

Valley Bible Church
Sermon Notes for March 12, 2017

The Route to Greece
Acts 20:1-16

Acts 18:23-21:16 details Paul's third missionary journey, which centered on the city of Ephesus.

1. Grand conspiracy in Greece (20:1-3)

After the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41) in the spring of 56 AD, Paul departed to visit the churches that he planted during his second missionary journey in Macedonia, including the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea (16:11-17:12).

His concern for the churches extended south to Greece and the city of Corinth. One reason for this visit was the gift that was being collected to serve the church in Jerusalem (Acts 24:17; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4). Paul had earlier sent Titus to serve this church (2 Corinthians 7:13). The Jewish plot against Paul caused a delay in his return to Antioch.

While Paul was in Macedonia during the fall of 56 AD, he wrote the book of 2 Corinthians. While Paul was in Corinth in the winter of 56/57 AD, he wrote the book of Romans. (cf. Romans 16:1, 21-23).

2. Godly companions in Philippi (20:4-6)

These seven men had Greek names, were from a diverse area and likely represented the churches who contributed to the gift for the Jerusalem church.

Verse five begins the second "we" section in Acts as Luke joined with Paul in Philippi after being left behind by Paul in this city in Acts 16. In these verses we see that Paul collaborated with many other men.

3. Great comfort in Troas (20:7-12)

This is one of the indications that the early church met on Sundays (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:2), which was the day of the week when our Lord rose from the dead (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2).

Eutychus was described as a young man, which put him between eight and fourteen years of age. The mention of the many lamps may have been included because of their role in the sleeping. Luke, a medical doctor, was most qualified to describe the young fellow as dead. The return of Eutychus from the dead naturally brought great comfort.

Because Paul intended to leave the next day, this teaching ministry took the entire night. The teaching of God's truth was more important to those at Troas than even sleep.

The raising of Eutychus is another of Luke's comparisons between a miraculous event by Paul and Peter , which served to support the legitimacy of Paul's ministry. Furthermore, Luke's description of Paul lying on the young man echos the miracles of both Elijah (1 Kings 17:17-24) and Elisha (2 Kings 4:33-36).

4. Going quickly to Miletus (20:13-16)

By taking the land route, Paul left the eight other men in order to spend a little more time at Troas before leaving.

The decision to bypass Ephesus was driven by Paul's desire to return to Jerusalem for Pentecost in late May of 57 AD. Pentecost was fifty days after Passover celebrated in Philippi (20:6). To visit Ephesus would require additional time so Paul sent for the leaders of the church of Ephesus (20:17) in order to exhort them.

May we be attentive to Christ, regardless of the distractions that surround us.