

Anatomy of Revival Part 10

Acts 20

This chapter discusses Paul's travels, imprisonments, and his great failure in Jerusalem. He will begin to chart his own course and disregard the leading of the Holy Spirit. It will become an emotional issue with Paul rather than a principle of the Word of God. It seems, after the revival in Ephesus, Paul developed an independent attitude. He seemed to act as if he had "arrived" (Philippians 3:13). He will repent of this attitude in prison in Caesarea and eventually end up in the geographical will of God in Rome.

1 "After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia."

Paul called the converts and church leaders who had come to know the Lord and become disciples during the past three years of revival in Ephesus. Paul embraced them and headed for the northern part of Greece. He will be there for almost one full year.

On this trip Paul will go to Troas and meet Titus (2 Corinthians 2:13, 7:6, 13:14) and train him as his troubleshooter. Paul will send him to Corinth, and he will bring back word that the trouble in the church has been solved (2 Corinthians 7:13-16). Paul wrote 2 Corinthians and Romans during this year he was in Macedonia. Paul wanted to visit Macedonia again because of the faithful brothers who stood with him financially during his hardships in Corinth. Paul became great friends with them, and they were close to his heart.

2 "Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece"

Paul recovered the path into Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi. He exhorted the disciples, this time, because he was not able to do so the first time he came and preached. He was run out of town each time and was not able to teach, exhort, and confirm the souls of the churches. Now that the trouble settled down, he could come back and build up the members of the congregation in the churches he helped to start. He could also thank them for their tremendous financial gifts brought by Timothy and Silas (Acts 18:5). After Paul left Macedonia, he headed to Achaia.

3 "and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia."

During the three months Paul was in Achaia, he wrote the epistle of Romans. During this time the Jews made an assassination attempt on his life. The Jews were on board a ship Paul was to catch to Syria. While on board, the Jews plotted to kill him.

Instead, Paul determined to go to Macedonia. He may have thought he was determining to do this himself, but he was being prompted to go to Macedonia by the Holy Spirit without his knowledge. We will never know until we get to heaven how many times the Holy Spirit leads us without our knowledge. We have been protected and guided by angels and the Holy Spirit many times. This is all a part of the walk of faith.

4 *“And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia—also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.”*

This is Paul’s traveling team and seminary into Macedonia. They are going to receive “on the job training.” They will be taught and shown the calling and operation of the apostle. Many will be left to establish churches along the way. Berea was where the word was received with “readiness of mind” (Acts 17:4). This is the place where the believers were commended for searching out the scriptures to verify the teaching of Paul.

Sopater came from Berea and must have been a wonderful and strong believer. Aristarcus and Secundus were from Thessalonica. Aristarcus and Secundus were from Thessalonica. Aristarcus was almost killed in Ephesus (Acts 19:29) and will visit Paul in prison (Acts 27:2, Colossians 4:10, Philemon 24). Gaius, who was from Derbe, was with Aristarcus in the Ephesian uprising against Paul (Acts 19:29). Tychicus is mentioned as being on Paul’s team. He delivered the letters to Ephesus and Philippi from Paul who was in prison (Ephesians 6:21, Colossians 4:7, 2 Timothy 4:12, Titus 3:12). Trophimus will be the innocent party in a riot in Jerusalem (Acts 21:19). He will have an attack of sickness from Satan and will not shake it. His faith became weak, and Paul leaves him sick at Miletus (2 Timothy 4:20).

5 *“These men, going ahead, waited for us at Troas.”*

Paul’s team went ahead of Paul and waited for him and Luke in Troas. Luke rejoined the team and is the writer “of us” (Paul and Luke).

6 *“But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas (through Samathracia [Acts 16:11]), where we stayed seven days.”*

Unleavened Bread lasts a full week. Paul wanted to be in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 20:16) which will be fifty days later. The trip to Troas is usually two days. Apparently, on the way, Paul preached for a while in Samathracia.

7 *“Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.”*

The early disciples met together for worship and fellowship on Sunday (1 Corinthians 16:1-2), not Saturday. This was a custom to celebrate communion, followed by the teaching of the Word.

8 *“There were many lamps (oil lamps) in the upper room where they were gathered together.”*

Paul was preaching in an upper room as Jesus did. Upper rooms were located above restaurants or taverns and used for public meetings. They had many windows and oil lamps by each one for light at night. The windows were open onto the streets, three floors below.

9 *“And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead.”*

This was a teen aged boy. While sitting in the room with the lamps, he became warm and fell asleep. He might have fought the sleep for awhile but was finally overcome. He fell out and died on the pavement below. When the disciples ran out to pick up his body and Paul is right behind them.

10 *“But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, “Do not trouble yourselves (“stop wailing” [Wuest]), for his life is in him.”*

Paul fell on the boy the same way Elijah (1 Kings 17:21) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:34) did of the young boys who died. This is a type of prayer for healing, an exchange of life. Paul assures the men that the boy will live. The people around the young boy were in hysterics and Paul quiets them.

11 *“Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed.”*

When Paul came back upstairs, he ate with the disciples and continued his sermon until dawn.

12 *“And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted.”*

Apparently, the boy was well-known. The crowd was not only ecstatic over the miracle but also relieved.

13 *“Then we went ahead to the ship and sailed to Assos, there intending to take Paul on board; for so he had given orders, intending himself to go on foot.”*

Luke traveled with the team in a ship. Paul decided to walk to Assos (about twenty miles south of Traos). Apparently, Paul wanted to be alone to pray for direction. He sent the disciples ahead and would meet them later.

The Lord instructed Paul to have a pastor’s conference for all the pastors of Ephesus. Paul also made up his mind to go to Jerusalem and preach to the believers there who have become

legalistic. He saw the condition of the church there (Acts 18:22) and has desired to go back for some time. He has gone before and been a blessing to the believers. He will go, this time, against the will of God.

Verses 14-15 is the voyage down the coast to Miletus. Paul will spend a period of time relaxing in some of the most famous resort spots of the Mediterranean.

14 "And when he met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mitylene."

Mitylene is the capital of the island of Lesbos. A short distance from Assos. Lesbos is a resort island. The word "lesbian" comes from the name of this island. This was a famous Roman resort island in the ancient world.

15 "We sailed from there, and the next day came opposite Chios. The following day we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium (a city on Samos). The next day we came to Miletus."

Chios was famous for wine. Samos was further down in the Aegean from Chios. It was famous resort for the Roman military. It was close to Ephesus and a free state under Rome. The temple of Hera was there, and her worship was similar to Diana. Paul and his team stayed at a major city on Samos, Trogyllium. In all of these cities Paul and his men rested. They did not preach, witness, or evangelize. These cities were in great need of the gospel, but Paul knew his team needed the rest to complete what God had called them to do.

They finally arrived in Miletus where God instructed them to hold the conference for the pastors of Ephesus. This would be Paul's first contact with the ministers since the riot broke up and Paul left Ephesus.