

The Loss of Hope

Acts 27:13-26

Acts 27:13-26 (NASB)

¹³ “When a moderate south wind came up, supposing that they had attained their purpose, they weighed anchor and *began* sailing along Crete, close *inshore*.

¹⁴ But before very long there rushed down from the land a violent wind, called Euraquilo;

¹⁵ and when the ship was caught *in it* and could not face the wind, we gave way *to it* and let ourselves be driven along.

¹⁶ Running under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we were scarcely able to get the *ship's* boat under control.

¹⁷ After they had hoisted it up, they used supporting cables in undergirding the ship; and fearing that they might run aground on *the shallows* of Syrtis, they let down the sea anchor and in this way let themselves be driven along.

¹⁸ The next day as we were being violently storm-tossed, they began to jettison the cargo;

¹⁹ and on the third day they threw the ship's tackle overboard with their own hands.

²⁰ Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing *us*, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

²¹ When they had gone a long time without food, then Paul stood up in their midst and said, "Men, you ought to have followed my advice and not to have set sail from Crete and incurred this damage and loss.

²² “*Yet* now I urge you to keep up your courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but *only* of the ship.”

²³ “For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me,

²⁴ saying, 'Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar; and behold, God has granted you all those who are sailing with you.'”

²⁵ “Therefore, keep up your courage, men, for I believe God that it will turn out exactly as I have been told.”

²⁶ “But we must run aground on a certain island.”

Life doesn't always meet our expectations. Even when making plans according to God's lead, we may run into something that interrupts them. Frustration over the obstacle can lead to discouragement and loss of hope. Then, if the hindrance should persist, our spirits may plummet toward despair.

Oftentimes, what trips us up is the circumstance that seems impossible to overcome. Think about Paul's voyage to Rome by sea. When a bad storm arose, the sailors worked hard to save the ship. But since they couldn't control the weather, they gradually gave up all hope of being saved ([Acts 27:20](#)).

Acts 27:20 (NASB)

²⁰ “Since neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small storm was assailing *us*, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.”

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There are times when we can't change what has happened—whether it's a job loss, a loved one's death, or a devastating diagnosis. In such situations, feelings of hopelessness can overtake us.

Postponed plans can also be disheartening. Hannah is an example of someone who became dejected because of **“hope deferred”** ([1 Samuel 1:10-11](#); see also [Proverbs 13:12](#)). She saw other women bearing children, but her own maternal desires had not yet been fulfilled. When things do not go according to our schedule, we may experience emotions like hers.

1 Samuel 1:10-11 (NASB)

¹⁰**“She, greatly distressed, prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly.**

¹¹**She made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.”**

Proverbs 13:12 (NASB)

¹²**“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But desire fulfilled is a tree of life.”**

Feeling abandoned by the Lord is another thing that can throw believers off track. I remember a season of life when I felt all alone. My mind said God was with me, but my feelings said otherwise. To counter those emotions, I pursued the Lord through prayer and meditation on Scripture.

In times of discouragement, you have a choice. Will you focus on your circumstances, or will you fix your gaze on our loving Father and trust Him?