

day they began to throw the freight overboard). The storm increased in violence, so that they found it necessary to lighten the ship by throwing some freight overboard. This was probably merchandize other than the main cargo, which was wheat (verse 38).

19. And the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship —The R. V. reads “they cast out with their own hands.” Probably this is correct. It was a work of sailors rather than passengers. The “tackling” is literally “the furniture” of the vessel, all the moveables and utensils. Owing to imperfect construction ancient ships were always in danger of foundering in a gale.

20. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared (R. V., shone upon us) and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away. This not only indicated the severity of the storm, but shows us how helpless they were, for before the invention of the mariner’s compass, many centuries after *this, the sun, moon and stars were the only things that sailors had to steer by*. Out of sight of land, tossed in the tempest, with a leaky vessel, no wonder they gave up hope of reaching home again. Perhaps this state of despair lasted to the end of the whole fortnight (verse 27).

21. But after long abstinence (R. V., when they had been a long time without food) Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, *Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm (R. V., gotten this injury) and loss*. Paul does not taunt them in their misery, but wishes to make them heed the fresh advice he is about to give. Their food is doubtless spoilt with the water; no fire for cooking could be kindled; the utensils may have been thrown overboard; and few would care to eat much when death was staring them in the face every day. We say “a man has made a loss,” which is substantially the same as the phrase in the text.

22. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man’s life among you, but of the ship. They all expected to go to the bottom with their frail vessel, but Paul’s hopeful words revived their courage.

23. For there stood by me this night the angel of God (R. V. of the God), whose I am and whom I serve. Paul distinguishes his God from those of the heathen, and avows his devotion for his service. It was a “good confession” and would command their respect. (Jonah 1:9).

24. Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought (R. V., stand) before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given (R. V., granted) thee all them that sail with thee. There was no doubt about Paul’s life being spared, for God had determined that he should stand before Cæsar. He could not, therefore, be drowned on the way. But in answer to his prayers for his fellow voyagers their lives too had been granted to him as a special favor.

25. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me (R. V., hath been told me). The word for “be of good cheer” here and in verse 22 is a physician’s term in reference to the sick keeping up their spirits, and would be the expression naturally used by Luke in reporting the substance of Paul’s words. Nothing is more inspiring than faith. Despondent men will follow a leader whose courage and hope do not falter, but when the captain loses heart the soldiers turn cowards. Paul, the prisoner, becomes the virtual commander of the ship. Captain and centurion both defer to his advice. In times of trial the strong men come to the front.

26. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island. Paul seems to have had a full revelation of all the details of the shipwreck. The island proved to be Melita, now Malta.

ORIENTALISMS.

By Rev. R. G. Murison, M. A., B. D.

The Ship and the Storm. — Ships in Syria and Palestine and the islands of the east coast of the Mediterranean are constructed similar to the old-fashioned ships, and are propelled by sails and not by steam. The natives have no steamers of their own. Egypt, however, has adopted the ways of Europe, and has steamers as well as schools of navigation. Steamers that run there belong to foreign companies. These steamers have a certain route, stopping at certain points at fixed