

Acts 27:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day.

Analysis

Fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks—Malta's coastline combined sandy beaches with treacherous rocky outcrops. Grounding on rocks meant certain destruction; sandy beach offered survival hope. **They cast four anchors out of the stern**—normally anchors deployed from the bow, but stern anchors held the ship's head seaward, preventing beam-to-breakers orientation. This expert seamanship prepared for beach landing at daylight. **And wished for the day** (ηύχοντο ἡμέραν γενέσθαι, were praying day to come)—the Greek suggests both natural desire and prayerful longing. Waiting for daylight with land so near required agonizing patience.

Historical Context

Ancient anchors were iron or stone, stored at stern for quick deployment. The four-anchor spread provided maximum holding power in strong winds. Malta's St. Paul's Bay, the traditional landing site, features the described geography—a sandy beach between rocky promontories. Archaeological evidence confirms ancient shipwrecks in this location.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When you're 'near land' in your spiritual journey, how do you wait patiently for God's daylight rather than rushing blindly ahead?
2. How does combining expert preparation with prayerful dependence characterize mature faith?

Interlinear Text

φοβούμενοί	τε	μήπως	εἰς	τραχεῖς	τόπους
fearing	Then	lest	upon	G5138	rocks
G5399	G5037	G3381	G1519		G5117
ἐκπέσωσιν	ἐκ	πρύμνης	ρίψαντες	ἀγκύρας	τέσσαρας
we should have fallen	out of	the stern	they cast	anchors	four
G1601	G1537	G4403	G4496	G45	G5064
ηύχοντο	ἡμέραν	γενέσθαι			
and wished	for the day	G1096			
G2172	G2250				

Additional Cross-References

Acts 27:17 (Parallel theme): Which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven.

Hebrews 6:19 (Parallel theme): Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;