

Acts 27:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

Analysis

Hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The fair havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea. The adverb molis (μόλις, "hardly, with difficulty") continues emphasizing laborious progress. **The fair havens** (Καλοὺς Λιμένας, Kalous Limenas) was an anchorage on Crete's south coast—ironically named given events to follow. Its proximity to Lasea, a small city, provided minimal shelter and supplies. The location proved inadequate for wintering (v. 12), creating the dilemma that led to disaster.

This geographical detail sets up the coming critical decision: stay in Fair Havens' safety despite discomfort, or risk sailing to better winter quarters? The debate (vv. 9-12) between Paul's warning and the pilot's expertise illustrates faith versus worldly wisdom. Fair Havens' inadequacy became a test—trust Paul's prophetic warning or the centurion's natural judgment? The name "Fair Havens" gains ironic weight: what seemed fair (adequate) proved dangerously insufficient, while Paul's harder counsel would have ensured safety. God's ways often appear less attractive than human alternatives yet lead to true security.

Historical Context

Fair Havens (modern Kaloi Limenes) remains identifiable on Crete's south-central coast, about 5 miles east of Cape Matala. Archaeological surveys confirm Lasea's location nearby. The harbor offered temporary shelter but lacked facilities for extended wintering—no town nearby, limited supplies, exposure to some wind

directions. Phoenix (v. 12), 40 miles west, had superior facilities. The dangerous sailing season ended mid-September; the lethal period ran November-February. Their late arrival at Fair Havens meant the ship faced winter decisions with no good options.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do 'fair havens'—apparently adequate solutions—sometimes tempt us away from God's harder but wiser counsel?
2. What does the choice between staying safe versus seeking better conditions teach about risk assessment in spiritual decisions?

Interlinear Text

μόλις τε παραλεγόμενοι αύτὴν ἤλθομεν εἰς τόπον τινὰ
hardly And passing it came unto place a
G3433 G5037 G3881 G846 G2064 G1519 G5117 G5100

καλούμενον Λιμένας Λιμένας ὡς ἐγγὺς ἦν πόλις
which is called havens havens whereunto nigh was the city
G2564 G2568 G2568 G3739 G1451 G2258 G4172

Λασαία

of Lasea

G2996