue them.

Historical Context

Large grain ships (140-150 feet long, 30+ feet wide) were square-rigged vessels that couldn't sail close to the wind like modern boats. When caught broadside by a northeaster, they became helpless. The ship was driven southwest away from Crete toward the African coast and the dreaded Syrtis quicksands (27:17).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. In what areas of life have you experienced the helplessness of being 'driven' by forces beyond your control?
2. How does surrendering human control in storms prepare you to receive divine intervention?

Interlinear Text

συναρπασθέντος	δὲ	τοῦ	πλοίου	καὶ	μὴ	δυναμένου
was caught	And	G3588	when the ship	and	not	could
G4884	G1161		G4143	G2532	G3361	G1410
ἀντοφθαλμεῖν	τῷ	ἀνέμῳ	ἐπιδόντες	ἐφερόμεθα		
bear up into	G3588	the wind	we let her drive	G5342		
G503		G417	G1929			

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org