

## THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 62 ACTS 19:15-34

### ACTS 19:13-20 | THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY: EPHESUS, PART 3

- Verses 13-14 – *see session 61*
- Verse 15 –
  - The spirit said **Jesus I know**, using γινώσκω [ginosko], “knowledge grounded on personal experience”, and **Paul I know**, using ἐπίσταμαι [epistamai], “knowledge obtained by proximity to the thing known.”
  - Note that this is **the evil spirit** which is speaking, not the man possessed. Clearly the sons of Sceva were not well-known in the Spirit world!
- Verse 16 –
  - Now the possessed man, under the power of the evil spirit, **leaped on them, and overcame them...** One of the common displays of a true evil spirit in the New Testament is unusual strength.
  - The men left **naked and wounded**, using the word τραυματίζω [traumatizo], from which we derive *traumatized*.
- Verse 17 –
  - This account must be taken in comparison with the miracles wrought at the hands of Paul.
  - The success of Paul versus the failure of the exorcists caused **the name of the Lord Jesus** to be **magnified**.
- Verse 18 –
  - We have previously suggested that the message of Paul in this account is one of the Kingdom. This verse aligns with that suggestion, since belief was followed by confession and the showing of deeds of righteousness.
- Verses 19-20 –
  - The **curious arts** are περίεργος [periergos] which is *ergon* (work) and *peri* (coming near). In 1 Timothy 5:13 it is translated **busybodies**. The word has no direct counterpart in English and is only contextually understood. Here, it is clearly associated with magic.
  - There were well-known “Ephesian Letters” which contained incantations and were often worn as good luck charms. The city was full of them, according to archaeologists. The associated books were brought together by these presumably Jewish (now kingdom) believers and burned. Recall that the Law prohibits any association with witchcraft.
  - The value was **fifty thousand pieces of silver**. Whatever the modern value, certainly a great sum of money. Enough that the word got out, and **mightily grew the word of God and prevailed**.

### ACTS 19:21-41 | THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY: EPHESUS, PART 4

- Verses 21-22 –
  - Paul **purposed in the spirit** (where a lower-case “s” fits best) to go to Macedonia and Achaia and then to Jerusalem. This would compete what we now call the third missionary journey.
  - Note that he had not left Ephesus yet, but sent Timothy and Erastus on while he stayed **in Asia**, the province of Ephesus.
- Verse 23 –
  - There was a ruckus about **that way**, that is, the Kingdom way.
  - The phrase is literally *the way* and is used first in Acts 9:2. It is my contention that *the way* is always *the way to the Jewish kingdom* and not a reference to the Pauline “mystery” gospel.

- Verse 24 –
  - The English is **Diana** but the Greek is *Artemis*. The Roman goddess Diana encapsulates Artemis but the original goes back, possibly even to Semiramis, the ancient Babylonian goddess of creation.
  - **Demetrius, a silversmith** was one who made money on the sale of Diana **shrines** ναός [naos], “temples,” a work that **brought no small gain unto the craftsmen**.
- Verse 25 –
  - More than we ever know or can admit, the fact that **we have our wealth** tied up in a certain concept can cause the continuation of that concept even when it has been proven wrong. This is usually done more subconsciously than it was by Demetrius.
- Verses 26-27 –
  - Whether a kingdom or a grace gospel, it is at odds with idol worship. It would be difficult to stir the masses with the motivation of Demetrius’ personal wealth, so now he turns to a higher motivation than money: the honor of his goddess.
  - This verse shows us that the message(s) of Paul, delivered by Paul and others, was making tremendous progress through the empire.
- Verses 28-30 –
  - With the city now **filed with confusion** (always a recipe for a disaster), they **caught** two of Paul’s traveling companions, who must have come from **Macedonia** for the journey ahead, planning to travel back with Paul. The two were forced into **the theatre** where Paul desired to join them, but **the disciples suffered him not**, no doubt out of prudence.
- Verse 31 –
  - The **chief of Asia** are the Ἀσιάρχης [Asiarches] were influential men chosen in a lengthy process.
  - The position was basically honorary, except that they did pay for the festivals like the one at hand. Though they only served for a year, they held the honorary title for life.
  - It is unclear from history whether there was one each year or ten each year, from conflicting historical accounts.
  - Nonetheless, this shows that Paul was influential among the influential. These men **were his friends**, though certainly not converts, and as his friends they wanted him to be safe.
- Verses 32-34 –
  - In the confusion, the crowd **drew Alexander out**.
    - He appears to be a spokesman for the Jews (note v. 34).
    - Some associate him with Alexander the Coppersmith of 1 Tim. 1:20, but there is only speculation to the possibility.
    - It appears to me that the Jews were at the center of this storm because Paul had been teaching of a Jewish Kingdom Gospel (see note, v. 23).
    - It is possible that Alexander was defending the Jewish synagogue *against* the kingdom message of Jesus as Messiah, distancing the Jews from Paul’s message. If this is the case, the association with Alexander the Coppersmith begins to make sense.
  - The people would have nothing of it and for **two hours cried out** their praises to Diana.