Acts Part 43

"Riot in Ephesus"



1 And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. 2 And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."



3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." 4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus."

5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. 7 There were about twelve men in all.

8 And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. 9 But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus and prevail mightily.

10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.



11 And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.

13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims." 14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this.

15 But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" 16 And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

17 And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. 18 Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices.

19 And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.



21 Now after these things were finished, Paul resolved in the Spirit to go to Jerusalem after he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."



22 And after he sent into Macedonia two of those who assisted him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.



23 About that time a major disturbance occurred in regard to the Way.



24 For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, was bringing considerable business to the craftsmen; 25 he gathered these men together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, "Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business.

26 You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made by hands are not gods at all.



27 Not only is there danger that this trade of ours will fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be regarded as worthless, and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence."

28 When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began shouting, saying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 29 The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's Macedonian traveling companions.

30 And when Paul wanted to go into the assembly, the disciples would not let him. 31 Also some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his sent word to him and repeatedly urged him not to venture into the theater.



32 So then, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the assembly was in confusion and the majority did not know for what reason they had come together.



33 Some of the crowd concluded it was Alexander, since the Jews had put him forward; and having motioned with his hand, Alexander was intending to make a defense to the assembly.



34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, a single outcry arose from them all as they shouted for about two hours, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"



35 After quieting the crowd, the town clerk said, "Men of Ephesus, what person is there after all who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of the image which fell down from the sky?



36 So, since these are undeniable facts, you ought to keep calm and to do nothing rash. 37 For you have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess.



38 So then, if Demetrius and the craftsmen who are with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are in session and proconsuls are available; have them bring charges against one another. 39 But if you want anything beyond this, it shall be settled in the lawful assembly.

40 For indeed, we are in danger of being accused of a riot in connection with today's events, since there is no real reason for it, and in this connection we will be unable to account for this disorderly gathering." 41 After saying this he dismissed the assembly.

