

Acts Chapter 19 Continued

Acts 19:21 "After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

“Purposed in the spirit”: Probably his own spirit, not the Holy Spirit.

“Macedonia and Achaia” (see notes on 16:9; 18:12). Located on the Greek mainland, these provinces were in the opposite direction from Jerusalem. Paul however, took this roundabout route to collect an offering for the needy in the Jerusalem church (Rom. 15:25-27; 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8:9).

“I must also see Rome”: Paul had not visited the Imperial capital, but because of the strategic importance of the church there, he could stay away no longer. In addition, Paul intended to use Rome as a jumping off point for ministry in the strategic region of Spain (Rom. 15:22-24).

This simple declaration marked a turning point in Acts. From this point on, Rome became Paul’s goal He would ultimately arrive there as a Roman prisoner. (28:16).

We see that Paul's journey, checking on all of the churches he had started, was quickly done. He purposed to go to Jerusalem, and then mentions that he must go to Rome. Paul, among other things, was a Roman citizen. He was concerned about the Romans; you remember God had sent him to the Gentiles.

Acts 19:22 "So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season."

“Timothy and Erastus” (For Timothy, see note on 16:1). Nothing more is known of Erastus. Though the name appears two other times in Scripture (Rom. 16:23; 2 Tim. 4:20), he cannot with certainty be identified with either one. Paul sent these two ahead of him to assist in his collection of the offering.

Timothy had been an understudy of Paul's, and anything Timothy might say would be as if Paul himself were speaking. This is the first mention of Erastus. Erastus seems to have been a Corinthian.

He was a city treasurer or steward. At any rate, he was a chamberlain of the city. He was probably at Ephesus with Paul and Timothy. (In 2 Timothy 4:20), Erastus was at Corinth which indicates again, that was his regular home. Paul sent them to Macedonia to check on the churches for him.

Acts 19:23 "And the same time there arose no small stir about that way."

“That way” (see note on 9:2).

This is undoubtedly speaking of here at Ephesus where Paul stayed. This stir is over the false goddess Diana.

Acts 19:24 "For a certain [man] named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;"

“Demetrius, a silversmith”: Probably not the individual commended by John (3 John 12), since the name was a common one.

“Silver shrines”: These were of the goddess Diana (Artemis). These shrines were used as household idols, and in the worship at the temple of Diana.

Artemis was also known as “Diana.” Worship of her, centered at the great temple of Diana at Ephesus (one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World), and was widespread throughout the Roman Empire. It is likely that the riot described in the passage took place during the annual spring festival held in her honor at Ephesus.

“Brought no small gain”: This statement suggests Demetrius may have been the head of the silversmiths’ guild, which would explain his taking the lead in opposing the Christian preachers.

The people here carried around small silver images of Diana that they thought would bring them good luck. These were like charms on a charm bracelet or necklaces with this charm on them. Of course, Demetrius had made some bigger images to set around in their houses, as well. Demetrius was making a lot of money doing this.

Acts 19:25 "Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."

The great concern that these craftsmen have, is that there will no longer be a market for their images they have graven. If all the people became Christians, they would be out of business. They have called an emergency meeting to try to stop Paul and this Christianity he preaches.

Acts 19:26 "Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:"

We see from this that Paul has brought a direct attack upon the images that they worship as gods.

Acts 19:27 "So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipeth."

Demetrius cleverly played upon his hearers’ fears of financial ruin, religious zeal, and concern for their city’s prestige. The Christian preachers, he argued, threatened the continued prosperity of Ephesus. His audience’s violent reaction shows they took the threat seriously (verse 28).

Acts 19:28 "And when they heard [these sayings], they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great [is] Diana of the Ephesians."

These men were really not concerned with this false goddess. They were afraid they would not have any way of making a living. This Diana had supposedly fallen from heaven and there was widespread worship of this false goddess.

I think it is wonderful that Paul has gone into an encampment of people worshipping the false goddess, and has set them on the path to true righteousness in Jesus Christ. Paul is truly a brave man for Christ.

Acts 19:29 "And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theater."

“Gaius and Aristarchus”: These men are described as Macedonians, though (20:4), lists Gaius’ hometown as Derbe, a city in Galatia. Possibly the Gaius of (20:4), was a different person.

We see some who have received Christ as Savior and others who are still worshipping this false goddess Diana. They grabbed two of the men traveling with Paul and brought them to the place of trial in the theatre. It appears that Paul was not with them at the time, so they just grab his helpers.

Acts 19:30 "And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not."

Here we see the bravery of Paul. He wanted to turn himself in so that they would release Gaius and Aristarchus, but the other disciples held him back. They knew how valuable Paul's ministry was and they wanted no harm coming to him.

Acts 19:31 "And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring [him] that he would not adventure himself into the theatre."

These members of the aristocracy were dedicated to promoting Roman interests. Though only one Asiarch ruled at a time, they bore the title for life. That such powerful, influential men were Paul's friends shows that they did not regard him or his message as criminal. Hence, there was no legitimate cause for their riot.

These people feared the worst, if Paul showed up in the theatre. These were people who knew how bad it could become, and they kept Paul back.

Acts 19:32 "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together."

“Assembly”: The frenzied mob gathered in the theater. Though Paul courageously sought to address them, The Asiarchs (along with the Ephesian Christians in verse 30), begged him to stay

away (verse 31). They feared both for the apostle's safety, and that his presence would exacerbate the already explosive situation.

We see here a mob gathered, not even knowing what the charges were. They were gathered for the excitement.

Acts 19:33 "And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made his defense unto the people."

“Alexander”: Probably not the false teacher later active at Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:20), or the individual who opposed Paul at Rome (2 Tim. 4:14), since the name was common.

He was either a Christian Jew or a spokesman for Ephesus' Jewish community. Either way, the Jews' motive for putting him forward was the same, to disassociate themselves from the Christians and avoid a massacre of the Jews.

“Made his defense”: Either of the Christians or the Jews, depending on which group he represented.

Acts 19:34 "But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great [is] Diana of the Ephesians."

“A Jew”: Whatever the Jews intended by putting Alexander forward backfired; the crowd shouted him down, and in a mindless display of religious frenzy, chanted the name of their goddess for two hours.

We can see from this just how strongly embedded this worship of this false goddess Diana was. They had shrines to her everywhere.

Acts 19:35 "And when the townclerk had appeased the people, he said, [Ye] men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the [image] which fell down from Jupiter?"

“Townclerk”: In modern terms, he was Ephesus' major. He was the liaison between the town council and the Roman authorities, who would hold him personally responsible for the riot.

“The image which fell down from Jupiter”: This probably refers to a meteorite, since meteorites were incorporated with the worship of Diana.

This town clerk is trying to calm these people down. He reminds them that it is a well-known fact that they worship this false goddess. It was not unusual for people to worship the sun, moon, or stars. In fact, many people still do. The fault in that type of worship is that they are worshipping the created and not the Creator.

Acts 19:36 "Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly."

The opening events of Paul's second missionary journey begin here. This journey ends at (18:22).

This town clerk who seems to be presiding over this incident; calmly tells them that these men have not broken any laws, so they have no reason to try them.

Verses 37-40: Both "Paul" and "Barnabas" were spiritual men; both are described as full of the Holy Spirit. Yet they disagreed and made mistakes. Luke implies that Paul's decision was less emotional "(thought" and "chose" rather than "determined"), and does state that he was "recommended" or commended" (Greek paradotheis), by the brethren.

Silas" was a good choice being

- (1) A prophet (verse 32);
- (2) One of the two commissioned by the Jerusalem church to proclaim the decree of the council (verse 22); and
- (3) A Roman citizen (16:37).

Acts 19:37 "For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess."

"Robbers of the churches" (Greek hierosulous), should be translated "robbers of temples." Paul and his companions had not plundered the temple of Diana where vast wealth was deposited.

He even goes so far as to say that they have not cursed the goddess Diana, either.

Verses 38-40: The town clerk (verse 35), correctly blamed the crowd for the riot, noting that they should have followed proper judicial procedure and gone to the courts and proconsuls if they had any complaints, so as not to incur serious consequences from Rome.

Acts 19:38 "Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another."

The word implead means bring to account. He says here, if you can come up with a legal complaint about any of this, take it to a legal court.

Acts 19:39-40 "But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly." "For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse."

He is really saying that this riot was illegal. The high courts might arrest them all for disturbance.

Acts 19:41 "And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly."

He told them to all go home.

Acts Chapter 19 Continued Questions

1. Paul purposed in his heart to go to what two places when he left Macedonia?
2. Which two people did Paul send to Macedonia in his place?
3. Where did Paul stay for a season?
4. Where had Erastus come from?
5. Why had Paul sent them to Macedonia?
6. What is the stir in verse 23 over?
7. Who is the silversmith mentioned in verse 24?
8. What was he making for his living?
9. Who did Demetrius call together?
10. Verse 26 tells how Paul had turned whom away from the worship of Diana?
11. Demetrius said not only had Paul destroyed their way of making a living, but had done what else?
12. Who did they call Diana in verse 28?
13. What two companions of Paul did the people grab up?
14. Where did they take them?
15. What brave thing did Paul try to do that the disciples stopped him from doing?
16. Who were spoken of as Paul's friend?
17. In verse 32, we read that the assembly was _____.
18. This assembly could be called a _____.

19. Who was Alexander?
20. What did this mob cry out for two hours?
21. Who came to settle all of this?
22. Why did they worship Diana?
23. What two things did the clerk say in defense of Paul's men?
24. Who did he reprimand in verse 38?
25. What does the word implead mean?
26. What did the clerk warn them that they were in danger of?
27. What did the clerk do after he spoke?