

Acts of the Apostles 19:21-22 and Acts 20

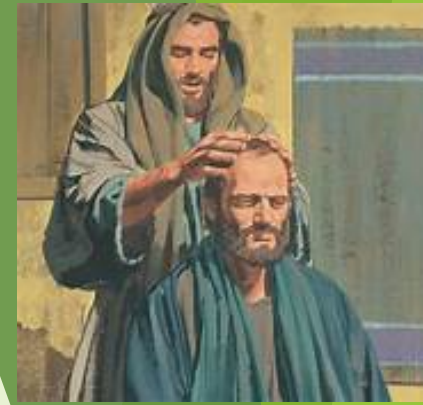
Paul travels through Macedonia and Greece on the way back to Jerusalem



The one where
Eutychus falls
out of a window
and Paul says
goodbye to the
Ephesians.



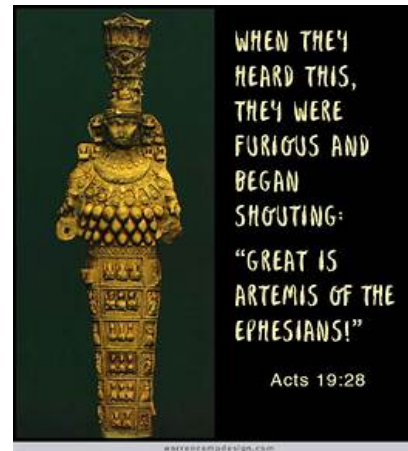
Last week



- ▶ In Ephesus, twelve men who had only known the Baptism of John were baptized and when Paul laid hands on them, they received the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Paul preached in the synagogue for 3 months then left to preach daily in the hall of Tyrannus.
- ▶ Paul remained in Ephesus for 3 years. All of Asia heard the WORD!
- ▶ Paul performed miracles in Ephesus. Even his washcloths or aprons would heal people if these items of Paul touched their skin.
- ▶ 7 sons of the High Priest try to exorcize a demon by using the name of Jesus. They are beat up and driven out of the house naked by the demon!



Last week

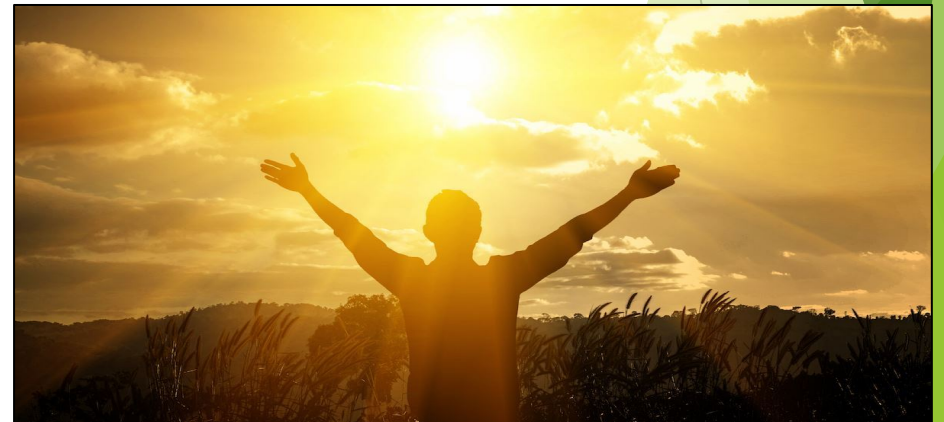


- ▶ Seeing this, many who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in sight of all who were there.
- ▶ Paul wrote the First Letter to the Corinthians at this time.
- ▶ Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia and then sends Titus to Corinth.
- ▶ Silversmiths who made idols of Artemis begin a riot in Ephesus. They fear Paul's teaching will hurt their livelihood and keep tourists away from the Temple of Artemis of Ephesus.
- ▶ A town clerk was the voice of reason who calmed the crowd.

Acts 19:21-22

- ▶ ²¹ When this was concluded, Paul made up his mind to travel through Macedonia and Achaia, and then to go on to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must visit Rome also.” ²² Then he sent to Macedonia two of his assistants, Timothy and Erastus, while he himself stayed for a while in the province of Asia.

Paul is driven by the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, he needs to get to Rome. This will be behind some of the decisions he makes in the last few chapters of Acts.



Acts 20:1-3

- ▶ ¹ When the disturbance was over, Paul had the disciples summoned and, after encouraging them, he bade them farewell and set out on his journey to Macedonia. ² As he traveled throughout those regions, he provided many words of encouragement for them. **Then he arrived in Greece, ³ where he stayed for three months.** But when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return by way of Macedonia.

This refers to the “riot of the silversmiths in Ephesus.”

No doubt the continued animosity against Paul and the Jewish-Christians required this encouragement so they would continue on in Paul’s absence.

This would have been the winter of 57-58AD^{AADD}

Acts 20:4-6

- ▶ ⁴ Sopater, the son of Pyrrhus, from Beroea, accompanied him, as did Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia ⁵ who went on ahead and waited for us at Troas. ⁶ **We sailed from Philippi** after the feast of Unleavened Bread, and rejoined them five days later in Troas, where we spent a week.

The 7 Churches mentioned in Revelation 2-5 are all in this same region where Paul was preaching during his stay in Ephesus

7 men are mentioned here. Commentaries suggest that these men are delegates from their churches bringing their collections to the Jerusalem Church.

A new “we” section begins suggesting that Luke is also present on this portion of the trip.

Acts 20:7A



- ▶ The departure from Philippi mentioned in verse 6 occurs in Spring of 58 AD. Passover and the Christian Easter fell on the same days.
- ▶ **Acts 20:7 A**
- ▶ ⁷ On the first day of the week when we gathered to break bread...
- ▶ This is the first scriptural mention of Christians celebrating Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper on Sunday.
- ▶ This Eucharistic celebration includes a very long homily by Paul, which explains the cause of the accident.

Acts 20:7-12 (Paul revives Eutychus at Troas)

- ▶ ⁷ On the first day of the week when we gathered to break bread, Paul spoke to them because he was going to leave on the next day, and he kept on speaking until midnight.
- ▶ ⁸ There were many lamps in the upstairs room where we were gathered, ⁹ and a young man named Eutychus who was sitting on the window sill was sinking into a deep sleep as Paul talked on and on. Once overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and when he was picked up, he was dead.
- ▶ ¹⁰ Paul went down, threw himself upon him, and said as he embraced him, “Don’t be alarmed; there is life in him.” ¹¹ Then he returned upstairs, broke the bread, and ate; after a long conversation that lasted until daybreak, he departed. ¹² And they took the boy away alive and were immeasurably comforted.

A very long Lord's Supper



- ▶ Paul can not stay too long if he is to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, a mere 50 days away.
- ▶ The Holy Days of Passover and Easter together take some time to discuss, celebrate *and explain*.
- ▶ The celebration at night recalls the Last Supper of Jesus and his arrest.
- ▶ Paul begins speaking for so long at so late an hour that Eutychus, whose name means “Lucky One” falls from his perch in the window.
- ▶ After he is revived by Paul, they continue with the Eucharistic celebration until day break.

Catechism of Catholic Church 1329

On the Lord's Supper



- ▶ The *Breaking of Bread*: because Jesus used this rite, part of a Jewish meal when as master of the table he blessed and distributed the bread, above all at the Last Supper.
- ▶ It is by this action that his disciples will recognize him after his Resurrection, and it is this expression ***that the first Christians will use to designate their Eucharistic assemblies; by doing so they signified that all who eat the one broken bread, Christ, enter into communion with him and form but one body in him.***
- ▶ The *Eucharistic assembly (synaxis)*, because the Eucharist is celebrated amid the assembly of the faithful, is ***the visible expression of the Church.***

Who is Paul here? Prophet *and* Priest!

- ▶ Paul is the celebrant of the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharist on a Sunday.
- ▶ The celebration was the liturgical recollection of the resurrection of the LORD, and the LORD's triumph over death.
- ▶ Paul is a healer. Eutychus' revival or salvation occurs during this sacred celebration. It is the only time Paul brings someone back from death. It emphasizes the power and presence of the LORD in the Eucharist.
- ▶ Paul's actions are similar to those of the OT prophets Elijah and Elisha.

Acts 20:13-16

Part of a Travel Diary?

This is a travel journal that includes “we” passages. Paul bypasses Ephesus to speed up his journey or perhaps to avoid additional conflicts with silversmiths and others.

- ▶ ¹³ We went ahead to the ship and set sail for Assos where **we were** to take Paul on board, as he had arranged, since he was going overland. ¹⁴ **When he met us** in Assos, we took him aboard and went on to Mitylene. ¹⁵ **We sailed** away from there on the next day and reached a point off Chios, and a day later we reached Samos, and on the following day **we arrived** at Miletus. ¹⁶ Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus in order not to lose time in the province of Asia, for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if at all possible, for the day of Pentecost.

PAUL'S THIRD JOURNEY



On the way to Jerusalem Paul bypasses Ephesus

The Seven Churches of Revelation



Ephesus Rev 2:17

Acts 19

Smyrna Rev 2:8-11

Pergamum Rev 2:13-17

Acts 16:7-8, Paul

passed through the region of Mysia, where Pergamum is located

Thyatira Rev 2:18-19

Acts 19

Sardis Rev 3:1-6

Philadelphia Rev 3:7-13

Laodicea Rev 3:14-22

Col 2:1

Acts 20:17-21

Paul summons the elders of Ephesus

- ▶ ¹⁷ From Miletus he had the presbyters of the church at Ephesus summoned. ¹⁸ When they came to him, he addressed them, “You know how I lived among you the whole time from the day I first came to the province of Asia. ¹⁹ I served the Lord with all humility and with the tears and trials that came to me because of the plots of the Jews, ²⁰ and I did not at all shrink from telling you what was for your benefit, or from teaching you in public or in your homes. ²¹ I earnestly bore witness for both Jews and Greeks to repentance before God and to faith in our Lord Jesus.

Paul begins his address to the Ephesians

- ▶ Here Paul reminds the presbyters of how humbly he taught them.
- ▶ He bore witness to both Jews and Gentiles both publicly and in their homes.
- ▶ Looking out for their good.
- ▶ Here he leaves them with a reminder of the core of his message.
 1. The need for repentance
 2. The importance of faith in Jesus Christ.



Paul continues to speak to the elders from Ephesus Acts 20:22-24

- ▶ ²² But now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem. What will happen to me there I do not know, ²³ except that in one city after another the holy Spirit has been warning me that imprisonment and hardships await me. ²⁴ Yet I consider life of no importance to me, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to bear witness to the gospel of God's grace.

Paul is ready to die for Christ. The Spirit has warned him that imprisonment and possibly death await him. He is warning his disciples of what is to come.

Acts 20:25-30

- ▶ “But now I know that none of you to whom I preached the kingdom during my travels will ever see my face again. ²⁶ And so I solemnly declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, ²⁷ for I did not shrink from proclaiming to you the entire plan of God. ²⁸ Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, in which you tend the church of God that he acquired with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure savage wolves will come among you, and they will not spare the flock. ³⁰ And from your own group, men will come forward perverting the truth to draw the disciples away after them.

Sheep and Shepherds



- ▶ Paul describes the faithful as the flock and the presbyters or elders and the shepherds.
- ▶ These Elders and Presbyters are given responsibility for the believers and for their own safety and spiritual health. They would also be responsible for financial funds for the widows and orphans. They are teachers and ministers. Paul insists that the Holy Spirit chose them, and works through them.
- ▶ The Greek the word Paul used is “episkopous” in these verses. These men are to be ***overseers, guardians or shepherds*** of the community. These men will later be called ***bishops***.

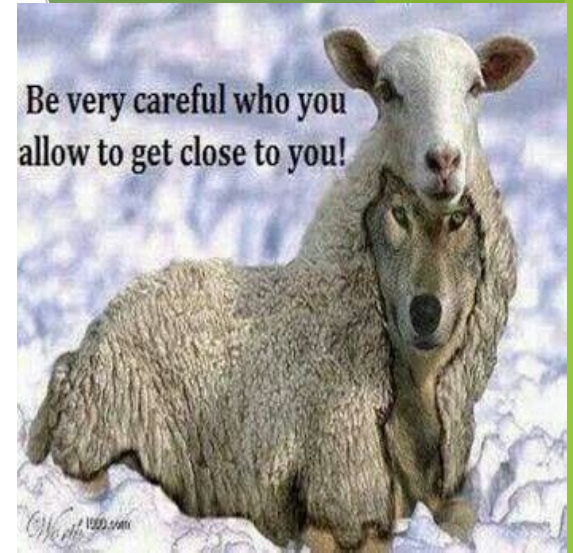
Warnings

- ▶ Paul warns them that he will never return to Ephesus. His death is imminent.
- ▶ The flock will be attacked both by people outside of the Church and from within once Paul is gone.
- ▶ Paul warns that there are those who will come and preach a different gospel from what he had preached. He calls these false teachers, who pervert the Word, wolves who attack the flock. They are false prophets. Some will emerge from among their own community.
- ▶ Paul's letters suggest that false teachers had already emerged.



False teachers and Prophets in the Epistles

- ▶ 1 Timothy 4:1-2 ¹ Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the last times some will turn away from the faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and demonic instructions ² through the hypocrisy of liars with branded consciences.
- ▶ Ephesians 5:6 ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty arguments, for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the disobedient. ⁷ So do not be associated with them.



Paul's heart is heavy

Acts 20:31-35

- ▶ ³¹ So be vigilant and remember that for three years, night and day, I unceasingly admonished each of you with tears. ³² And now I commend you to God and to that gracious word of his that can build you up and give you the inheritance among all who are consecrated. ³³ I have never wanted anyone's silver or gold or clothing. ³⁴ You know well that these very hands have served my needs and my companions. ³⁵ In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort we must help the weak, and keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Final thoughts for the Ephesian Elders



- ▶ After three years of teaching, correcting and admonishing, Paul now turns the leaders of the Ephesus Church over to the grace of God and the blessings of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ The grace of God will build them up and provide a place for them among the saints.
- ▶ He again emphasizes the virtue of work, especially work that supports the self, the poor and needy.

Final farewell and prayer

Acts 20:36-38

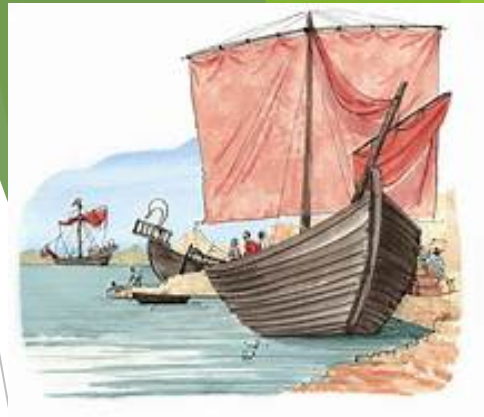
- ▶ ³⁶ When he had finished speaking he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ They were all weeping loudly as they threw their arms around Paul and kissed him, ³⁸ for they were deeply distressed that he had said that they would never see his face again. Then they escorted him to the ship.

Paul ends his discourse by joining his friends, disciples and Ephesian leaders in heartfelt prayer.



Quick Review

- ▶ Paul leaves Ephesus after the riot of the silversmiths.
- ▶ He travels to Macedonia where he wrote 1 Corinthians in 57AD.
- ▶ He goes from there to Greece and stays for 3 months, until a plot against Paul is uncovered.
- ▶ He returns to Corinth, his third visit there. He goes back to Macedonia and then to Philippi, and on to Troas after Passover/feast of unleavened bread. Seven men from various churches join Paul.
- ▶ They gather together to celebrate the Eucharist where Paul talks until midnight at least. A young man named Eutychus falls asleep as Paul is speaking and falls out of a third story window and is declared to be dead.



Review

- ▶ Paul, in a similar manner as the prophets Elijah and Elisha, revives Eutychus. So during the celebration of death and resurrection of Jesus, a man is brought back to life. Paul continues with the breaking of the bread and the faithful continue to talk until daylight.
- ▶ Paul continues his journey by land for a bit and meets the ship with his companions again in Assos. From there they travel to Mitylene, to Chicos, Samos and Miletus.
- ▶ In Miletus he sends for the elders of Ephesus and delivers a farewell address. They will not see him again. He prays for the elders and warns them about false teachers and prophets.
- ▶ **He emphasizes the need for repentance, faith in Jesus Christ, work, humility and a responsibility to give to the poor and needy.**
- ▶ They all pray together before Paul leaves again by ship.

What do we take away from this lesson?

- ▶ Contemplate the times in our own lives when we have been driven or guided by the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ If we don't allow some quiet time alone with God in prayer or contemplation, how will we hear God?
- ▶ When we gather together in prayer to celebrate Eucharist, Jesus Christ is truly binding us together as one body.
- ▶ We should beware of false prophets or teachers who distort the message of Sacred Scripture for their own nefarious purpose.
- ▶ Paul reminds us that it is important to be humble, to work honestly, to be repentant, and to love Jesus Christ.
- ▶ We are called to give to the poor and needy. It is better to give than to receive.

Let us pray

Dear Lord open our eyes to the wonder of your creation and to the power of your love and grace in our lives every day.

Be with us and inspire us as we reflect on the sacred words of scripture that we read today. Open our hearts so that the words we read, and the example of the faithful that have gone before of us will produce genuine change in our lives.

We pray that from the inspiration of Scripture we will go into the world being doers of the word, and not hearers only.

Holy Spirit, go before us always. Amen