

### III. THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY OF PAUL

#### A. THE COURSE WHICH PAUL WAS LED TO TAKE ON HIS THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Acts 18:23-21:14).

1. Paul departed from Antioch, Syria and went through Phrygia and Galatia strengthening the disciples and came to Ephesus (Acts 18:23).

- a. Some of the places he visited along the way.

Paul's journey took him through Tarsus, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, Pisidia.

- b. Some things about Ephesus and its people.

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. There stood the great Temple of Diana the goddess who was worshipped. Situated also at Ephesus was an open-air theatre which could seat some 50,000 spectators to watch the fights of beasts as well as men against beasts (Easton's Bible Dictionary).

- c. The events which occurred at Ephesus.

- (1) It was at Ephesus that Aquila and Priscilla instructed Apollos who was, at that time, a disciple of John the Baptist (Acts 18:24-27). Aquila and Priscilla had been converted to Christ by Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-3).

- (2) It was at Ephesus that Paul met some disciples of John the Baptist and led them to faith in Christ (Acts 19:1-7).

Notice these men were not believers who were saved and had not received the Holy Spirit as some erroneously teach, they had not believed on Christ and consequently had not received the Holy Spirit. They had not been at Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given. When they believed on Christ they were baptized in His name and received the Holy Spirit when Paul laid hands upon them. Notice also the speaking of other tongues was a sign to these Jewish believers to authenticate the gospel message and the method by which they received the Holy Spirit authenticated Paul as Christ's messenger.

- (3) Paul taught in the synagogue and other places in Ephesus for three years (Acts 19:8-10; 20:31). During this time God wrought all kind of miracles by the hand of Paul (19:11,12).

- (4) While Paul was at Ephesus, certain Jews, who came there, tried to emulate Paul's apostolic powers, but this back-fired on them (Acts 19:13-17).

- (5) Notice during Paul's stay at Ephesus the Word of God grew, people were saved, and their lives were changed (Acts 19:18-20).

(6) Then Paul purposed in the Spirit, or was being led by the Spirit, to go into Macedonia and Achaia, then to Jerusalem and finally to Rome. Therefore, he sent Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia while he tarried still at Ephesus (Acts 19:21-22).

(7) Notice while Paul tarried at Ephesus, Demetrius the silversmith stirred up strife against Paul and there was an uproar and confusion in all the city against Paul and his companions (Acts 19:23-41).

d. The epistles which Paul wrote from Ephesus.

During the three years that Paul stayed at Ephesus he wrote the first epistle to the Corinthian Church (AD 57).

e. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 18:24-26: Notice, while Apollos was eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures, he needed to be taught some things and he was willing to learn. Oftentimes men go out preaching and need to be taught but they won't listen to others who know the truth.

(2) Notice Acts 19:1-7 has been greatly misapplied by charismatic tongues-speaking groups of our day. They often contend that a person can be saved and not have the Holy Spirit. And then, when a believer gets the Holy Spirit, he will evidence it by speaking in tongues. Such an interpretation is faulty and unscriptural because it fails to consider the context of the passage and its dispensational truth. Note Rom. 8:9.

(3) Acts 19:6: We should also note that the miraculous powers given to the apostles to authenticate the gospel message ceased and are not operative in our day as some contend.

(4) Acts 19:13-16: Notice, just as there were some who tried to exercise apostolic powers like Paul, there are some trying to do the same thing in our day. There are exorcists who claim to cast out demons in Jesus' name.

(5) Acts 19:10: In Paul's extended stay in Ephesus we can see the value and outcome of those who faithfully teach the truth to others.

(6) Acts 19:23-41: Notice once again when the gospel is preached the devil will stir up opposition against God's messengers.

2. After the uproar at Ephesus, Paul then departed and went into Macedonia (Acts 20:1). Then after going over those parts he went into Greece (Acts 20:2,3).

a. The places Paul must have visited in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece.

Paul and his companions probably passed from Ephesus north through Mitylene, Assos, Troas and then sailed over to Macedonia. In Macedonia, they no doubt visited Philippi, Thessalonica, and then sailed to Corinth,

Greece where Paul stayed for 3 months.

- b. Certain persons mentioned in Paul's party (Acts 20:4,5). Note these went before Paul and tarried at Troas.
- c. The epistles which Paul wrote from Macedonia and Corinth.

From Macedonia Paul wrote the second epistle to the Corinthian Church (AD 57). Then during the three months Paul stayed at Corinth he wrote the epistle to the Romans (AD 58).

- 3. When certain Jews plotted against Paul he left Corinth and went back through Macedonia to Philippi (Acts 20:3). Then from Philippi he and others of his company sailed to Troas and joined the others of his missionary party (Acts 20:6).

- a. Some things about this place.

Troas was a seaport city on the coast of Mysia which was in north-western Asia Minor. It was there that Paul had seen a man of Macedonia in a vision during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:8-11).

- b. Events which occurred at Troas.

(1) It took Paul and his company a 5 days' journey from Philippi to Troas (Acts 20:6).

(2) Paul and his companions abode there 7 days and met together on Sunday with certain disciples for the Lord's supper and preaching. Paul preached on and continued to midnight. During that time a young man named Eutychus, who had fallen asleep, fell from the third loft of the building and was taken up dead. Paul embraced the young man and brought him back to life (Acts 20:7-12).

- c. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 20:7: We should note that the disciples of the Lord met together on the first day of the week, or Sunday, for fellowship and preaching. This was in remembrance of the Lord's resurrection.

(2) Acts 20:7: We ought to have a hunger for the Word of God like the disciples at Troas. Too often today, believers are too time-conscious and get out of sorts if a preaching service is a little lengthy.

- 4. From Troas Paul traveled afoot to Assos, while Luke and the others took a ship (Acts 20:13).

- 5. At Assos Paul joined others of the missionary party and they sailed from Assos to Mitylene, then to Chios. From Chios they sailed to Samos, then to Trogyllium, and then arrived at Miletus (Acts 20:14-15).

- a. The reason for taking this route.

There seems to be two reasons for taking this particular route. Paul desired to see the believers at Ephesus again and secondly, he wanted to be at Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost (Acts 20:16). He no doubt saw this time as an opportunity to reach others with the gospel of Christ.

b. The special event which occurred at Miletus.

(1) From Miletus Paul sent for the elders of the church in Ephesus to meet him. And when they were assembled, Paul gave them a farewell address in which he exhorted them and encouraged them to continue in their labors for the Lord (Acts 20:17-35).

(2) Paul then prayed with them and they embraced one another and wept together. Then they accompanied Paul to the ship to see his face for the last time (Acts 20:36-38).

c. Some applications we can make from this event.

(1) Acts 20:17, 36-38: We ought to have Godly affections for fellow-believers and desire to fellowship with them.

(2) Acts 20:24: We would do well to have some determination, like Paul, to finish the course which the Lord has given us.

(3) Acts 20:28: We ought to recognize and respect those whom God has set over His flocks.

(4) Acts 20:29-30: We need to beware of those who would destroy the work of God by drawing others away with them.

(5) Acts 20:33-35: We would do well to have a testimony like Paul had among the Ephesian believers.

6. From Miletus Paul and his missionary companions sailed to Cos, then on to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. Finally they arrived at Tyre, Syria (Acts 21:1-3).

a. What happened at Tyre.

Paul and his missionary party tarried 7 days at Tyre. While there, Paul found disciples who warned him, by the Spirit, not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:4).

Since the ministry of the Holy Spirit had been to witness to Paul of trials ahead (Acts 20:22,23), this apparently referred to the Spirits' warning not to go at that present time.

b. How Paul responded to these disciples and to the Holy Spirit's warning.

Apparently Paul waited at this time as the Holy Spirit had warned him, so after he had stayed seven days with these disciples he went to take ship again. As he went, these disciples followed him and when they had prayed on the shore

Paul and his company departed (Acts 21:5,6).

7. From Tyre Paul and his companions sailed to Ptolemais, stayed one day and then sailed to Caesarea (Acts 21:7,8).

a. What happened at Caesarea.

Paul and his companions stayed in the house of Philip, the evangelist, for many days. While there, a prophet from Judea named Agabus came and warned Paul, by the Spirit, not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:9-11).

b. How Paul responded to this second warning.

Although the disciples of Philip's house and Paul's fellow-workers besought him not to go, Paul was determined to go to Jerusalem. So Paul and his party, with certain other disciples, went up to Jerusalem (Acts 21:12-16).

8. After a series of devastating events Paul was then sent as a prisoner to Rome (Acts 21:17-28:31).

a. The events which occurred after Paul's return to Jerusalem (Acts 21:17-26:1).

(1) Paul first met with the brethren and shared how God had worked among the Gentiles (Acts 21:17-20).

(2) To avoid confrontation between Paul, and what he preached, and the Jews who kept the law, the disciples encouraged Paul to take a Jewish vow so the Jews would think that he was keeping the law.

But Jews from Asia saw him and stirred up the people who began to beat Paul and would have killed him, but a Roman captain rescued him from them (Acts 21:20-32).

(3) Paul was then bound by the Roman soldiers, and the chief captain allowed him to speak to the Jews, so the reason for the uproar could be determined. Paul then recounted how he was converted to Christ but the Jews, after listening for awhile, sought to kill him (Acts 21:33-22:23).

(4) Next, the chief captain commanded the soldiers to take Paul to the barracks and scourge him so he could understand what he had done. But when Paul made it known that he was a Roman, the chief captain commanded the Jewish council to convene and set Paul before them (Acts 22:24-30).

(5) As Paul appealed to the Pharisees, of the council concerning the resurrection, this caused a division between them and the Sadducees and caused such dissension that the chief captain commanded his soldiers to take Paul to the barracks (Acts 23:1-10).

(6) When the chief captain learned of a Jewish plot to kill Paul he assembled an escort and sent Paul by night to Caesarea, along with a letter to Felix, the governor. When Felix read the letter he put Paul in Herod's judgment hall until his accusers would arrive (Acts 23:11-35).

- (7) After five days the high priest and elders came and accused Paul before Felix. When Paul gave his defense Felix deferred Paul's case giving him certain liberties. Several times for the next two years Felix communed with Paul and heard of his faith in Christ hoping that Paul would give him money to be released. But when Festus took Felix's place he left Paul bound as a favor to the Jews (Acts 24).
- (8) Next Paul was brought before Festus. But when Festus, seeking to do a favor for the Jews, asked Paul if he would go up to Jerusalem and be judged, Paul appealed unto Caesar (Acts 25:1-12).
- (9) After some days when King Agrippa and Bernice came to visit Festus, he informed them of Paul's cause. He then wanted to hear Paul's defense and when he had heard it, he declared that Paul could have been set free if he had not appealed unto Caesar (Acts 25:13-26:32).

b. The events which occurred on the voyage to Rome.

- (1) Paul was then delivered, with other prisoners, to a certain centurion and they sailed from Caesarea to Sidon, then from there to Myra and then to Fair Havens near the city of Lasea. There Paul tried to warn the sailors and the centurion of trouble ahead, but they would not listen (Acts 27:1-12).
- (2) After the ship carrying Paul loosed from Fair Havens, it ran into a storm near the island of Cauda that threatened their lives and drove them for some fourteen days. On the fourteenth day Paul encouraged them all with the certain words which the Lord had given him and exhorted them to eat. Finally, they were able to run the ship aground on an island called Melita (Acts 27:13-28:1).
- (3) After being helped by the people of the island, Paul was used of the Lord in certain miraculous ways and the people honored them with the things they needed (Acts 28:2-10).
- (4) Then after three months Paul, along with the other prisoners and crew, sailed from Melita to Syracuse, then Rhegium, then Puteoli and on to Rome (Acts 28:11-15).

c. The events which occurred after Paul reached Rome.

- (1) At Rome Paul was allowed to dwell by himself with a soldier who kept him (Acts 28:16).
- (2) After three days Paul called the elders of the Jews together and explained his situation. The Jews waited to hear of Paul's beliefs so a day was appointed and many came to the place where Paul lodged and he persuaded them concerning Jesus from morning till evening. As a result, some believed, but the others departed disputing among themselves (Acts 28:17-29).

(3) Paul then dwelt two years in his own house and had the liberty to preach the things of Christ to all that came unto him (Acts 28:30,31).

d. The epistles which Paul wrote from Rome.

From Rome Paul wrote the epistles to the Ephesians, the Colossians, and the Philippians. During that time he also wrote Philemon, I and II Timothy and Titus.

e. Some applications we can make from these events.

(1) Acts 21:20-30 is certainly an application of I Cor. 9:19-23.

(2) From Acts 23:17-22 we can see that God has a way of protecting His people from those who would do us harm.

(3) From Acts 27:13-28:1 we can see God's protection in times of trial.

(4) From Acts 28:17-29 we see once again the two-fold result when the gospel is preached.