

## Castor and Pollux and the Path of Least Resistance

*Acts 28:11-16*

*September 24, 2023*

**V 15** The trip on land between Puteoli and Rome was about 125 miles. The entourage that came out from Rome to meet the Apostle Paul travelled about 45 miles, to the Market of Appius on the Appian Way. Of all those on board the ship going into Rome, Paul was probably the only one making a triumphal entry.

**V 11** Why would Luke make a point to give the name of the ship on this particular voyage? He had not named the ships on any of the other voyages (16:11ff, 20:5ff, 21:1ff, 27:1ff).

**Acts 28:11** At the end of three months we set sail on an Alexandrian ship which had wintered at the island, and which had the Twin Brothers for its figurehead.  
Twin Brothers = “Sons of Zeus” = Castor and Pollux  
Patron deities of sailors

Luke was making a point that Castor and Pollux had failed the pagan worshippers on the previous voyage. It was believed that in a storm at sea, to catch a glimpse of the constellation Gemini (Latin for “twins”) meant that Castor and Pollux would deliver you from the storm.

**Acts 27:19** and on the third day they threw the ship’s tackle overboard with their own hands.

20 Since neither sun nor stars (Gr *astron* star, planet, constellation) appeared (Gr *epiphaino*) for many days, and no small storm was assailing us, from then on all hope of our being saved was gradually abandoned.

There had been no epiphany in the constellations to tell these sailors that the storm was going to end soon.

**Acts 27:23** “For this very night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood before me (present with 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.

The free sailors trusted a false god who could not rescue them from a storm; the Apostle Paul, in chains because of service to the One True God, had a God who walked with him through the storm.

*Idolatry might appear to rescue you from a storm, but only Jesus will walk you through a storm.*

See **Daniel Ch 3.**

*Idolatry will lead you down a path of temporary ease, but with eternal detriment. (Hell for the unbeliever; loss of reward for the believer living out of fellowship with God)*

Potential Idols of our day, 21<sup>st</sup> century America:

1. Cleverness of man – science/tech/education/information
2. Culture of man – art/entertainment/social media influence/athleticism/music
3. Conceit of man – “Me-ism”; the “cult of self-worship” (paraphrased from Thaddeus Williams in his book, *Don’t Follow Your Heart: Boldly Breaking the Ten Commandments of Self-Worship*).

We interact with each of these entities on a daily basis, and when any of them become our source of optimism for the future, when any on them define our sense of self-worth, when any of them become our hope for joy, fulfilment, and purpose, then they are taking the place of a right relationship with our Creator, and they have become idols.

**2 Corinthians 4:17,18**

*Serving the One True God, as a believer in fellowship with God, will involve a path of suffering, leading to a future with an eternal weight of glory.*

Clarification of terms:

**One True God** = Jehovah/Yahweh/Angel of the LORD in OT;  
Jesus/God the Father/Holy Spirit in NT

**“false gods”** = not imaginary, but real, supernatural beings, created by God, rebellious from Him; “demons”; “spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenlies” Eph Ch 6

**“idol”** = where the physical world and spiritual world meet;  
interface

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