

Seven Sons of Sceva

Acts 19

- 3rd Journey
- P is going to try to fulfill a promise made on the 2nd journey.

1. Rebaptism – v. 1-7

- 1: P took road less travelled to get to Eph.; Lk wanted to get the story to Eph. as quickly as possible; “perhaps P’s most significant work in all 3 journeys.” Roper
- Eph. the jewel of Asia, center of trade in that part of the world, tourists to see Artemis’ temple, 7 ancient wonders
- 2: too many confuse this: he is asking if they could perform miracles, here he knows their baptism isn’t valid, Great Commission baptism tied to the HS
- 3: *lit* “into what were you baptized?” could’ve been taught by Apollos
- Richard Oster: “Post-Pentecost believers with Pre-Pentecost instruction.”
- 4: P didn’t criticize them or their teacher, he immediately taught them the truth! Last ref. to John the Baptist
- 5: correct response: baptized for the right reason! John’s had no mention of HS and looked forward to coming Messiah; JC’s was of faith and points back. Similar: by immersion, for forgiveness of sins.
- 6: carried out original intent: passing on of sp. gifts; only time tongues mentioned as a gift assoc. w/ laying on of hands
- 7: about 12, could’ve been 11 or 13

2. Paul’s Ministry – v. 8-22

- 8: a record for P not being thrown out
- 9: end results the same: some Jews turned away; *the way* = Christianity.
- Tyrannus had a private school P could preach, maybe a gymnasium (mind + body); nothing known of his, Latin for tyrant. Teaching style?
- 10: 2yrs + 3mo + little other time = 3yrs [20:31], longest of any journey stay; Rev. churches?
- 11: life in Eph. revolved around incantations; Shakespeare summed them up in “The Comedy of Errors” 1.2.97-102. P never faced anything like this. Extra-extraordinary.

- 12: handkerchiefs: lg rags used by P, prob. to wipe sweat away while working, aprons would've covered his clothing
- Dr. LK made distinction of sickness vs. demon
- 13: exorcist: *out + oath* only time in NT, casting out by speaking; JC & apostles not exorcists, no oath needed just spoke them out: Mk. 1:25, Ac. 16:8
- 7 sons used secret words, determined P's word he used was Jesus
- 14: HP a self-assumed title, none names Sceva on record (Doc, Professor in wild west)
- 15: wry humor
- 16: demon-possessed used superhuman strength to attack would-be exorcists; inadequately clothed
- 17: 3 results: 1] P God-approved, sons rejected 2] fear upon all 3] magicians learned not to use JC names
- 18: occult: hidden; Eph. brought to senses
- 19: books: scrolls concerning spells, potions, etc.; drachma = 1 day wage; substantial sum then and today
- 20: progress report
- 21: these things: generic summing of work; P serious about future plans: 1] go to Jerusalem 2] on way, go through Macedonia & Achaia & revisit 3] start for Rome; must do
- Pivotal verse: last 1/3 of book gives sequence of events leading to arrival in Rome
- 22: sent Corinth letter via Tim
- Erastus: prob. city treasurer of Cor. [Rm. 16:23]
- Titus later sent to Cor. to follow up on work there [2 Cor. 1:12, 13; 7:5-7; 8:6, 23]
- P stayed to take advantage of open doors

3. Adversaries – v. 23-41

- A major incident during P's ministry in Eph.
- 23: prob. during festival of Artemis, same time as Pentecost
- 24: prob. different Demetrius of 3Jn12. Fertility goddess, giver of life, Eph. claimed her as their own; people bought souvenirs when they visited the temple
- 25,26: P's disdain of idolatry made sales plummet

- 27: pagan lips witness to the impact of Chr.; 40yrs later Pliny the Younger wrote a letter to emperor Trajan that Chr. caused these temples to be deserted
- 28: slogans substituted for reason
- 29: theater seated 25,000, some there today
- Not sure which Gaius this was; Aristarchus would travel with P to Jerusalem & Rome 27:2
- 30: knew there was no reasoning w/mob
- 31: those over worship were sympathetic
- 32: classic mob scene; Ben Franklin defined mob as “a group of persons with heads aplenty but no brain”
- 33: Jews in Eph. had a ‘live and let live’ philosophy; Alexander the Coppersmith [2 Tim. 4:14, cf. 1:20]
- 34: Josephus: Eph. looked down on Jews
- 35: city HQ a few blocks from theater; town clerk: most important local official, as efficient at quelling a riot as Demetrius had been at inciting one
- 36,37: NCV “Stop and think before you do anything;” temple also serves as a bank, they didn’t rob it; claimed they didn’t blaspheme but they did. He might lie to end riot
- 38: local courts met regularly
- 39: 2 goals: 1] stressed there was a right way to handle this – and they chose the wrong way!
2] let craftsmen know they’d be held accountable if there were repercussions
- 40: Rom. viewed few crimes worse than civil disorder, a capitol offence to incite; guilty could be imprisoned and even executed, incl. town clerk for letting it happen; fines, taxes, guilds disbanded
- 41: all leave, town clerk relieved
- Aristarchus shows up in 20:4 travelling w/P
- Another victory for the Way – LK shows it was not Christians, but their persecutors, who posed a threat to society!

Lessons:

1. To have the remission of sins, we must be baptized for the right reason – according to God’s commands. “It never hurts to make sure.”
2. Satan and his associates know who Christ is and what He teaches. We must be the opposite of them, not just believers but also doers – James 2:19, 1:22.
3. At times there may be ‘strength in numbers,’ but that is not true when a large number is opposed to the truth. God and His Word will always prevail!

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