

## "There Arose No Little Disturbance"

- **Chapter 19 of Acts details a riot that occurred in response to the spread of the gospel in Asia Minor.**

*In Chapter 19, we can observe four possible responses to the gospel:*

1. The way of Paul : to take up your cross and follow Christ (vv. 21-22).
2. The way of profit: to evaluate the situation in terms of what's in it for me (vv. 23-27) .
3. The way of protest : to violently demand the return of the way things have always been. (vv. 28-34).
4. The way of politics: to argue that the demands of Jesus need not disrupt our lives (vv 35-41).

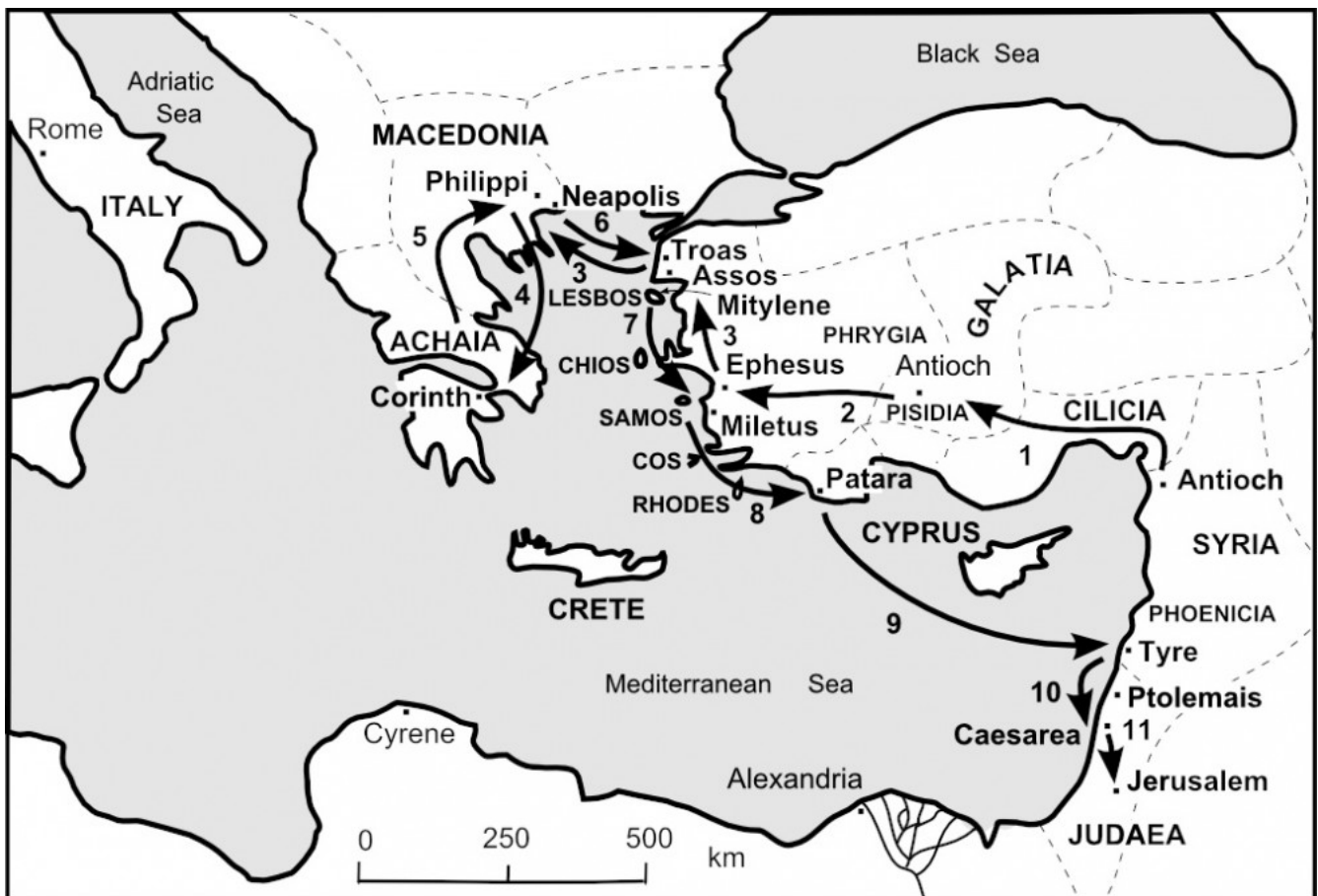
**Next Week:** Acts 20:1-16 "A Young Man Named Eutychus"

# Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of August 4th-10th

## Context

1. Paul left Antioch on his third missionary journey back in Acts 18:23. After visiting the churches in Galatia and Phrygia, he arrived in Ephesus and remained there for about 3 years (Acts 20:31). According to verse 21, Paul planned to go to Jerusalem by way of Macedonia and Achaia??? (See map below). Why did he plan to go by this route? Because of his pattern of revisiting established churches? (Acts 15:36-16:5, 18:23) Another reason? (1 Cor 16:1-4, Rom 15:24-32) Why do you think Luke doesn't mention this intent? Did he know about it? (see Acts 24:17)



2. Paul is aware that his reception in Jerusalem might not be entirely positive, yet he is determined to go there. Why do you think that is? (see Rom 9:1-5, Acts 1:8, 9:15-16) Do you think there is any parallel with another individual who set his face to go to Jerusalem? (see Luke 9:51, 13:31-35, Mark 10:33-34)

## Observation

3. This passage follows the narrative about the Sons of Sceva (Acts 19:11-20). Before discussing the riot in Ephesus, Luke describes Paul's plans and preparations for travel to Rome by way of Macedonia, Achaia, and Jerusalem. Why do you think Luke placed verses 21-22 between these two narratives? How are the narratives connected with Paul's plan and one another?
4. The riot in Ephesus is referred to as "no little disturbance concerning the Way." Disciples began to be referred to as Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26) and the term is again used in Acts 26:28, but the usual term is "the Way." (9:2, 19:9, 23, 22:4, 24:14, 22). Reflect on the following Old Testament passages and consider what the term may imply, as well as its relevance in terms of the Jewish (Acts 19:9) and Gentile (Acts 19:23) responses (Ex 32:8, Pss 1:6, 119:101, 104, 128, Prov 8:20, 12:15, 28). What is the significance that Jesus used this term to describe himself? (Jn 14:6)

## Meaning

5. In verse 36, the town clerk refers to a "sacred stone that fell from the sky." There is no other historical reference to such a stone in Ephesus, but the playwright, Euripides, referred to a meteorite worshiped as an image of Artemis in Taurus (*Iphigenia in Taurica*). How does this relate to Paul's contention that "gods made with hands are not gods" (Acts 19:26, 14:15, 17:29, 1 Cor 8:4) and the alleged greatness of Artemis of the Ephesians?
6. In verse 21, Paul resolves "in the spirit" to travel through Greece and to Jerusalem, and to visit Rome thereafter. Do you think that it his own spirit that is pushing him to do this, or the Spirit of God? (See Acts 20: 22-24, 21:4, 11-12)
7. In verse 31, Luke speaks of Asiarchs who were friends of Paul who convince him not to venture into the theater when the riot was breaking out. An Asiarch was an aristocratic member of the provincial council responsible for the work of temples devoted to the imperial cult. Why would these men have been concerned about Paul?

## Application

8. Contrast the response of Demetrius (vv 23-27) with the response of the crowd (vv 28-34), and the town clerk (vv 35-40). What sort of response might we expect to sharing the good news of Christ's death and resurrection today?
9. The response of the government to Christianity has been portrayed in a generally positive light in Acts (16:38-39, 17:7-9, 18:12-17, 19:30-35), though not always (12:1-5, See also Luke 18:28-19:16). How reliable was the tolerance of the governing authorities? How does that compare to today? Are there any implications for us as Christians with 92 days remaining before the next US Presidential election?