

Acts 27:40

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore.

Analysis

When they had taken up the anchors—The Greek *perielontes* (casting off) suggests they cut or released anchors rather than retrieving them, prioritizing speed over salvage. **They committed themselves unto the sea** captures desperate faith—no turning back. **Loosed the rudder bands** indicates previously lashed steering oars (ancient ships used side-mounted oars for steering) were freed for navigation. **Hoised up the mainsail** (Greek *artemōna*, small foresail) caught wind to drive toward shore.

This verse displays nautical expertise Luke accurately recorded. Every technical detail—anchors, rudders, foresail—was necessary for the final beach approach. Their coordinated action demonstrated professional competence combined with desperate courage. God's promise of deliverance didn't eliminate the terrifying final run to shore; it sustained them through it.

Historical Context

Ancient Mediterranean ships used large side-mounted steering oars (not stern rudders). These were tied or lashed when anchored to prevent damage. The *artemōn* (foresail) was smaller than the mainsail, used for maneuvering in tight situations. Running a ship aground intentionally was last-resort tactic, virtually guaranteeing the ship's destruction while hopefully saving passengers. The maneuver required skill, timing, and considerable courage.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does 'committing to the sea' illustrate faith's requirement to move forward despite fear?
2. What does the technical precision of this final effort teach about combining faith with competent action?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	τὰς	ἀγκύρας	περιελόντες	εἶων	εἰς
And	G3588	the anchors	when they had taken up	they committed	themselves unto
G2532		G45	G4014	G1439	G1519
τὴν	θάλασσαν	ἅμα	ἀνέντες	τὰς	ζευκτηρίας
G3588	the sea	and	loosed	G3588	bands
	G2281	G260	G447	G2202	G3588
πηδαλίων	καὶ	ἐπάραντες	τὸν	ἀρτέμονα	τῇ
the rudder	And	hoised up	G3588	the mainsail	G3588
G4079	G2532	G1869		G736	G4154
πνεύσει					
κατεῖχον	εἰς	τὸν	αἰγιαλόν		
and made	themselves unto	G3588	shore		
G2722	G1519		G123		