

NOON BIBLE STUDY: ACTS 20

ACTS 20:1-6 - TRAVEL DETAILS, TRAVEL COMPANIONS

ITINERARY: EPHESUS → MACEDONIA (EXHORTATION) → GREECE (3 MONTHS) → SYRIA (DIDN'T GO) → BACK THROUGH MACEDONIA (PHILIPPI) → TROAS

COMPANIONS: SOPATER OF BEREA (SON OF PYRRHUS), ARISTARCHUS & SECUNDUS OF THESSALONICA, GAIUS OF DERBE, TIMOTHY, TYCHICUS & TROPHIMUS OF ASIA

V. 2 - DURING THIS TIME PAUL IS WRITING AND CHECKING IN ON CORINTHIAN CHURCH. GREECE IS AKA ACHAIA, WHERE CORINTH IS LOCATED. HE ALSO IS GOING TO WRITE THE LETTER TO THE ROMANS:

SEE ROMANS 15:22-28

V. 3 - PAUL WANTS TO GO TO JERUSALEM AND BRING THE COLLECTION HE HAS GATHERED FOR THE NEEDY SAINTS THERE.

V. 4 - IN DISCUSSING THE "COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS" IN 1 COR. 16:1-4, PAUL NOTED THAT IT WOULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE CHURCHES. THEIR PRESENCE WOULD GIVE SAFETY FROM ROBBERY AND ALSO WOULD PROVIDE A PUBLIC GUARANTEE OF PAUL'S INTEGRITY IN HANDLING THE FUNDS. THE MEN LISTED HERE (ACTS 20:4) AS ACCOMPANYING PAUL REPRESENT ALL THE AREAS OF HIS MISSIONARY WORK. (ESV STUDY BIBLE)

V. 5 - THEY ALL WENT AHEAD AND MET PAUL & LUKE

ACTS 20:7-12 - PAUL TEACHING IN TROAS, EUTYCHUS IS LUCKY

V. 7 - "FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK" - SUNDAY - 1ST REFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS GATHERING ON SUNDAY

"EUTYCHUS" MEANS GOOD FORTUNE, LUCKY

ACTS 20:13-16 - TRAVEL DETAILS

V. 16 - PAUL SAILS PAST EPHESUS. HE WANTED TO BE IN JERUSALEM, HOPEFULLY BY PENTECOST. REMEMBER THAT V. 6 INDICATES PAUL WAS IN TROAS 5 DAYS AFTER THE FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD. THERE ARE 50 DAYS BETWEEN PASSOVER (THE FIRST DAY OF UNLEAVENED BREAD) AND PENTECOST. PENTECOST WAS ONE OF 3 PILGRIMAGE FESTIVALS TO JERUSALEM FOR THE JEWS AND PAUL HOPED TO BE THERE BY THEN. HE HAS BEEN IN EPHESUS FOR 3 YEARS AND A STOP THERE WOULD HAVE INCLUDED MANY VISITS AND GOODBYES, MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO MAKE IT TO JERUSALEM IN TIME. SO INSTEAD OF TRAVELING TO EPHESUS, HE CALLS TO ELDERS TO MEET HIM IN MILETUS, WHICH IS APPROXIMATELY 63 MILES BY LAND, 38 MILES BY SEA FROM EPHESUS.

ACTS 20:17-35 - PAUL'S MESSAGE TO EPHESIAN ELDERS (PART 1 - V. 17-27, PART 2 - V. 28-31, PART 3 - V. 32-35)

- IN MANY WAYS THIS MESSAGE IS PROBABLE REPRESENTATIVE OF WHAT PAUL MAY HAVE SAID TO ELDERS AT EACH CITY UPON RETURNING TO ENCOURAGE THEM. THIS IS THE ONLY RECORDED MEETINGS OF SUCH EVENT (LUKE WAS WITH PAUL WHEN THIS HAPPENED).

PART 1 - ACTS 20:17-27 - PAUL'S MANNER WITH THE CHURCH AND FUTURE PLANS

V. 19 - HUMILITY AND TEARS, V. 20 - DIDN'T HOLD BACK ANYTHING PROFITABLE, V. 21 - PREACHED REPENTANCE TOWARDS GOD AND FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, V. 22-24 - HEADING TO JERUSALEM. HE IS NOT SURE OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN, BUT CONVINCED HE SHOULD GO. HE IS NOT AFRAID BECAUSE HE IS DETERMINED TO FINISH HIS COURSE., V. 25 - THEY WON'T SEE HIS FACE AGAIN., V. 26-27 - PAUL IS CONFIDENT HE HAS GIVEN THEM EVERYTHING THEY NEED.

PART 2 - ACTS 20:28-31 - WORD FOR THE ELDERS

V. 28 - (1) BE ON GUARD FOR YOURSELVES (2) BE ON GUARD FOR THE FLOCK (3) REMEMBER THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WHO MADE YOU OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD HIS POSSESSION.

V. 29-30 - (1) WOLVES WILL COME IN (2) AND SOME OF YOU TOO WILL DRAW AWAY DISCIPLES FOR THEMSELVES, SPEAKING PERVERSE THINGS

ESV STUDY BIBLE - PAUL SHOWED REMARKABLE INSIGHT INTO THE FUTURE SITUATION OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH (PROBABLY THROUGH A REVELATION FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT). THE LETTERS OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY, WHO SERVED EPHEBUS A DECADE OR SO LATER, ATTEST TO THE PRESENCE OF FALSE TEACHERS WHO WERE RAVAGING THE CHURCH FOR THEIR OWN GAIN & WHO HAD INDEED COME FROM WITHIN THE CHURCH, IN FACT, FROM AMONG THE ELDERS THEMSELVES.(SEE 1 TIM. 1:19—20; 4:1—3; 2 TIM. 1:15; 2:17—18; 3:1—9.)

PART 3 - ACTS 20:32-35 - PAUL'S EXAMPLE AS ELDER AND SHEPHERD

- V. 35 - WORK HARD. HELP THE WEAK. IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN RECEIVE.. PAUL DIDN'T TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PEOPLE HE SERVED. HE WASN'T A BURDEN TO HIS CHURCH.

ACTS 20:36-38 - BITTERSWEET GOODBYE

THE CHURCH COULD/SHOULD BE "OK" BY THE LEADERSHIP OF CHRIST AND THE SPIRIT-FILLED, GODLY "NO-NAME" ELDERS.

THIS APPROXIMATELY ALL HAPPENED IN THE YEAR 57 AD. PAUL WILL BE ARRESTED SOON AND EVENTUALLY WILL ARRIVE IN ROME AND BE PUT UNDER HOUSE ARREST IN 62 AD. THAT IS WHEN HE WILL WRITE THE LETTER TO THE EPHESIAN CHURCH, WHICH IS PRIMARILY A LETTER OF ENCOURAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTION ON VARIOUS PARTS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. HE WILL LATER WRITE (C. 64) A LETTER TO TIMOTHY WHO IS NOW LEADING AS AN ELDER IN EPHESUS (PRISCILLA AND AQUILA ARE ALSO THERE 2 TIM. 4:19). MUCH OF THE CONTENT OF THIS LETTER, AS WELL AS A SECOND LETTER (WRITTEN BY 67 AD) WILL BE FOR TIMOTHY AND THE CHURCH TO BE ON GUARD AGAINST THOSE PREACHING FALSE TEACHING AND THOSE WHO HAVE TURNED DISCIPLES AWAY FROM THE FAITH. UNFORTUNATELY, PAUL'S WARNING TO THE ELDERS IN MILETUS WAS NOT FULLY HEADED. HE ENCOURAGES TIMOTHY TO BE ON GUARD.

LAST WORDS OF 1 TIMOTHY:

1 TIMOTHY 6:20-21 - O TIMOTHY, GUARD WHAT HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO YOU, AVOIDING WORLDLY AND EMPTY CHATTER AND THE OPPOSING ARGUMENTS OF WHAT IS FALSELY CALLED "KNOWLEDGE" -- 21 WHICH SOME HAVE PROFESSED AND THUS GONE ASTRAY FROM THE FAITH. GRACE BE WITH YOU.

PAUL WILL BE MARTYRED SOMETIME IN 67 AD.

POSSIBLY 20 YEARS LATER, WE KNOW THAT JOHN, ONE OF THE ORIGINAL 12 IS NOW IN EPHESUS. IT IS FROM THERE THAT HE WILL WRITE 1-3 JOHN. THE LAST BOOK OF THE NT, REVELATION, WRITTEN NO LATER THAN 96 AD, RECORDS A MESSAGE FROM JESUS TO THE CHURCH:

REVELATION 2:1-7 - "TO THE ANGEL OF THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS WRITE: THE ONE WHO HOLDS THE SEVEN STARS IN HIS RIGHT HAND, THE ONE WHO WALKS AMONG THE SEVEN GOLDEN LAMPSTANDS, SAYS THIS: 2 'I KNOW YOUR DEEDS AND YOUR TOIL AND PERSEVERANCE, AND THAT YOU CANNOT TOLERATE EVIL MEN, AND YOU PUT TO THE TEST THOSE WHO CALL THEMSELVES APOSTLES, AND THEY ARE NOT, AND YOU FOUND THEM TO BE FALSE; 3 AND YOU HAVE PERSEVERANCE AND HAVE ENDURED FOR MY NAME'S SAKE, AND HAVE NOT GROWN WEARY. 4 'BUT I HAVE THIS AGAINST YOU, THAT YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR FIRST LOVE. 5 'THEREFORE REMEMBER FROM WHERE YOU HAVE FALLEN, AND REPENT AND DO THE DEEDS YOU DID AT FIRST; OR ELSE I AM COMING TO YOU AND WILL REMOVE YOUR LAMPSTAND OUT OF ITS PLACE-- UNLESS YOU REPENT. 6 'YET THIS YOU DO HAVE, THAT YOU HATE THE DEEDS OF THE NICOLAITANS, WHICH I ALSO HATE. 7 'HE WHO HAS AN EAR, LET HIM HEAR WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES. TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES, I WILL GRANT TO EAT OF THE TREE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN THE PARADISE OF GOD.'