**May 12, 2021**

**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

588 S.E. 7th Street, Webster, FL 33597; (352) 568-5570

**Bishop James Hall, Pastor**

**Bishop M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**“NO SMALL STIR ABOUT THAT WAY”**

**Acts 19:21-41**

***Acts 19:21 "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."***

Paul had determined to pass through Macedonia and Achaia again (the territory he covered during his second missionary journey) and then go to Jerusalem. After that, his goal was to visit and proclaim the gospel in Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire. Paul, among other things, was a Roman citizen. He was concerned about the Romans You remember God had sent him to the Gentiles. We see that Paul's journey, checking on all of the churches he had started, was quickly done.

***Acts 19:22 "So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season."***

***Acts 19:23 "And the same time there arose no small stir about that way."***

Timothy had been an understudy of Paul's, and anything Timothy might say would be as if Paul himself were speaking. This is the first mention of Erastus. Erastus seems to have been a Corinthian. This is undoubtedly speaking of here at Ephesus where Paul stayed. He was a city treasurer or steward. At any rate, he was a chamberlain of the city. He was probably at Ephesus with Paul and Timothy. Paul sent them to Macedonia to check on the churches for him while he remained in Asia. While there, a major disturbance occurred about “that way.” “The Way” was an early name referring to Christianity (Acts 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22), because Jesus was “The Way” (John 14:6). “The Way” also represented the new life of believers as they followed the pattern of their Messiah. Wherever Paul preached, two things would regularly happen: believers were delivered, got saved, changed their behavior, and unbelievers got mad. That pattern was about to repeat itself.

***2 Corinthians 1:8-11***

***8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:***

***9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:***

***10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;***

***11 Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.***

***2 Timothy 3:12 “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”***

***Acts 19:24 "For a certain [man] named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen;"***

This stir is over the false goddess Diana. The people here carried around small silver images of Diana that they thought would bring them good luck. These were like charms on a charm bracelet or necklaces with this charm on them. Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, and his fellow craftsmen were annoyed. Artemis was a Greek goddess (known among the Romans as “Diana”), and Ephesus was home to the great temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It was the major Ephesian tourist attraction; people from all over Asia visited it to worship. But a problem arose, an economic one. Of course, Demetrius had made some bigger images to set around in their houses, as well. Demetrius was making a lot of money doing this.

***Acts 19:25 "Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth."***

***Acts 19:26 "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:"***

***Acts 19:27 "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."***

As a result of Paul preaching that gods made by hand are not gods, many people had stopped buying the idolatrous trinkets produced by Demetrius and his comrades. People were coming to Christ and tossing their Artemis statues in the trash. Thus, these craftsmen were watching their religion suffer and their business flat line and they weren’t happy. The great concern that these craftsmen have, is that there will no longer be a market for their images they have graven. If all the people became Christians, they would be out of business. They have called an emergency meeting to try to stop Paul and this Christianity he preaches. An eternal Godly principle is that you should always value “people (souls)” over “profit (sales).”

***Mark 8:36-37***

***36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?***

***37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?***

***Acts 19:28 "And when they heard [these sayings], they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great [is] Diana of the Ephesians."***

We see from this that Paul has brought a direct attack upon the images that they worship as gods. These men were really not concerned with this false goddess. They were afraid they would not have any way of making a living. This Diana had supposedly fallen from heaven and there was widespread worship of this false goddess. Demetrius worked the crowd into a frenzy so that they began shouting, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!

***Acts 19:29 "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."***

This created much confusion in the city. We see some who have received Christ as Saviour and others who are still worshipping this false goddess Diana. People wanted to know what was going on. It appears that Paul was not with them at the time, so they grabbed two of the men travelling with Paul and brought them to the place of trial in the theatre. The amphitheater seated approximately 24,000 people.

***Acts 19:30 "And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not."***

Here we see the bravery of Paul. He has gone into an encampment of people worshipping the false goddess and has set them on the path to true righteousness in Jesus Christ. Paul is truly a brave man for Christ. He wanted to turn himself in so that they would release Gaius and Aristachus, but the other disciples held him back. They knew how valuable Paul's ministry was and they wanted no harm coming to him.

***Acts 19:31 "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."***

***Acts 19:32 "Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together."***

These people feared the worst, if Paul showed up in the theatre. These were people who knew how bad it could become, and they kept Paul back. We see here a mob gathered, not even knowing what the charges were. They were gathered for the excitement. The townspeople had lost it! The atmosphere was no longer safe. Confused shouting continued, and many people didn’t even know why they were there. They were just going with the flow.

***Acts 19:33 "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."***

***Acts 19:34 "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."***

When a Jewish believer named Alexander attempted to talk, they simply shouted him down. This Alexander is a mystery. Most believe that he was a Jew, and he came out of the multitude to make the statement that he was not with the Christians and did not want to be blamed along with them. Some view him as a converted Jew, who is at this time a Christian, and therefore comes to defend Paul and his companions. The people didn’t want to hear about this Jewish Messiah who was a rival to their goddess. Instead, they shouted about Artemis’s greatness for two hours. We can see from this just how strongly embedded this worship of this false goddess Diana was. They had shrines to her everywhere.

***Acts 19:35 "And when the townclerk 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?"***

This town clerk is trying to calm these people down. He reminds them that it is a well-known fact that they worship this false goddess. It was not unusual for people to worship the sun, moon, or stars. In fact, many people still do. The fault in that type of worship is that they are worshipping the created and not the Creator.

***Acts 19:36 "Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly."***

***Acts 19:37 "For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches, nor yet blasphemers of your goddess."***

Finally, the city clerk who was responsible for keeping the city records and managing the temple funds, appeared before the crowd in an attempt to pacify them. This town clerk who seems to be presiding over this incident, calmly tells them that these men have not broken any laws, so they have no reason to try them. He even goes so far as to say that they have not cursed the goddess Diana, either. He was conciliatory. He said, in essence, “Of course Artemis is great. Everyone is on the same page about this, so please chill!”

***Acts 19:38 "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."***

***Acts 19:39 "But if ye inquire any thing concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly."***

***Acts 19:40 "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."***

***Acts 19:41 "And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly."***

Next, he urged Demetrius and any others who had a case against anyone to bring it to the courts and follow the legal process. The word “implead” means bring to account. He says here, if you can come up with a legal complaint about any of this, take it to a legal court. He is really saying that this riot was illegal. The high courts might arrest them all for disturbance. Finally, he told them that if they wanted to worry about something, he could give them something to worry about: We run a risk of being charged (by Rome) with rioting. Nobody wanted Roman legions coming against the city! So, with these words the city clerk calmed the assembly and dismissed them. He told them to all go home. The word translated “assembly” here is the Greek word ekklēsia. When it refers to the assembly of believers, it’s translated “church.” When Jesus and the apostles started speaking of the church, they were not coining a new term. It was a common word used to speak of a gathering of people to address an issue, especially one legal in nature. The church of Jesus Christ is God’s legally authorized assembly on earth to draw down heaven to execute the will of God in history.

***Matthew 16:18-19***

***18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***

***19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.***

**QUESTIONS**

1. Paul purposed in his heart to go to what two places when he left Macedonia?
2. Which two people did Paul send to Macedonia in his place?
3. Where did Paul stay for a season?
4. Where had Erastus come from?
5. Why had Paul sent them to Macadonia?
6. What is the stir in verse 23 over?
7. Who is the silversmith mentioned in verse 24?
8. What was he making for his living?
9. Who did Demetrius call together?
10. Verse 26 tells how Paul had turned whom away from the worship of Diana?
11. Who did they call Diana in verse 28?
12. What two companions of Paul did the people grab up?
13. Where did they take them?
14. What brave thing did Paul try to do that the disciples stopped him from doing?
15. In verse 32, we read that the assembly was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
16. This assembly could be called a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
17. Who was Alexander?
18. What did this mob cry out for two hours?
19. Who came to settle all of this?
20. Why did they worship Diana?
21. What two things did the clerk say in defense of Paul's men?
22. Who did he reprimand in verse 38?
23. What does the word implead mean?
24. What did the clerk warn them that they were in danger of?
25. What did the clerk do after he spoke?