

**exorcists took upon
them to call over
them which
had evil spirits**

Acts 19:2 – 20:5

~ Paul embarked on his third missionary journey in the last leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God and returned to the city of Ephesus. Paul covered the Galatian country thoroughly, as he had done twice previously, and now he returns to the place he left Priscilla and Aquila, you will recall. In our previous report, we met Apollos who preceded Paul in Ephesus. We learned Apollos did not know anything about the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; all he knew was the baptism of John Baptist. Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and expounded to him the resurrection message whereby people could finally be saved. Those whom Apollos had been teaching had not yet received the Holy Spirit, and Paul immediately detected that....

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2 He said unto them, Did ye received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Spirit.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

~ The moment we trust Christ as our Savior from sins and believe He died as the penalty for those sins, and was raised from the dead for our justification, then we receive and are indwelt by the Spirit of God, friends. At that time, we are also sealed by the Spirit of God unto eternal life, and we are baptized by the Spirit of God into the body of believers! ALL of that happens at the same moment we trust Christ as our Savior and Lord....

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

~ This school was designed for Ephesians. They had a siesta in the middle of their workday; likely two to three hours rest every day. That was the time when people could choose to hear Paul teach. I have to assume he rented the quarters as a classroom. Well, his teaching went on for two full years this time and, ALL they which dwelt in the province of Asia heard the Gospel message. That gives us quite a conception of how the Word of God was spreading in the day in which we are studying. Apparently, the church in Colossi came into existence as a result. Paul wrote to the Colossians as he did to the Romans when he had never even visited there; and Paul was the founder of the church in those places as the Gospel was introduced.

1 Corinthians 16:8 But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. 9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries ~

This all happened in and from the school at Tyrannus. The Gospel was going out everywhere during this extremely adversarial two years. The Corinthians wanted Paul to come over to them when he wrote chapter sixteen of first Corinthians. It appears the seven churches in Asia Minor came into existence as a result of the preaching of Paul the apostle at this

school at this time. This is the reason I believe Paul's greatest ministry was in Ephesus, by the way....

10 And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

11 And God wrought special powers by the hands of Paul:

~ Interestingly, we see Paul exercising the sign gifts of an apostle in a religious center that was greater than Athens, or any other city, by far. Corinth was Satanic to its core. The Great Temple of Diana was there. When we consider the epistle to the Ephesians, we will examine all of these places Paul visited in tremendous detail. Here, in Acts, let's just suffice to say now the satanic worship carried on in this temple would have made the modern-day Satanist look like an amateur. Well, in order for Paul to meet such strong opposition, God granted him these gifts. The church does not have sign gifts today. Sign gifts are not needed as the Bible is our authority; and no one is going to believe just because you perform some sign gift. You'll only drive people away speaking in tongues. You'll only divide true believers claiming you are healing people. Go raise the dead and I'll be impressed. Anything short of that is simply mediocre....

12 So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

~ These "handkerchiefs" and "aprons" were made of the materials Paul would have used in his occupation making tents. This place had a warm climate, and during his work, Paul would have perspired profusely. These cloth pieces were for him to wipe the sweat from his face. They would have been extremely dirty articles, to be sure. We should also keep in mind that this area is where the mystery religions thrived. Those religions stressed cleanliness. They had white garments, white robes; and everything had to be clean and proper. This is how the Lord was rebuking the heathen, pagan religions of that day; by incorporating filthy sweat drenched bands in the gift of healing. This is quite different from what people today seem to think this means. This passage reveals a special power that was granted to Paul

at this particular time and, as far I as can tell, this is the only time it ever took place – including this day in which we live. I consider it blasphemy to say you have a gift to send out a little piece of cloth that has power in it, but let's move on....

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

~ These itinerant Jews were apparently in the business of casting out demons themselves. They dealt heavily in the occult and were closely connected with the mystery religions. We won't take time at this juncture in our expedition to seriously consider all of the mystery religions, but we will later on safari. These Satanic people saw what Paul was doing and they made an attempt to duplicate it for profit in Jesus Name. Even many of the priests had gone into business because it was highly lucrative. Still is today. If you have a preacher who claims to heal - or speak in tongues in YOUR church today – may I say this kindly? – YOU are in a satanic church. I'm sure you don't like that talk from me; but God says to you, "TOO BAD!" ~

14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

~ The word here is "gnostico" – they knew Who Jesus was – just like the evil spirits that inhabited the man who lived amongst the tombs of the Gadarenes knew Who Jesus was. Well, the attempts by the sons of Sceva to duplicate the miracle backfired horribly. This was a huge humiliation and embarrassment for the seven sons, too. Anytime someone tries to stymie the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the names of "gifts," the result will be that they cause Christ to be magnified – at the expense of their embarrassment. the entire city was shaken by this event.

See, the miracles Paul and the other apostles performed were nothing like what we hear about today by the self-proclaiming "gifted" crowd, who are

really just a bunch of phonies and counterfeits. Who is really moved by the exercising of “gifts” today? ‘No one’ is the answer to that question. The so-called ‘gifted’ crowd has been coming and going for years on end and have made not a single dent in converting people to Christ. Well, Ephesus was shaken to its foundation by these gifts. That’s how we can know - amongst other ways - that the sign gifts are not in existence any longer....

16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

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.

~ This is the first time Paul mentions traveling to Rome; and to Rome he certainly did travel. However, it wasn’t quite the way he planned it. This is the timeframe Paul wrote to the Corinthians; and Timothy and Erastus obviously took the letters from Paul to them after this. This is also when that great door was opened, but there were many adversaries. Of course, those adversaries were satanic men and women in this center of pagan religion that was nothing in the world but pure, bone-sucking worship of the devil himself – make a note, my safari readers; write this all down if you have to....

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

23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

~ “That way” was called that way because Christianity, at this time, didn’t have the name of some church or denomination. It wasn’t even called “Christianity” – it was called “that way!” Well, that way was a new way, to be sure. The way was the Lord Jesus Christ; He Himself said, “I am the way, the truth and the light.”

Moving on, we meet a man who did business around the temple of Diana, which was the financial institution and bank in that day. This is a commerce center where the orient and the occident met. Kipling was dead wrong because the two – east and west – certainly did meet: in Ephesus – where the worst of both came to light. This is a place where sin and gross immorality took place flagrantly right out in the open.

Religion is the one organization that can debase itself more than any other entity known to mankind. The temple is one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It is the largest Greek temple that was ever constructed and was extremely beautiful; some of the works of Praxiteles were there. However, the image of Diana was hideous – and totally different from the image of Dianna of the Greeks, which was graceful. This utterly crude, multi-breasted, oriental Diana was their god. Well, they sold little images of her they made like cheap tourist gifts at an amusement park. It was big business Paul is interfering with; and when you disrupt big business, big businessmen is going to push back. When you step on a man’s pocketbook, you’ll see his emotions displayed....

24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;

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

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:

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 worshippeth.

28 And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

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 theatre.

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

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.

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.

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 defence unto the people.

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.

35 And when the town clerk 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?

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

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

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.

39 But if ye enquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly.

40 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.

41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

~ So, they wouldn't allow Paul to go into the theater because it wouldn't have been safe. They would have simply killed him. The mob was crying out that nothing could destroy their great temple. Interestingly, the temple and surrounding city has been in ruins for over two thousand years. No one is making a push to get it rebuilt either, by the way. The local official told the mob they could bring a lawful charge against Paul, but they didn't want to do that – they just wanted to chant a single sentence and drown Paul out – that's about how it's done today. Riots are nothing new in our day. Thus, the whole meeting ends in utter confusion with a mob mentality spewing incessantly about Diana. When this uproar ceases, the work of Paul is ended in Ephesus. He still did his best work there....

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1 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.

2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,

3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.

4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.

5 These going before tarried for us at Troas.

~ The third missionary journey of Paul the apostle is now complete. Everyone named in verse four turned to Christ under the ministry of Paul. This is quite a delegation of missionaries. Paul performed a great miracle at Troas raising a man from the dead. See, Paul had the sign gifts of an apostle – which YOU do not have. We really need to recognize it was those gifts that established the message of the death, burial and resurrection Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Today, that message is established in the Word of God, so we have no need for ‘sign gifts.’ Even if you could heal someone it would NEVER make another person believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as their Savior. You certainly cannot raise the dead, which was also one of the gifts and, my friends, if they had one gift, they had them all – it wasn’t random. So, we’ll pick up right here in our next report from our Spiritual Safari ~
