

**Acts 19:21-41, Confrontation with Diana  
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**Overview**

This chapter is about "no small stir" that "arose ... about that way."

1. In every city that Paul visits,
  - a) a Minority incites
  - b) Opposition against the evangelists,
  - c) and the Lord Delivers them.Though Ephesus seems to be the most stable of the churches, it is not immune to this pattern, which is detailed here.
2. In fact, in this case the opposition is the consequences of success. Strong church -> strong opposition.
3. Against background of Paul's continuing plans: thus shows God's sovereignty over the affairs of men.

**A. 21-22, Principles of Divine Direction**

1. Legitimacy of plans. Paul sets a travel agenda and then carries it out. Cf. the Lord Jesus setting his face toward Jerusalem, Luke 9:51 (the only gospel that mentions this!)
2. Mechanism of planning: "in the s/Spirit."
  - a) James 4:13-15 does not rule out planning, but requires that it be done in submission to the Lord's will.
  - b) The Spirit as the mechanism of communication between us and God:
    - 1) Rom. 8:16, God's Spirit bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God
    - 2) 1 Cor. 2:11-13, because we have God's Spirit, we can know the things of God.
3. What God plans, he will carry out. This section will show in several ways how God preserves Paul for the work he has given him:
  - a) Not in the main stream of people rushing to the theater (had they been able to find Paul, they would certainly have brought him along);
  - b) Friends, both Christian and not, keep him out of the fray;
  - c) The rule of law quiets the mob, as in Corinth.
4. The sequel will show a common occurrence: believers with different persuasions by the Spirit, and how to handle them.

**B. 24-34, Rise of Opposition**

1. 24-28, Initiated
  - a) The work of the silversmiths: selling little models of the shrine of Artemis, both for votive offerings in the temple and as souvenirs (cf. our Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty, and Liberty Bell). Apparently the spread of the gospel from

Ephesus through Ephesus and all Asia (19:10,17) was so effective that sales were dropping off!

- b) John (1 John 2:16) identifies three heads for "all that is in the world." The various rejections in Acts can be grouped under these:
    - 1) Lust of the flesh; unwillingness to give up carnal sins. Certainly Athens; perhaps also Corinth.
    - 2) Pride of life: "envy" in Antioch (13:45) and Thessalonica (17:5)--religious leaders who couldn't get the kind of response that Paul did.
    - 3) Lust of eyes: Philippi (16:19) and here.
  - c) If you reject the gospel, it is for one or more of these reasons; anything else (here, affront to Artemis) is a cover-up. Note Demetrius' words. He provides the affront to Artemis as an excuse for them to riot, but as the town clerk later points out, it is ridiculous to assume that a few strangers can overcome such a great goddess! The real point is their loss of income.
  - d) In every case, rejection leads to outright opposition. People seek to remove the irritant.
2. 29, 32, 34, The Crowd Incited
- The common failing of democracy; people can be stirred up to act before they think things through. Cf. the activity of the media during the recent presidential campaign, stirring people up about a recession when in fact we were over a year into a recovery.
- a) They were excited ("confused," 29, 32). Several indications (multiple Asiarchs, 31; open courts, 38) that this was during the annual festival of Artemis, which would mean lots of people and very easily inflamed.
  - b) They agreed that "something needs to be done," 29 ("with one accord").
  - c) And yet they didn't really know what the problem was, 32!
  - d) *Application*: Be careful and deliberate in taking positions. Recognize your own liability to be swept away.
3. 30, 31, Paul's absence from the theater.
- a) His willingness to face his adversaries directly. Bold for the gospel.
  - b) Those who persuade him not to go (and note that he lets himself be persuaded).
    - 1) Disciples--believers
    - 2) "the chief of Asia," high ranking civil officials who respected his character and testimony. --> The nature of Paul's testimony and witness, gaining a good report among those who are without. The world, when it takes the time to be sane, should have nothing to say against us.
  - c) Thus God preserves him for the Spirit-led objective outlined

in 21-22.

4. 33-34, Alexander and the Jews

- a) Should be supportive of Paul; after all, the point under discussion, that there are no manmade gods, is one they should defend. But they have already rejected the new teaching (19:9--hardened, believed not, spake evil).
- b) Their spokesman may be the same person named in 2 Tim. 4:14 as "Alexander the Smith," one of Paul's adversaries in Rome. By his trade, if he were the same, he might have been among the craftsmen employed by Demetrius! So far from bearing witness to the One True God among the heathen, the diaspora Jews had often sunk into compromise (here, making idol shrines!).
- c) The Ephesians refuse to hear him; they do not understand the difference between Paul and other Jews, and think that Alexander will preach what in fact he ought to, the one true God. The opposition to Christians has spilled over to the Jews.
- d) The result is predictable: even greater Jewish opposition. In 21:27, when Paul gets to Jerusalem, the riot in the temple is instigated by "Jews of Asia," probably people of Ephesus who resent the impact of Paul's preaching on their previously comfortable situation.
- e) *Application:* Compromising Christians may sometimes try to quiet our testimony for the sake of their comfort among the world, and if we stand up for the truth, they will reject us (showing their essential separation from us all along).

C. 35-41, The Clerk's Address

As in Corinth (18:14,15), God brings deliverance through a member of the secular government. Three points to his address.

- 1. 35-37, There's nothing here to get so upset about.
  - a) 35, The greatness of Artemis is unquestioned. A few strangers could do nothing to mount an effective challenge.
  - b) 37, And in fact, these men have not either robbed her treasury or spoken blasphemously against her.
  - c) 36, therefore you shouldn't get hot and bothered.
  - d) *Application:* His comments can be effective only if the believers have in fact been respectful and moderate in what they have said about idols to unbelievers. Take Athens for example; Paul does not set a collision course, but reasons around them. Our objective is not to start fights and polarize the discussion, but to get people to realize that what they have been seeking in their false religion is in fact only available in Christ.
- 2. 38-40, There exist appropriate channels to handle such objections as you bring; this approach can only bring trouble.

- a) 38, if it's a question of the law, the courts are now open, and we have proconsuls (Roman governors).
  - b) 39, if it's something else that needs to be discussed, we have a regular town meeting three times a month, and we should talk about it there.
  - c) 40, the Romans don't like riots, and if they catch us carrying on like this, we'll be in trouble.
3. *Application:* God can use even a wicked government to achieve his purposes. Leads to Paul's assessment in Rom. 13. We do not trust in human authority, but neither should we be surprised when it works to the glory of God.

**Summary**

- 1. Divine providence in making plans.
- 2. Respectability in the world--the support of the Asiarchs and the town clerk shows the esteem in which Paul was held.
- 3. Yet he also speaks the truth, unlike the Jews, who have compromised to the point that their divine mission was of no effect.

**Hymn:** I Am a Stranger Here

**Analysis**

- A. Paul Prepares to Depart  
*Actually, goes with 20:1-5*
  - 1. 19:21 (Ws de\ e)plhrw/qh tau^ta,
  - 2. e)/qeto o( Pau^los e)n tw^| pneu/mati
    - a) dielqw\n th\n Makedoni/an kai\ )Axai/+an
    - b) poreu/esqai ei)s (Ieroso/luma,
    - c) ei)pw\n o(/ti Meta\ to\ gene/sqai me e)kei^ dei^ me kai\ (Rw/mhn i)dei^n.
  - 3. 19:22 a)postei/las de\ ei)s th\n Makedoni/an du/o tw^<sup>n</sup> diakonou/ntwn au)tw^|, Timo/qeon kai\ )/Eraston,
  - 4. au)to\s e)pe/sxen xro/non ei)s th\n )Asi/an.
- B. summary: 19:23 )Ege/neto de\ kata\ to\n kairo\n e)kei^non ta/raxos ou)k o)li/gos peri\ th^s o(dou^.
- C. detail
  - 1. Inciting event
    - a) Demetrios
      - 1) setting: 19:24 Dhmh/trios ga/r tis o)no/mati, a)rguroko/pos, poiw^<sup>n</sup> naou\s a)rgurou^s )Arte/midos parei/xeto toi^s texni/tais ou)k o)li/ghn e)rgasi/an,
      - 2) quote p: 19:25 ou(\s sunaqroi/sas kai\ tou\s peri\ ta\ toiau^ta e)rga/tas ei)^pen,
        - a> )/Andres, e)pi/stasqe o(/ti e)k tau/th<sup>s</sup> th^s e)rgasi/as h( eu)pori/a h(mi^<sup>n</sup> e)stin,
        - b> AQ p
          - 1> AQ formula: 19:26 kai\ gewrei^te kai\ a)kou/ete

- o(/ti
- 2> AQ:
- a: ou) mo/non )Efe/sou a)lla\ sxedo\n pa/shs th^s  
 )Asi/as o( Pau^los ou(^tos pei/sas mete/sthsen  
 i(kano\n o)/xlon,
- b: le/gwn o(/ti ou)k ei)si\n qeoi\ oi( dia\ xeirw^  
 gino/menoi.
- c: kinduneu/ei ...
- 1: 19:27 ou) mo/non de\ tou^to ... h(mi^n to\  
 me/ros ei)s a)pelegmo\n e)lqei^  
 2: a)lla\ kai\ to\ th^s mega/lhs qea^s )Arte/midos  
 i(ero\n ei)s ou)qe\n logisqh^nai,  
 3: me/llein te kai\ kaqairei^sqai th^s  
 megaleio/thtos au)th^s,  
 A. comment <auths>: h(\n o(/lh h( )Asi/a kai\  
 h( oi)koume/nh se/betai.
- b) Workers
- 19:28 )Akou/santes de\ kai\ geno/menoi plh/reis qumou^  
 e)/krazon le/gontes, Mega/lh h( )/Artemis )Efesi/wn.
2. Gathering of the Assembly
- a) 19:29 kai\ e)plh/sqh h( po/lis th^s sugxu/sews,  
 b) w(/rmhsa/n te o(moqumado\n ei)s to\ qe/atron sunarpa/santes  
 Ga/i+on kai\ )Ari/starxon Makedo/nas, sunekdh/mous Pau/lou.  
 c) 19:30 Pau/lou de\ boulome/nou ei)selqei^  
 ou)k ei)/wn au)to\n oi( maqhtai/:
- d) 19:31 tine\s de\ kai\ tw^  
 fi/loi, pe/myantes pro\s au)to\n pareka/loun mh\ dou^nai  
 e(auto\n ei)s to\ qe/atron.
3. Discussion in the stadium: reason p
- a) text: 19:32 a)/lloi me\n ou)^n a)/llo ti e)/krazon,  
 b) reason
- 1) h)^n ga\r h( e)kklhsi/a sugkexume/nh,  
 2) kai\ oi( plei/ous ou)k h( )/deisan ti/nos e(/neka  
 sunelhlu/qeisan.
4. Alexander
- a) 19:33 e)k de\ tou^ o)/xlou sunebi/basan )Ale/candron,  
 probalo/ntwn au)to\n tw^  
 b) o( de\ )Ale/candros katasei/sas th^n xei^ra h( )/qelen  
 a)pologei^sqai tw^ | dh/mw|.  
 c) 19:34 e)pigno/ntes de\ o(/ti )Ioudai^o/s e)stin fwnh\  
 e)ge/neto mi/a e)k pa/ntwn w(s e)pi\ w(/ras du/o krazo/ntwn,  
 Mega/lh h( )/Artemis )Efesi/wn.
5. The Clerk
- a) quote f: 19:35 katastei/las de\ o( grammateu\s to\n o)/xlon  
 fhsi/n,  
 b) quote p:
- 1) 35-37, There's nothing here to get so upset about.  
 a> )/Andres )Efe/sioi, ti/s ga/r e)stin a)nqrw/pwn o(\s ou)

ginw/skei th\n )Efesi/wn po/lin newko/ron ou)^san th^s  
 mega/lhs )Arte/midos kai\ tou^ diopetou^s;  
 b> 19:36 a)nantirrh/twn ou)^n o)/ntwn tou/twn  
 c> de/on e)sti\n u(ma^s  
 1> katestalme/nous u(pa/rxein  
 2> kai\ mhde\n propete\s pra/ssein.  
 d> 19:37 h)ga/gete ga\r tou\s a)/ndras tou/tous ou)/te  
 i(erosu/lous ou)/te blasfhmou^ntas th\n geo\n h(mw^n.

2) 38-40, There exist appropriate channels to handle such objections as you bring.

a> Appropriate channels: contrast:

1> condition

a: if: 19:38 ei) me\n ou)^n Dhmh/trios kai\ oi( su\n au)tw^| texni^tai e)/xousi pro/s tina lo/gon,

b: setting:

1: a)gorai^oi a)/gontai

2: kai\ a)nqu/patoi/ ei)sin:

c: then: e)gkalei/twsan a)llh/lois.

2> condition

a: 19:39 ei) de/ ti peraiterw e)pizhetei^te,

b: e)n th^| e)nno/mw| e)kklhsi/a| e)piluh/setai.

b> This approach will get us in trouble. reason p

1> text: 19:40 kai\ ga\r kinduneu/omen e)gkalei^sqai sta/sews peri\ th^s sh/meron,

2> reason: mhdeno\s ai)ti/ou u(pa/rxontos, peri\ ou(^ [ou]) dunhso/meqa a)podou^nai lo/gon peri\ th^s sustrofh^s tau/th's.

c) kai\ tau^ta ei)pw\n a)pe/lusen th\n e)kklhsi/an.