

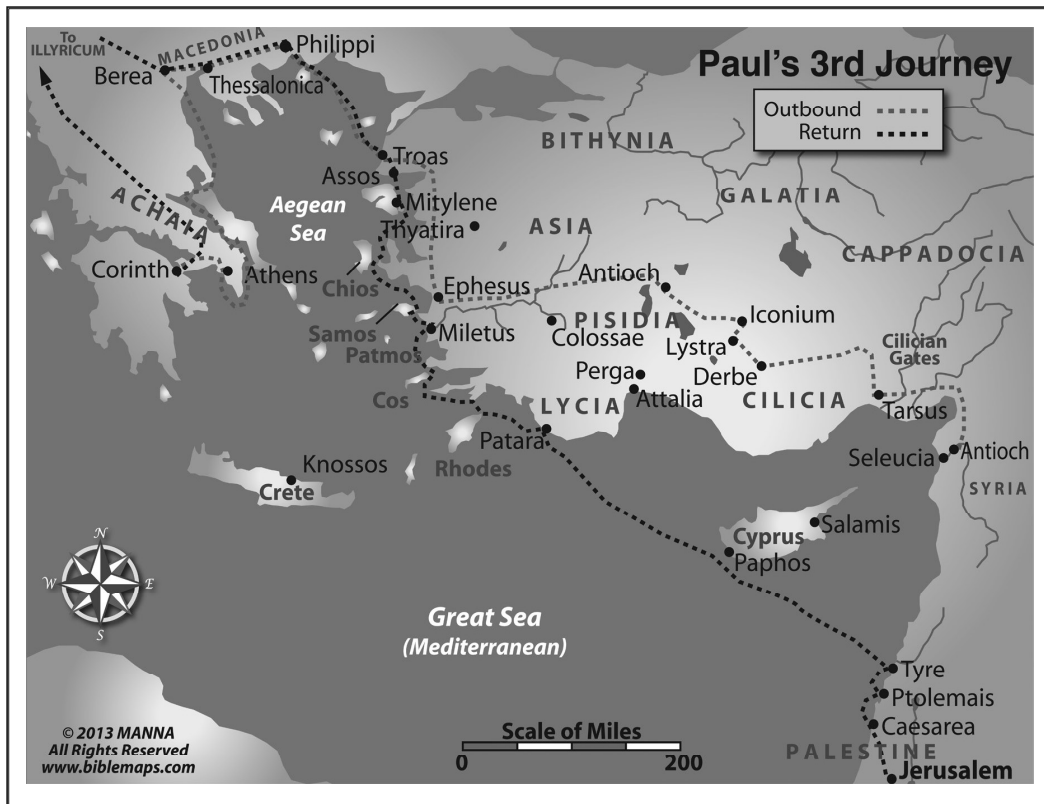
**Acts 19****Lesson 18  
At Ephesus****Outline**

- I. Twelve Disciples are Baptized and Receive the Holy Spirit** (vv. 1-7)
- A. *Had not received the Holy Spirit since they were only baptized with John's baptism* (vv. 1-4)
  - B. *Baptized in the name of the Lord* (v. 5)
  - C. *Received the Holy Spirit* (v. 6)
  - D. *The number was twelve* (v. 7)
- II. Paul Preached and Disputed with the Jews** (vv. 8-10)
- A. *In the synagogue for about three months* (vv. 8-9a)
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- III. Miracles and Exorcists** (vv. 11-20)
- A. *God wrought unusual miracles by Paul* (vv. 11-12)
  - B. *Exorcists exposed* (vv. 13-17)
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- IV. Paul Planned for a Future Journey** (vv. 21-22)
- A. *Planned to go to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem and Rome* (v. 21)
  - B. *Sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia* (v. 22)
- V. Uproar over Idolatry** (vv. 23-41)
- A. *Demetrius stirred up the people* (vv. 23-28)
  - B. *A demonstration in the theater* (vv. 29-34)
  - C. *The city clerk appeased the people and dismissed the assembly* (vv. 35-41)
    1. *Since Ephesus was the guardian of the temple of Diana, ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly* (vv. 35-36)
    2. *If there were other charges, the courts were open* (vv. 37-39)
    3. *Dismissed the disorderly meeting* (vv. 40-41)

**Key Verse that Summarizes the Chapter****Acts 19:10**

*And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*

In the last chapter (18:23), the third missionary journey begins. Paul revisits the churches established on the first journey. While Apollos is at Corinth, Paul arrives at Ephesus (v. 1). This chapter is devoted to his work in that city. He makes a brief visit there on the previous journey (18:18-21). When he leaves, he says he will return “God willing” (18:21). He leaves Aquila and Priscilla there as he moves on. He is now back as he promised.



### Twelve Disciples are Baptized and Receive the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-7)

*Had not received the Holy Spirit since they were only baptized with John's baptism (vv. 1-4). Arriving at Ephesus, he found some disciples. These were not Christians for they had not been baptized in the name of the Lord (v. 5). This simply means they were learners, pupils or students of John's teaching.<sup>1</sup>*

Paul asked if they had received the Holy Spirit since they believed (v. 2).<sup>2</sup> They said, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit" (v. 2).<sup>3</sup> So Paul asked, "into what

- 1 "They were disciples of the teaching of Christianity *to the limited extent that John had proclaimed them*" (Johnny Stringer, Truth Commentaries, Acts, 389).
- 2 This is a reference to spiritual gifts that were received by the laying on of the Apostles' hands as evidenced by verse 6.
- 3 This most likely means that they didn't know they could receive the Holy Spirit or that He was available to be received. If they were disciples of John's teaching, they must have known something about there being a Holy Spirit (cf. John 1:33-34).

were you baptized?" (v. 3) or "on what basis" were you baptized.<sup>4</sup> They answered, "Into John's baptism" (v. 3).

Paul pointed out that John's baptism was to lead men to believe on Christ (v. 4),<sup>5</sup> which makes it different than the baptism of the Great Commission. The baptism of John was immersion (John 3:23) in water (Matt. 3:11) for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4). In that regard, it was no different than the baptism of the Great Commission. So in what ways were they different?

When one was baptized with John's baptism, he confessed his sins (Matt. 3:6). Under the Great Commission, one who desired to be baptized confessed his faith (Acts 8:37). Those baptized by John were told to later believe on Christ (Acts 19:4). Jesus taught that one was to believe and then be baptized (Mark 16:16). The baptism of John didn't put one in the kingdom (Matt. 3:1-2). One baptized in the name of Christ entered the kingdom of God (John 3:5). John's baptism ceased. The baptism of the Great Commission continues until the end of time (Matt. 28:18-20).

*Baptized in the name of the Lord* (v. 5). When these disciples understood the contrast and difference in the baptisms and that the New Covenant was now in force,<sup>6</sup> they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>7</sup>

*Received the Holy Spirit* (v. 6). Those who had been baptized received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of Paul's hands. This measure of the Spirit was the spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12-14) that was only received by the laying on of an apostles' hand (Acts 8:14-15).

*The number was twelve* (v. 7). The number of the disciples who learned about baptism in the name of the Lord was twelve.

### **Paul Preached and Disputed with the Jews (vv. 8-10)**

*In the synagogue for about three months* (vv. 8-9a). As he did in other cities, he entered the synagogue. He spent three months persuading the people about the kingdom of God (v. 8). This message had to include that Jesus is the Messiah, he was raised from the dead to sit on his throne, and he is ruling and reigning now. His preaching was rejected by some who spoke evil of the Way.<sup>8</sup> Thus, Paul was forced to pull disciples away from the synagogue to another location (v. 9a).

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4 A.T. Robertson, *Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft & Robertson's Word Pictures in the New Testament. Copyright (c) 1985 by Broadman Press).

5 This is the last reference to John the Baptist in the New Testament.

6 Verses 4-5 must be a summary of what Paul said to the twelve disciples, for verse 4 says nothing about baptism in the name of Christ. Yet they wanted to be baptized in the name of Christ (v. 5).

7 From this section, we learn that just because one has been baptized doesn't mean that their baptism fits the pattern of the New Testament.

8 Luke uses the terms "the Way" to designate Christianity, the way of the Lord (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22).

*In the school of Tyrannus for two years* (vv. 9b-10). We don't know who Tyrannus was or what arrangements were made for using the school or lecture room. He continued his teaching daily for two years. It was effective to the point that well beyond Ephesus the word of the Lord Jesus had been heard (v. 10).

### **Miracles and Exorcists (vv. 11-20)**

*God wrought unusual miracles by Paul* (vv. 11-12). Miracles were performed as evidence of the message preached (Mark 16:17-20; Heb. 2:3-4). All miracles are unusual by their nature, being supernatural. However, the miracles in this context were unusual in that they were without personal contact, showing a greater contrast to the exorcist efforts. Handkerchiefs<sup>9</sup> or aprons<sup>10</sup> were brought from Paul's body to the sick then diseases and evil spirits departed from those who made contact with the items.

*Exorcists exposed* (vv. 13-17). There were some traveling exorcists<sup>11</sup> who tried to use the name of the Lord to call out demons (v. 13). There were seven sons of a Jewish chief priest named Sceva who tried this (v. 14). The evil spirit in the man on whom they tried their exorcism said he recognized Jesus and Paul, but not them (v. 15).<sup>12</sup> Then the man overpowered the seven and whipped them all. They fled from the house into the streets of Ephesus naked and wounded (v. 16). What a sight that must have been! How embarrassing! What a failure!

The report of this spread throughout Ephesus causing fear and the name of the Lord to be magnified (v. 17). The people saw the difference and concluded Paul's teaching was correct.

*Many obeyed* (vv. 18-20). Having seen the evidence, many believed (obeyed) and confessed their deeds or magical arts were a fraud (v. 18). Many brought their books about magic<sup>13</sup> and burned them in the presence of all (v. 19). The value was estimated to be about 50,000 pieces of silver.<sup>14</sup> What sacrifice they were willing to make! This was a very strong statement of renouncing the error they were leaving.

The word grew mightily and prevailed (v. 20). This simply means the word was being effective and people responded. Here again is a progress report.

### **Paul Planned for a Future Journey (vv. 21-22)**

*Planned to go to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem and Rome* (v. 21). Paul had planned to go from Ephesus to Macedonia (which would include Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea) and Achaia (which includes Corinth), and then on to Jerusalem and finally Rome. As he later went through Macedonia and Achaia he gathered funds for the poor saints at Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:25-26). After taking the funds to Jerusalem, he planned to go to Rome. He did, but not in the manner he thought. He would go as a prisoner after his arrest (Acts 21).

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9 A towel used to wipe sweat.

10 "Linen aprons used by servants and artisans (Martial XIV. 153). Paul did manual work at Ephesus (Acts 20:34) and so wore these aprons" (A. T. Robertson, *ibid*).

11 Those who claimed to be able to cast out evil spirits.

12 Even evil spirits recognized the difference in the power of God and that which was a fraud.

13 The books that gave them their spells, incantations and charms.

14 A piece of silver would be a day's wage for a common laborer.

*Sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia* (v. 22). Paul sent Timothy<sup>15</sup> and Erastus<sup>16</sup> ahead into Macedonia. The book of 1 Corinthians was written at this point after Timothy had left (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:7-11).<sup>17</sup> Paul stayed for a while longer at Ephesus.

### **Uproar over Idolatry (vv. 23-41)**

*Demetrius stirred up the people* (vv. 23-28). Not everyone was happy about the work Paul was doing. A man named Demetrius, who was a silversmith, stirred the people up by saying that the preaching of Paul was jeopardizing their business of selling shrines of Diana<sup>18</sup> and the temple of the goddess. His complaint indicated Paul's teaching that there were no gods made with hands (v. 26) had spread well beyond Ephesus. With Demetrius' stirring, the people became angry and shouted "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" (v. 28).

*A demonstration in the theater* (vv. 29-34). With the whole city in a tizzy, the crowd rushed into the theater<sup>19</sup> taking Gaius<sup>20</sup> and Aristarchus<sup>21</sup> (both of Macedonia) with them. Paul wanted to go in the theater, no doubt to defend himself and his companions against the charges. The disciples would not permit it (v. 30). Officials, who were friends, also discouraged Paul from going (v. 31).

There was such confusion in the theater, with people shouting different things, that most of those present didn't know the purpose of the gathering (v. 32). The Jews pulled Alexander<sup>22</sup> out of the crowd for him to address the crowd. Maybe some of the Jews wanted someone to clarify that not all Jews were to be identified with Paul and his companions.

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15 This is the first mention of Timothy since he came to Corinth (Acts 18:5).

16 This may be the same Erastus that was the treasurer of Corinth (Rom. 16:23), but we don't know (cf. 2 Tim. 4:20).

17 Timothy would go from Macedonia to Corinth. Paul expected the letter to arrive before Timothy got to Corinth.

18 "This was a celebrated goddess of the pagan, and one of the twelve superior deities. In the heavens she was Luna, or Meui (the moon); on earth, Diana; and in hell, Hecate. She was sometimes represented with a crescent on her head, a bow in her hand, and dressed in a hunting habit; at other times with a triple face, and with instruments of torture. She was commonly regarded as the goddess of hunting. She was also worshipped under the various names of Lucina, Proserpine, Trivia, etc. She was also represented with a great number of breasts, to denote her as being the fountain of blessings, or as distributing her benefits to each in their proper station. She was worshipped in Egypt, Athens, Cilicia, and among pagan nations generally; but the most celebrated place of her worship was Ephesus, a city especially dedicated to her" (Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes*, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by BibleSoft).

19 A large amphitheater that would seat some 25,000.

20 Gaius was a common name. This Gaius was from Macedonia. We cannot identify him with certainty with other references to Gaius (Acts 20:4; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14; 3 John 1). We do know that he was a travel companion of Paul. That association with Paul was, no doubt, the reason for being taken into the theater.

21 "The Aristarchus of this verse may be the Aristarchus of 20:4, for that Aristarchus was of Thessalonica, a city of Macedonia. He traveled with Paul to Rome (27:2) and was associated with him during his imprisonment there (Col. 4:10; Phile. 24)" (Johnny Stringer, *Truth Commentaries, Acts 404*).

22 We don't know who this Alexander is. Any effort to identify him is pure guess.

Since he was a Jew, the crowd reacted by shouting for about two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (v. 34).

*The city clerk appeased the people and dismissed the assembly* (vv. 35-41). The town clerk made four points to the crowd. First, he reasoned saying that no one could deny that Ephesus was the temple guardian of the great goddess Diana. Since that was true, the crowd should settle down and not do anything rash (vv. 35-36). The riot was *useless* "because no one was about to forget the fact that Ephesus was the guardian of the temple of Artemis."<sup>23</sup> Secondly, the town clerk pointed out the riot was *not justified* since these men had not done any wrong (v. 37). The two men that were pulled into the theater were not guilty of any crimes. His third point was that if Demetrius and the other craftsmen had a legitimate charge against these men, let them settle that in the proper court (vv. 38-39). His final point was that they were in danger of being in trouble with the Roman government for having an unlawful assembly (v. 40).

With that, the crowd was dismissed.

## Questions

1. In what sense were the twelve called "disciples"? \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. What does it mean that these twelve didn't know whether there was a Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. What was the difference in John's baptism and the baptism of the Great Commission? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_
4. Do all Christians today receive the Holy Spirit like the twelve? \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. How effective was Paul's work for two years in the school of Tyrannus? \_\_\_\_\_  
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<sup>23</sup> Gareth L. Reese, *Acts*, 696.

6. What made the miracles of Paul (vv. 11-12) "unusual"? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What caused the people to see that Paul's teaching was true (v. 17)? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What progress reports are found in this chapter? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. Who stirred up the riot and why? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. What four points did the town clerk make? \_\_\_\_\_

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