

- A Study In Acts -

Chapter Twenty – Third Journey of Paul Continued

ACTS 20:1-3, Part 1:

We actually began the third journey in **Chapter 18:23**. Paul returned from the second journey to Antioch of Syria and then went out again to the region of **Galatia** and **Phrygia** strengthening the brethren in these locations; Luke tells us.

Paul has come to **Ephesus** and has met and worked with disciples of the coming Messiah by the work of John the Baptist. He would now more accurately explain the way of God through Jesus Christ to them (see: **Acts 18:26**). Paul would continue to work in the synagogues of the Jews for 3 months; however, when some were hardened, he went to the school of Tyrannus and continued to teach from this singular location for two years, successfully bringing the Gospel's truth to all of Asia. At the conclusion of the events that transpired in the first two years at Ephesus (special miracles, false exorcists, and the word of the Lord growing mightily and prevailing); we looked into the events that would make up the remainder of the time he will stay in **Ephesus**.

In our previous lesson, Paul staying in Ephesus "**For a time**" –**Acts 19:22**; would become aware of problems in the **Body of Christ** at **Corinth** (messengers from the household of Chloe – **1 Corinthians 1:11**, and a letter composed by the brethren and sent to him – **7:1**), he would write the first letter to them and send it by Titus (**2 Corinthians 2:12-13; 7:6-7**).

We covered the events that will cause Paul to change his plans prematurely (he wanted to stay here in Ephesus until Pentecost (**1 Corinthians 16:8**); which he believed was enough time for Titus to return with a report while he was still in Ephesus. However, as the events in Ephesus unfold and the chaos of riot ensued, Paul will be forced to leave Ephesus far sooner than he had hoped. In this lesson, we will see the route Paul takes in hope of reuniting with Titus.

Text #1:

Acts 20:1-3 "After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to *himself*, embraced *them*, and departed to go to Macedonia. ²Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece ³and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia."

Departed to go to Macedonia: Paul had wished to stay in Ephesus till Passover (**1 Corinthians 16:8**); however, the silversmith's riot signaled that Paul's effective work in Ephesus was at least for now, over. Here, Luke records that Paul is leaving Ephesus to go to Macedonia; however, if we rightly divide Paul's own words, with Luke's record, we find an important stop along the way that has to be recorded for our notes in the journey.

2 Corinthians 2:12-13 “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, ¹³ I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I departed for Macedonia.

In **Acts 16:8**; we read that Paul had come to Troas during the second journey, and although he is there, nothing is recorded in terms of work in the Gospel. Here, however, Paul notes that a door was opened for Him by the Lord.

Acts 14:27 “Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.”

1 Corinthians 16:8-9 “But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. ⁹ For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”

We can see by the use of the terminology in these passages, that it is used to express the Gospel’s work in specific places. So, we can see that on this trip to Troas, there is no doubt that Paul has shared and had success in the Gospel.

Macedonia: Luke records that upon arriving in Macedonia (the northern province of Greece), he encouraged them with many words. The “**them**”, would be the three churches the Gospel has established in this region during the second journey: Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. It is also important to note prior to Paul moving south that he will inform us in his own letters that something happens while he is here in Macedonia.

First, it is believed that it is here that Paul either ventures physically or teaches the Gospel to those who live in Illyricum (a Roman province farther north and west bordering Macedonia) and they take it back home with them. But either way, he will be able to say:

Romans 15:19 “in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

Second, when Paul sent the first letter to the Christians in Corinth by Titus, Titus was to return and report to Paul in Ephesus (as Paul assumed he would still be there). Having had to leave Ephesus sooner than he thought, which in turn caused great anxiety about meeting up with him. He has gone into Macedonia on a route that he believes will cause him to run into Titus. When he came to Troas, he was still anxious because he had not encountered Titus there. We learn that it is here in Macedonia that Paul and Titus meet up.

2 Corinthians 7:5-7 “For indeed, when we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were troubled on every side. Outside *were* conflicts, inside *were* fears. ⁶ Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, ⁷ and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was comforted in you, when he told us of your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.”

Not only has Titus and Paul reunited, but Titus’ report of the acceptance of the first letter has caused Paul’s heart to soar.

2 Corinthians 7:8-12 “For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. ⁹ Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. ¹⁰ For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. ¹¹ For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, *what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication!* In all *things* you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter. ¹² Therefore, although I wrote to you, *I did not do it* for the sake of him who had done the wrong, nor for the sake of him who suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear to you.”

Not only has Titus come, but he has brought a report that the majority of the brethren in Corinth have indeed repented and are once again unified in Christ’s work and doctrine. Paul wrote the first letter as a disciplinarian father, stern and authoritarian in his work to restore them. With Titus’ report, Paul is now from Macedonia, writing back to them (writing **2 Corinthians**). This time as a loving restoring father! In addition, we know that Paul would stay in Macedonia for enough time to write this letter, send in back with Titus (**2 Corinthians 8:16-17**), and give them time before he himself would follow (**2 Corinthians 13:2, 10**).

Outline of 2 Corinthians:

Chapters 1-7: Comfort to Friends

Chapters 8-9: Instructions in Benevolence

Chapters 10-13: Remarks and Warnings to Enemies

So, in your notes in the **20th Chapter of Acts**, next to **verse one and two**, make a note that Paul would write **2 Corinthians**. Now don’t get too excited, we are not done with **verses 1-3** yet. In our next lesson, we will cover what transpires in Greece (or the southern province of Achaia).

Next: “Paul’s Return to Corinth!”