



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Leaders Who Risked their Lives with Paul

APRIL 24-26, 2019

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Acts 19:21-29 *When these things were accomplished, 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." 22) So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time. 23) And about that time there arose a great commotion about the Way. 24) For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no small profit to the craftsmen. 25) He called them together with the workers of similar occupation, and said: "Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade. 26) Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands. 27) So not only is this trade of ours in danger of falling into disrepute, but also the temple of the great goddess Diana may be despised and her magnificence destroyed, who all Asia and the world worship." 28) Now when they heard this, they were full of wrath and cried out saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" 29) So the whole city was filled with confusion, and rushed into the theatre with one accord, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians, Paul's travel companions. (NKJV)*

"NO ALEXANDER, NO CAESAR, NO OTHER HERO, APPROACHES TO THE LARGE-MINDEDNESS OF THIS LITTLE BENJAMITE [2 COR. 10:1, 10; PHIL. 3:5]."
JOHN ALBERT BENGEL

What were the things that had just been accomplished through Paul? Was there a singular plan that involved Macedonia, Achaia and Jerusalem? Why the quote from Paul showing how he thought it was necessary for him to go to the capital of the empire? Who was Timothy and Erastus? Why did Paul continue to stay in Asia at Ephesus? What does this riot prove? Why were Gaius and Aristarchus so dedicated to Paul?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- > MAY 1-3: ACTS 19:30-41 *THE CAREFULLY CRAFTED RIOT AT THE CAPITAL*
- > MAY 8-10: ACTS 20:1-6 *PAUL'S INCREDIBLE MISSION TEAM*

When Paul chose to evangelize Ephesus, he was challenging one of the greatest strongholds of Satan in the world of his day. Every form of demonic power and worship was associated with the official religion of Ephesus, the worship of Diana. The Temple of Diana was the largest temple and wonder of the world and her idolatrous worship was the most popular in the Roman Empire. Every spring, multitudes of pilgrims from her 33 shrines and all over the Mediterranean, flocked to the city for the annual festival. Revenue from this promiscuous event had become essential to the Ephesian economy. Paul had attacked the jugular of Satanic oppression at this capital of Asia Minor and was conquering it for Christ.

"EFFECTIVENESS AND PERSECUTION USUALLY GO HAND IN HAND, SINCE AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH IS A BOLD CHURCH, AND A BOLD CHURCH IS OFTEN A CHURCH MADE STRONG IN SUFFERING."
JOHN MACARTHUR

I. PAUL'S VISION

ACTS 19:21-29

Incredible things had been accomplished through Paul while he was in Ephesus. He had first won twelve disciples who had formerly followed John the Baptist, then he had taught for three months in the synagogue,

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 7:30AM –BIBLE STUDY – FREDERICKSBURG – BOB EVANS ON RT. 3 & 10:30AM – WOODBRIDGE – BOB EVANS, 14490 SMOKETOWN RD.

THURSDAY @ 7:00AM –BIBLE STUDY – CHESTER – SHONEY'S AT RT. 10 & 301 ALSO NOON- DEPT. OF CAPITOL POLICE-TRAINING ROOM

FRIDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – SUFFOLK – VILLAGE INN, 6116 COLLEGE DRIVE, NEAR HAMPTON ROADS CROSSING

Virginia

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winning another group of disciples. When the Jews rejected the Gospel, Paul began a seminary to train church leaders in the school of Tyrannus. He and his newly trained leaders were so effective within two years “that all who dwell in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10). Likely, while he worked his trade of making tents, believers were handing him new handkerchiefs and aprons to work miracles of healing and delivering from demons. By only bringing these articles Paul had touched to those afflicted, they were completely healed (19:11-12). When seven brothers tried to cast out a demon, they barely escaped, wounded and without their clothes. Upon hearing the news, at least three million dollars worth of occult books were burned voluntarily in the streets of Ephesus. “So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed” (19:20). Paul then purposed to return through the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to collect an offering for the impoverished church he had violently persecuted in Jerusalem (1 Cor 16:1-4; 2 Cor 8-9; Rom 15:25-27). Paul’s quote specifically fulfilled his commission (Acts 9:15) and includes a Greek verb meaning “it is necessary” (22x in Acts) when he says “I must also see Rome.” Jesus Christ personally verifies that necessity in Acts 23:11 & 27:24. Timothy is Paul’s cherished son in the faith and Erastus had probably been the wealthiest man in the world.

“BUT I WILL TARRY IN EPHESUS UNTIL PENTECOST. FOR A GREAT AND EFFECTIVE DOOR HAS OPENED TO ME, AND THERE ARE MANY ADVERSARIES.”

THE APOSTLE PAUL (1 COR. 16:8-9)

II. DEMETRIUS’ DIVISION

ACTS 19:23-27

Probably the leader of the trade guild of silver craftsmen was Demetrius. Their primary means of profit was from the silver shrines of the goddess Diana, particularly when the spring festival brought many pilgrims from all over the empire to worship her in her mammoth Temple

made entirely of marble. For at least four reasons Demetrius despised “*the Way*,” the most popular name for Christians because of Christ’s claim in John 14:6, “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*” True Christians have always taught that because we “*all have sinned*” (Rom. 3:23), and “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom 6:23, Rev 21:8), then the only hope is in Jesus Christ and His death on the cross in payment for our sin. He arose from the tomb to give us His supernatural life in victory over our sin as “*the gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Rom 6:23). To turn from our sin and receive Jesus Christ is the only “*way*” that anyone can go to heaven. Demetrius is honest in his attack of “*the Way*” in the first line of his speech, “*Men, you know that we have our prosperity by this trade.*” It was really all about money for him. He does not debate Paul’s truth statement “*they are not gods which are made with hands,*” but only presents the consequences to come upon their trade, reputation, the reverence for Diana and their Temple which has previously prevailed through deceit.

“THE SILVERSMITHS WILL ALSO LOOSE THEIR GOOD NAME, FOR THEY WILL BE SEEN TO BE MAKING COUNTERFEIT (FAKE) GODS THAT ARE NO GODS AT ALL. THE IRONY IS THAT, OF ALL PEOPLE, IT WOULD BE HARDEST FOR THE SILVERSMITHS THEMSELVES TO BELIEVE THAT THEY WERE MAKING GODS WITH THEIR OWN HANDS.” DAVID COOK

III. THE LEADERS’ PRISON

ACTS 19:28-29

The speech of Demetrius lit a fire that burned into rage and this angry gang of tradesmen begin to scream a chant that they believe will have influence on the city, “*Great is Diana of the Ephesians!*” This wild mob throws the city into confusion and starts a stampede into the theatre, violently threatening two Thessalonian believers, Gaius, probably a top official, and Aristarchus likely a wealthy Jew. Both of them risking their lives for Christ.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Do you seek to be a bold witness like Paul and give the Gospel to other leaders in your realm of influence?
- 2) Are you like Demetrius in defending deceit and working against God’s kingdom and those that proclaim the truth?
- 3) Is there sufficient gratitude to God for His saving work in your heart that you are willing to risk your life for Him?