

Paul—Acts 19:21—20:2

Riot at Ephesus; Paul Leaves Ephesus for Macedonia

I. Additional Scriptures/Notes...

- 01. 19:21... to go to Jerusalem**—“It is only by the merest hint that Luke gives us an indication here of something which is filled out in Paul's letters. He tells us that Paul purposed to go to Jerusalem. The church in Jerusalem was poor; and Paul aimed to take a collection from all his Gentile churches as a contribution to it. We find references to this collection in 1Cor 16:1ff.; 2Cor 9:1ff.; Rom 15:25-26. Paul pressed on with this scheme for two reasons. First, he wished in the most practical way to emphasize the unity of the Church. He wished to demonstrate that they belonged to the body of Christ and that when one part of the body suffered all must help. In other words, he wished to take them away from a merely congregational outlook and to give them a vision of the one universal Church of which they were part. Second, he wished to teach them practical Christian charity. Doubtless when they heard of the privations of Jerusalem they felt sorry. He wished to teach them that sympathy must be translated into action. These two lessons are as valid today as ever they were” [William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible*].
- 02. 19:22... Erastus**—“Erastus was chamberlain of Corinth ([Rom 16:23](#)), or, more properly, the treasurer of the city (see the notes on that place), and he was, therefore, a very proper person to be sent with Timothy for the purpose of making the collection for the poor at Jerusalem. Paul had wisdom enough to employ a man accustomed to monied transactions in making a collection” [*Barnes' Notes*].
- 03. 19:23-27...** “This is the most truthful and candid of all the speeches ever uttered against Paul [J.W. McGarvey]. ||||| “Observe the argument of Demetrius: (1) By this craft we have our wealth; (2) Paul teaches that these are not gods that are made with hands; (3) therefore our craft is in danger; (4) the great goddess Diana is despised; (5) great is Diana of the Ephesians! The prime incentive of his religious zeal is that his craft is in danger” [B.W. Johnson, *The People's New Testament*].
- 04. 19:24... Diana**—“This was a celebrated goddess of the pagan, and one of the twelve superior deities. In the heavens she was Luna, or Meui (the moon); on earth, Diana; and in hell, Hecate. She was sometimes represented with a crescent on her head, a bow in her hand, and dressed in a hunting habit; at other times with a triple face, and with instruments of torture. She was commonly regarded as the goddess of hunting. She was also worshipped under the various names of Lucina, Proserpine, Trivia, etc. She was also represented with a great number of breasts, to denote her as being the fountain of blessings, or as distributing her benefits to each in their proper station. She was worshipped in Egypt, Athens, Cilicia, and among pagan nations generally; but the most celebrated place of her worship was Ephesus, a city especially dedicated to her” [*Barnes' Notes*].
- 05. 19:27... the temple of the great goddess Diana**—“In Ephesus the worship of the goddess Artemis (or Diana) had dominated the religious scene for centuries. The temple of Artemis, which replaced an earlier temple that burned down in 356 B.C., was considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The structure was massive, extending some 165 feet by 345 feet in dimension, and situated on a platform which was 240 by 420 feet. Its beautiful decorations included brilliant colors and trappings in gold. One hundred twenty-seven white marble pillars, each of them sixty feet high, supported the structure.

The temple was magnificent and gave testimony to a religion with a long history. When Paul began preaching in Ephesus he was taking on an entrenched and powerful religious tradition” [*College Press NIV Commentary*].

- 06. 19:29... they rushed with one accord into the theater**—“The loud demonstration of the silversmiths infected the whole city. The people rushed to the largest facility in Ephesus—the open-air theater. Cut into the western slope of Mt. Pion, the theater had a seating capacity of 24,500 and served as the regular meeting place for the city meeting (dh'mo", *dçmos*) three times a month. This time the assembly was not an organized one” [*College Press NIV Commentary*].
- 07. 19:31... And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends**—“Known by the title 'Asiarchs,' 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 the riot” [*The MacArthur Study Bible*, p. 1670].
- 08. 19:35... town clerk**—“In modern terms, he was Ephesus' mayor. He was the liaison between the town council and the Roman authorities—who would hold him personally responsible for the riot” [*Ibid.*].
- 09. 20:1... And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples**—“...indicates that Paul had probably been protected in some place of safety; but immediately after the uproar was over, and having already planned to go to Macedonia (Acts 19:21), decided to begin that journey at once. The passions of the mob would not soon be fully abated; and, rather than cause his friends any further anxiety, he left for Macedonia. The Macedonian detour, however, was part of the more extended trip to Jerusalem” [*Coffman*].

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: **The Period of the Church.**

III. Summary.

This reading tells about a near riot at Ephesus. Paul's preaching of the pure gospel produced enemies of those who made their living from making the silver shrines honoring Diana. Demetrius, a silversmith, recognized the consequences of Paul's preaching and was quick to gather others with similar interest to oppose him and his co-workers. A great outpouring of emotion and affection for Diana is the result of his efforts. Paul wanted to speak to the unruly crowd, but was kept from it. The Town Clerk calmed the emotions of the people with his message. He told the people that there was no reason to become unruly and that if they had any legal case against Paul or his companions they could sue them in court. He wanted to gain control of the situation before it got out of hand and caused Roman authorities to come and punish the city.

IV. Outline.

1. Paul has a plan to visit Rome (Acts 19:21-22; cf., Rom 15:23-33).
2. Paul's preaching against idolatry has angered the silversmiths (Acts 19:23-28).
3. There is a demonstration in the Theater (Acts 19:29-34).
4. The Town Clerk brings the assembly to order by warning about repercussions from Rome for their riot-like actions proceeding any further (Acts 19:35-41).
5. Paul leaves for Jerusalem via Greece (Acts 20:1-2).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ The town clerk accused Paul of blasphemy.
02. _____ It could be said that we have the equivalent of a “labor union” meeting in this reading.
03. _____ Timothy and Erastus stayed in Asia with Paul.
04. _____ Diana was worshipped by a great many people in Asia.
05. _____ There was danger of the uproar coming to the attention of the Roman government.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ **Let them implead one another** means: (a) let them pray for one another; (b) let them press charges; (c) let them owe each other.
07. _____ WHO said that an image of DIANA had fallen down from Jupiter: (a) Luke; (b) Paul; (c) the town clerk.
08. _____ Did Paul desire to address the angry mob at Ephesus: (a) YES; (b) NO.
09. _____ Who was traveling with Paul at this time: (a) John Mark; (b) Apollos; (c) Aristarchus.
10. _____ Is there a verse in this reading that speaks of Paul’s success in evangelization: (a) Yes; (b) NO.

Fill in the Blanks

11. _____ was the amount of time that the Ephesians cried out **GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS**.
12. **Saying they _____ which are _____ with _____** was the particular teaching of Paul which so upset Demetrius.
13. _____ was the place Paul wanted to go after Jerusalem.
14. _____ pieces of silver represent the value of the books burned in the immediate context of this reading.
15. **And after the _____ was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and _____ *them*, and departed for to go into _____.**

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to Acts 18 Questions... [(1) False, Acts 18:24; (2) True, Acts 19:6-7; (3) False, Acts 19:16; (4) True, Acts 19:19; (5) True, Acts 18:24; (6) b, Acts 18:28; (7) c, Acts 18:24; (8) f, Acts 19:6; (9) a, Acts 19:14; (10) c, Acts 19:19; (11) only, baptism, John, Acts 18:25; (12) Apollos, convinced, Acts 18:28; (13) Apollos, name, Lord, Jesus, Acts 19:1, 5; (14) magnified, Acts 19:17; (15) Christ, Acts 18:28.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. **AFTER I HAVE BEEN THERE, I MUST ALSO SEE ROME** (Acts 19:22). Paul was not interested in Rome as a tourist site, but as a place where there were souls who needed to hear the gospel and brethren who needed to be strengthened (cf., Rom 1:11). May we also develop a *WORLD* vision like Paul had! Paul began to look for new territories to plant the seed of the word of God. He wrote to the Roman saints that he did not want to build on someone else’s foundation (Rom 15:20). He was a risk-taker and had tremendous courage to go to different places preaching the gospel.

2. **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** (Acts 19:26). *There is an element of PERSUASION to be involved in successful efforts to evangelize!* An area of study that should be quite fruitful to Christians would be “How to Persuade.” In order to persuade someone to become a Christian by obeying the gospel some degree of persuasion must be exercised. A person must first recognize a NEED to change before they will change. Thus, an element of persuasion is having some familiarity with the beliefs of the person you are seeking to convert and then being able to point out the false ideas that make up those beliefs. All of this will require study of God’s word, which is part of our task (1 Pet 3:15). Before any of this persuasion can be successful there will have to be agreement regarding what is to be used as the source of authority. If a person is not willing to settle matters based upon the Bible, the word of God, then they are not really very good candidates to be persuaded to accept the gospel message.
3. **AND WHEN PAUL WOULD HAVE ENTERED IN UNTO THE PEOPLE, THE DISCIPLES SUFFERED HIM NOT. AND CERTAIN OF THE CHIEF OF ASIA, WHICH WERE HIS FRIENDS...** (Acts 19:30-31). *We see the tremendous courage of the Apostle Paul!* Paul was ready to speak to this unruly mob and seek to rescue his companions. Whereas the Jews sought to put forward Alexander to persuade the mob that they had nothing to do with Paul, Paul courageously desired to face them. *We see also that Paul did not exclude the wealthy from his prospect-for-conversion lists!* These “chief of Asia,” were very wealthy individuals who had close connection with headquarters in Rome. Since they were friends of Paul, they did not want to see him injured and prohibited him from going into the Theater. Paul obviously looked at men as lost souls whether they were wealthy or poor. He simply saw souls. Sometimes we might tend to think that a wealthy person would not be interested in studying the Bible with us, but Paul had no such bias against the wealthy and powerful!
4. **AND THE MORE PART KNEW NOT WHEREFORE THEY WERE COME TOGETHER** (Acts 19:32). *The Bible DOES contain some humorous sections!* Here is a riotous crowd all shouting and they have assembled themselves in the Theater, but most of them did not even know what the uproar was all about. It was a dangerous situation and required the immediate attention of the Town Clerk to calm the situation. But the biggest part of the ones involved did not even know what was going on, they just wanted to be part of something. The word ASSEMBLY is used here in this verse and is translated from the Greek *ekklesia*, which is often translated by the word CHURCH. We might then wonder, as we assemble for worship, are there any like the majority here? Are there those present who don’t really know what is going on?
5. **...GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF THIS CONCOURSE** (Acts 19:40). *An interesting word to study.* “*Sustrophē* (from *sun*, together, *strephō*, to turn) is a late word for a conspiracy ([Act 23:12](#)) and a disorderly riot as here (Polybius). In [Act 28:3](#) *sustrophō* is used of gathering up a bundle of sticks and of men combining in [Mat 17:22](#)” [*Robertson’s Word Studies*].

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

A A W F H E R A S T U S R I E J L C M B
 C T H E T H E A T E R V B H X J U I S V
 R S H E I D O F M T I M O T H Y G V H M
 A D W H I U Z U U M X V A D D N A P A U
 F A Q A N M P U R L S O F R P Y Q Z G R
 T N N H O A E C U C L M W N O Y R I A S
 S A Y H S D R Z U N R O T F D X U P W R
 M I A T M E S H C I Q A F H W E H O Y E
 E D W I A W U S E A G E F W O M H E P T
 N S A M L I A U T G C B B T R C U U J P
 L I D S L T D I T L M I V V D A C B B F
 R T E R S H E R F L O G J V I I T R R X
 I A N E T H D T M A H T T O R S K H O P
 W E R V I A R E C M M K C E B O R C X V
 R R U L R N Y M H S S T G M R E F Y J D
 Z G T I H D B E C O W N O S C R A E I X
 N I L S X S J D J N A M B W T E M X M D
 X A I S A L L A K D F U P C Q O Y O I L
 T H A T W A Y F N O G O D S R E R Z Q R
 O C T D G W S I L Z E B E A J K J D R L

[The words (or word locaters) listed below are to be found in the text of our lesson. They also are found in the puzzle above. This is just one more way to reinforce what you have studied from the text. Why not read the whole verse where the word is found one more time as you do the puzzle? Thank you for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. Let's desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow (1 Pet 2:2). DRL]

Acts 19:21—20:2

Rome, 19:21

Timothy, 19:22

Erastus, 19:22

no small stir, 19:23

that way, 19:23

Demetrius, 19:24

silversmith, 19:24

Diana, 19:24

no small gain, 19:24

craftsmen, 19:24

all Asia, 19:26

persuaded, 19:26

turned away, 19:26

no gods, 19:26

made with hands, 19:26

our craft, 19:27

in danger, 19:27

full of wrath, 19:28

Great is Diana, 19:28

the theater, 19:29