



# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

The Record of the Beginning of Jesus' Reign

## Chapter Nineteen

### INTRODUCTION

**P**AUL is on his third missionary excursion into Asia Minor, taking the good news of Christ's Reign to Israelites in the nations. In this chapter Paul starts his return trip home to Antioch. However, his plans get altered and he ends up spending a little more time in Asia Minor.

On the first leg of his return trip home, Paul stopped at Ephesus. There, things heated up a bit when he ran into some irate silversmiths, a trial (by an "ecclesia") at town square, a Jewish-style exorcism, and a book burning!

As chapter 19 begins, Paul is in Ephesus and he is having difficulties with some silversmiths who made and sold idols (shrines, statues, religious paraphernalia, etc). They were artisans in the church/temple business – in other words, idol merchants. Idols and religious paraphernalia were peddled to facilitate worship in the churches ("shrines") of Artemis the pagan goddess of Ephesus – much like the peddlers of doves who set up shop in the temple of Jerusalem (Mtt. 21:12); also like the trinkets and gratuitous literature in modern "Christian Book Stores" (so-called). Artemis of Ephesus was worshipped throughout Asia Minor.

In lesson eighteen we met Apollos, a teacher from Alexandria. Apollos taught in some of the cities where Paul had taught. He was not a first-hand apostle like Paul (see Chapter Nine for more details on Paul's first-hand experience with Jesus). Unlike Paul, Apollos had learned about Jesus indirectly, but he was a good student of scripture and a good teacher.

While in Ephesus, Apollos met up with Aquilla and Priscilla, who added to his understanding by sharing the information they had gained from Paul. After teaching in Ephesus for some time Apollos left Ephesus and went over to Achaia, not far from Corinth where Paul had been. At this time, Paul was sailing from Corinth to Ephesus. They may or may not have crossed paths; the text doesn't say. Apollos went to Achaia in Greece, and Paul went back to Ephesus.

**NOTE:** As Paul carried the good news of Christ's Reign he was opposed by religion in every city. In some cities the Jews opposed him. In other cities the worshippers of Artemis opposed him. These, along with government people, were his worst persecutors.

### **ACTS 19: 1-7 RECEIVING HOLY SPIRIT**

And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus and found some disciples,

And he asked them, "Having believed, have you received holy spirit?" And they said to him, "If there is holy spirit we have not heard."

And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into the baptism of John."

Then said Paul, "John baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in the One coming after him, that

is Jesus."

When they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid hands upon them, the holy spirit came on them, and they were speaking tongues, and were prophesying.

And all the men were about twelve.

**H**ERE is a good lesson about "holy spirit." Notice, the term. It is sometimes "holy spirit" (as in verse 2), and sometimes "the holy spirit" (as in verse 7). But it is NEVER "Holy Spirit" or "Holy Ghost" (i.e., capitalized as a name).

Spirit is motivation, inspiration, mood or disposition. In both Greek and Hebrew the term means *air in motion: wind*. Wind (i.e., spirit) causes things to move. Spirits are not invisible entities. Spirits are causes of movement; indicators of life. Breath (air in motion) and movement are indicators of life. But neither breath nor movement could be called a life form. This is "spirit."

Spirit is the indicator of life. And since it is not a person, the term should not be capitalized as a proper noun (like Holy Spirit).

These particular Ephesians had not heard about "holy spirit." Obviously, they had not heard Paul when he was in Ephesus for they would have learned of holy spirit from his talks. So more than likely they had heard only Apollos. This conclusion is corroborated by the description of Apollos in verse 25 of Acts 18:

*25. This man (Apollos) was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.*

Acts 18:25

Apollos taught from the perspective of "the baptism of John" until he reached Ephesus where he learned more from Aquilla and Priscilla. Thus, Paul met some

disciples who hadn't learned of Christ's Kingship, and only knew about repentance and John.

John baptized people for repentance, preparing the way for One greater who would cause men to be inspired and holy.

The baptism of Jesus embodied more than repentance. It empowered people by inspiring them (i.e., motivating them). Sometimes the motivation came right at the time of baptism. Sometimes they received it before, and sometimes after the baptism. Either way, the spirit came because they heard that Jesus had been raised from the dead, enthroned as King, and was reigning. It INSPIRED people and called them out to be "holy" (separated).

John had taught repentance. That was good, but inspiration was also needed to carry it through to the next step. Repentance, as John taught, caused men to cease wrong thoughts and deeds. However, holy spirit caused men to separate themselves to follow Christ. It empowered them and induced them to positive action. Holy spirit compels us to holy action.

Learning the truth about Christ and His kingdom inspires people (gives them spirit). Baptism is part of the package. The baptism of Jesus symbolizes dying, being buried (going under the water), and then raising up (coming out of the water) to newborn life. This is also called, "being born again." This brings LIFE, enthusiasm, inspiration and motivation. This was the difference between John's baptism and the baptism of Jesus.

Learning of Jesus' Kingship gives

us spirit because the Gospel of the Kingship engenders life, faith, confidence, direction, and action.

Usually, the first thing we do when we learn of Christ and become inspired is try to share it with someone. Often it's the people least willing to accept it – like ministers, church acquaintances, etc. Typically, they are not interested because they are content with church ways. They are insensitive to holy spirit, and feel secure in their ignorance.

The point is this: inspiration (i.e., receiving spirit) comes from hearing the Gospel of the Kingdom. This drives us to action. In these verses, holy spirit was moving men to action ... separating them to the ministry of Christ.

**QUESTION:** Isn't this what they call "getting religion"? The people I've seen who "got religion" became shallow, obnoxious hypocrites. Is this caused by the "Holy Ghost"?

**QUESTION:** Why do you attempt to de-personify the Holy Spirit in the face of John 14:26?

*“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you.”*

Here the Comforter is identified as the Holy Ghost, and is referred to with the pronouns “whom” and “he.” These words indicate a “person” not just a motive.

## ACTS 19:8-10 THE WORD SPREADS

And for about three months he was speaking boldly, going into the synagogue, reasoning and persuading about the Kingship of God.

But as some hardened themselves, and rebelled, speaking evil of the way before the multitude, he withdrew from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

And this continued for two years; so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

**P**AUL taught in the synagogue for three months, until the hardened hearts and evil men drove him away. After that, he taught for two years in an auditorium called “the School of Tyrannus.”

Here again, the scenario is repeated like a broken record. Paul goes into the synagogue and speaks to Jews about the Kingship of God. Then two things happen: 1. those who have eyes and ears begin learning and changing, and 2. those who do not have eyes and ears form a mob or some kind of conspiracy to get Paul put in jail or killed. The gospel of the Kingship polarizes people quickly.

Paul was unwelcome in the synagogue, and it says he “separated the disciples.” This means he convinced them to leave. They relocated to a place called the “school of Tyrannus” where Paul continued to teach.

This school was probably a hall where lectures were given. Tyrannus

may have rented the hall or sponsored speakers (philosophers and teachers that traveled about) to stop by and teach. Thus, most of Paul’s teaching was dis-associated with the synagogue. This is an important point because those synagogues were comparable to modern churches. Paul did most of his teaching away from them! Similarly today, truth still survives best when it is separated from the churches!

“Asia,” in verse 10, means Asia Minor. In two years, because of the efforts of one man and his helpers, the Gospel went throughout Asia Minor. The Word spreads fast. Those with “ears to hear” pick it up quickly. On the other hand, these principles can be presented over and over for years and those without ears will not pick it up.

If the message from one man - Paul - had spread throughout all of Asia Minor in two years, then you would think it certainly has gone throughout the rest of the world during the subsequent nineteen

centuries until today. It’s doubtful that there could be any place on Earth that the gospel has not touched. Therefore, today’s preachers who claim that they are commissioned by God to preach to the nations of the Earth where the word of God has not been heard are either lying or confused. Now, if they want to go teach the heathen that is their choice. But they should not claim the Bible commands them to do it.

**PONDER THIS:** The reason churchgoers aren’t interested in the concepts of “the Gospel” and Christ is because they like what church offers them and they want to support it. They are churchgoers ... not truth seekers.

## ACTS 19:11-12 DID PAUL USE MAGIC?

And God was working new powers through the hands of Paul:

So that handkerchiefs and sashes from his body were taken to the sick, and diseases left them, and bad spirits were purged.

**I**T IS important that we explain these two verses because they are regularly misinterpreted. Paul himself had no supernatural powers, nor was he working miracles. That may sound elementary to you, but just think about it. Many people who read this passage assume that Paul could command powers to heal.

It says that handkerchiefs or sashes from Paul were taken to the sick. It is easy to jump to the conclusion that this was a formula for working miracles. But this instance represents an exception rather than the rule. We know of no other example of this in Scripture. This was not business as usual for Paul.

In fact, today there are self-proclaimed preachers, healers, and exorcists, who mail bits of cloth to people, calling them “prayer cloths.” Some of you may have received one of these “prayer cloths” in the mail. The preacher/con man sends instructions with it, telling his intended mark to do a couple things – pray in a certain position with the cloth touching them, at a certain time of day, or whatever – and then send the cloth back to him so he can pray over it. Of course, when you send it back you are instructed to include “five, ten, fifteen, twenty or twenty-five dollars” to insure that the prayers will work. The implication is that more money makes for a more effective prayer.

This scam is an old one, but it still works today. And this particular scripture is often misused by con artist preachers to justify this scam.

But Paul was not working miracles. God was! Miracles occurred in the presence of Paul, but Paul was not doing them. Now, that may sound like splitting hairs, but there’s a big difference. You see, if Paul had been working miracles by formula it would have been **SORCERY**. It would have been a formula – a recipe for miracles. The formula itself would have caused the miracles. But the scripture says that God was performing it through Paul. Paul had no power to heal. Paul was NOT a “healer.” God is the Great Healer!

He (God) could have just as easily done it another way, through a different mode, or just spontaneously. It didn’t have to be done via Paul’s handkerchieves. In this case, it just so happened that God used cloths. Neither the cloth nor Paul had special powers. They were merely convenient tokens or expressions of faith in Paul’s God.

The point is that these were not patterns, or models, or prototypes, for religious miracle mongers (preachers) to conjure up powers of healing, or develop powers to invoke the supernatural. These were not recipes or formulas for a sorcery handbook. Paul was an apostle of Christ, not a Sorcerer! Sorcery is the so-called “secret wisdom” or knowledge of formulas that sorcerers claim will give them mystical powers to command the elements. It is superstitious nonsense and forbidden by God ... because it is false and dishonest.

Religion typically tends toward superstition. It interprets such scriptures as miracles-by-formula or ritual (i.e., sorcery). But God doesn’t work that way. Scripture instructs us to bring our needs to Christ, directly. He who knows our hearts and thoughts needs no secret, magic formulas or mystical middle men.

Verse 12 ends with, “... *and bad spirits were purged.*” The KJV renders this, “... *and the evil spirits went out of them.*” Again, pagan churches have misinterpreted this verse by teaching that invisible *spirit beings* were escaping out of the bodies of men. This is Demonology – the flip side of Angelology.

Demonology is the pagan belief that spirit beings live in the air around us. It has been fully accepted in the churches. Thus, the “authorized” church rendition and interpretation of this passage is that evil ghost-beings were being threatened sufficiently by Paul so that they opted to escape out of the bodies of their victims and go elsewhere – perhaps to find another body to possess where Paul would not bother them.

In fact, the true meaning of this verse is these people received an attitude adjustment. They lost their bad spirits (band intentions). They were replaced by good intentions. Parents who still raise their children correctly (a rare thing nowadays) observe this phenomenon regularly ... every time they administer correction with their children. A command to “stop doing that,” or a loving swat on the seat of the pants has “cast out” innumerable “demons” from children who need correction. It is called “an attitude adjustment.”

In mature Christians an act of compassion can sometimes have the desired effect by touching the conscience. Compassion may correct us when we’ve had a bad day and allowed ourselves to develop a bad spirit. This may work with mature Christians. It is not effective, however, with small children because they have not yet developed the capacity for self-correction. Children need enforceable commands to keep them within the bounds of safety, common sense and good manners.

**QUESTION:** Are you saying that the time-honored rituals and traditions practiced in churches are like magic tricks practiced by sorcerers?

## ACTS 19:13-20 SOME EARLY "HEALERS" EXPOSED

But some of the solicitous Jews - exorcists - attempted to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those with bad spirits, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."

And there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, who were doing this.

But in response, the bad spirit said to them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize; but who are you?"

And having sprung upon them, the man in whom was the bad spirit overpowered them and defeated them so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

And this became known to all the Jews, as well as the Greeks, dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

And many that believed came, and by announcement confessed their acts.

And a good number of the ones who had been soliciting brought their books together, and burned them before all: and calculated the prices of them, and found it to be fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Thus the word of God mightily grew and was strong.

**C**HRISTIANS are not exorcists. In fact, Christians look upon exorcists as sorcerers and pretenders, exercising false and silly rituals. So here was Sceva, a Jewish high priest. His sons were "exorcists." Exorcism was a Jewish practice before it was adopted by the churches. Churches have taken on the sorceries of Judaism, for exorcism has become one of the churches' most popular and common practices.

These verses show a Jewish scam called "the exorcism of demons." "Adjure" (in verse 13) means to bind by oath or threat. The idea was to solemnly charge or command the alleged "spirits," threatening them with a curse if they did not obey the exorcist. This is typical sorcery. Exorcists are sorcerers, and sorcery is religious slight-of-hand designed to defraud audiences and convince them of the sorcerer's power.

These Jews attempted to work their con game by the name of "*Jesus Christ whom Paul preaches*." By using the name of a third party (Paul) they were attempting to establish ostensible lines of authority in the eyes of the public. No doubt the reason they wanted to use Jesus' name was because Jews saw Jesus as a sorcerer. In Jewish writings they portray Him as a sorcerer. Thus, the opportunists wanting to work magic-by-formula attempted a new recipe. They called on names that had been associated with what their perverted minds perceived as sorcery, hoping that the speaking of the names would give them mystical powers. This is seen also in modern churches, in a number of ways ... and it is sorcery, NOT Christianity!

When television preachers try to work miracles through this same method, they are practicing sorcery. They are pagan con men trying to work magic-by-

formula. True miracles from God have no formula. Miracles are not demanded by men. Nor are they performed by ritual or by following a formula.

The wording of verse 15 was expressed in the terms of the exorcists it exposed. Exorcists promote a doctrine that spirits are supernatural, invisible entities with minds and lives of their own. They claim that invisible spirit beings take possession of the bodies of mortal men. Over the years, superstitious people have read this verse and assumed it confirmed the Jewish pagan belief of demonology. They were being misled by superstitions from pagan sources.

Where scripture says that an "evil spirit" speaks, it means a man voices his bad motives. Men with bad motives are sometimes referred to as "evil spirits," much the same as open-minded men today are sometimes called "free spirits."

If one takes a realistic, practical view of this passage, it simply means that this man had evil motives. Saying that the "evil spirit" spoke was their way of saying he expressed bad intent.

The superstitious Jew thought he was possessed by a supernatural demon. But Paul was not a Jew, and neither are we. Our faith is not in sorcery and magic. Christians should not adopt the Jewish theology of the churches/synagogues.

This fellow in verses 15-16 was apparently causing trouble with the Jews, which oddly enough could have meant he was not a bad fellow at all ... since Jewish perspective is upside down and backwards. We remember also that the Jews claimed that Jesus had a demon.

These seven sons of Sceva, who attributed an evil spirit to the man, went to him and attempted a sorcery-style exorcism. This man said he understood the authority of Jesus and Paul, but he didn't recognize the authority of sorcerers. He said "I don't recognize their name (i.e., their authority)."

The exorcists employed a bluff, and the man called their bluff. Their

smoke-and-mirror act was fraudulent. This one man, by himself, overcame them, thrashed them soundly, and sent them running. Thus should all exorcist preachers in the churches be dispatched.

Then, lo and behold, there was a book burning: one of the most feared things in modern society.

Picture this if you can. This confrontation brought fear on the people at Ephesus and magnified the name (i.e., authority) of the Lord Jesus. Those who had been soliciting magic and sorcery brought their religious books which had been exposed as hoaxes and idolatry and threw them into a fire. They were infuriated that they had been tricked into such idiocy to believe in sorcery. Their frustration grew as they realized that altogether they had lost fifty-thousand pieces of silver by spending it unwisely on religious junk. Fifty-thousand pieces of silver in that day would have been the equivalent of over 100 years of wages for an average worker! As you can see, superstition was big business then, as it still is today.

In verse 19, the 17th-century KJV used the archaic term “curious arts” –

the old English term for “sorcery,” “magic,” and “witchcraft.” These “crafts” are generally associated with Jewish superstition. However, the actual Greek word is “*perierga*” ... which means “*to circulate or repeat*” as in chanting a formula over and over, or repetitious ritual to “solicit” occult power. This same word is used earlier in verse 13, where Jews were repetitiously “soliciting” door to door – a common practice still in modern church protocol.

Some time ago, in *The American Christian*, we published an article exposing dowsing. Dowsing is a form of “divining,” and can be classified as one of these “curious arts” or “sorcerers’ tricks.” Some people today still dowse, and still believe that it actually works. That article aroused some angst from certain readers. As in the above example, we exposed dowsing and opened people’s eyes to the truth. We caused people to abandon their superstitions and their books about “dowsing,” tossing them in the garbage because they realized they were only hoaxes.

However, one man who lived in California got an attorney and threatened to sue me. He accused me

of trying to ruin his means of livelihood. Truthfully, up to that day I had no idea he was a professional dowser. He had been a supporter of ACM, and had received our literature for years. I hadn’t known how he made his living. He threatened me but I didn’t retract. He was not heard from again.

Churchgoers love sorcery, hoax, and trickery. But notice, when truth is demonstrated clearly, some people will voluntarily abandon their superstitions and con games. But, many people do not have the love of truth through reason. These require graphic demonstration.

Many Ephesians confessed their superstitions and changed their ways ... because one exposé chased the frauds out of town. People lost their faith in sorcery. The fakes were debunked and the hoax exposed. Every time a hoax is exposed, and a lie is shown to be a lie, truth becomes more powerful and people are either drawn to the truth, or fear of truth makes them back away from it simply because “men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

**QUESTION:** You are quick to accuse people who believe in dowsing as being superstitious. But Marconi, the inventor of the radio, was scoffed at for thinking radio waves were real. Galileo (1564-1642) was convicted and imprisoned for writing a paper which promoted the view that the Earth revolved around the Sun - a view which clashed with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Both examples represent proven scientific principles which were either new or unknown at the time they were presented. Is it possible you are doing the same thing with dowsing today?

**COUNTERPOINT:** Why do you explain away demons so casually? Don’t you realize that it IS logically and scientifically possible that such a thing as “little ghosts” (as you have called them) could exist? All matter is made up of atoms. And all atoms in matter are separated from one another by space – like planets in the solar system. Furthermore, every atom is made up mostly of empty space. The nucleus of an atom is the only solid part of it. Eliminate all the empty space in every atom of a 200 pound man and he would be no bigger than a flea.

Since all matter is made up of atoms, and atoms are separated from one another by space, there is no such thing as absolute solidity. ALL matter (even that of a human body) is mostly empty space. Spirit beings can pass into what appears to be solid matter. As water is absorbed by brick or wood, a demon spirit can enter (be absorbed by) a human body because of atomic structure and the fact that the human body really isn’t solid!

## ACTS 19:21-32 PAUL RUNS AFOUL OF THE IDOL INDUSTRY

When these things were done, Paul, having passed through Macedonia and Achaia, was inspired to go into Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.

So he sent two of his ministers to Macedonia, Timothy and Erastus; but he delayed in Asia for a while.

And at that time there arose no small disturbance about The Way.

For a certain silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines to Artemis, provided no small profit to the artisans;

Whom, having come together with like craftsmen, he said, “Men, you know well that by this craft we have our prosperity.

“And you see and hear how that this Paul has persuaded and changed the minds of many people not only of Ephesus, but nearly all of Asia [Minor], saying the ones (gods) created by hands are no gods;

“So that not only this our craft is in danger of

coming to contempt, but also the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be considered nothing, and her magnificence, which the whole of Asia [Minor] and the world worships, will be brought down.”

And when they heard this, they were full of anger, and cried out, saying, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”

And the city became filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia, who were travelers with Paul, they rushed with one accord into the theater (i.e., town square).

As for Paul, he would have gone into the mob, but the disciples would not allow him.

Also, some of the Asiarchs, being his friends, sent and advised him not to present himself in the theater.

Therefore, some were crying one thing, and some another: for the ecclesia was in confusion; and most of them did not know why they had come together.

**P**AUL planned to go back to Jerusalem via Macedonia. But he stayed in Ephesus for a while before proceeding, and sent Gaius and Aristarchus ahead of him to Macedonia.

In verse 23 we see the term, “the way.” Some times it is called “that way,” speaking of “the way of Christ,” “the way of the Ecclesia.” It was the way of truth, separate from the Beast System. This was not the name of a church or a denomination. It was “the way” of Christ’s leading.

The Silversmiths had been profiting off the religious idolaters by selling shrines, statues, idols and paraphernalia to be used to worship Artemis. The silversmiths put silver plate on items of worship, statues and

other religious accouterments. Ephesus was the main city of Asia Minor, and thus the center of Artemis worship. The worship of idols and shrines was big commerce. Today it is called “church” and “evangelism” ... and it still provides much profit for churches and evangelists.

The Greek goddess “Artemis” was called “Diana” in Latin. This same goddess had also been known as “Astarte” (also called “Ishtar” – the Persians’ “Mother of Heaven”). She was the goddess of fertility known throughout the ages also as “Semiramis” and “Minerva” These are names for the goddess, and they are interchangeable depending on the date and culture. In Catholicism she is their “Virgin Mary.”

Demetrius called all the church craftsmen together and informed them that Paul was about to ruin their business by telling everyone that these expensive silver-plated idols the craftsmen were producing were “no-gods.” Of course the reason the idols sold so well was because the superstitious people believed that gods commonly came down from heaven and inhabited, or resided inside, the idols. When Paul showed this to be false – that there were no such gods inhabiting idols or men, or any other objects – the silver idols suddenly lost their value! Sales fell off and these merchants lost money.

Artemis/Diana worship was the great religion of that realm. It is still

the great religion of our day ... by a slightly different form and name.

Religion was big business in first-century Ephesus. Just like the church leaders and TV evangelists of today, merchants became wealthy selling idols and erecting churches.

In verses 27 through 31, the silversmiths banded together and took Gaius and Aristarchus prisoner and brought them into "the theater."

"Theater" is the actual Greek word used in this passage and has reference to a town square or a hall

for stocking and displaying the silversmiths' work (in other words, an idol market).

The "theater" was also called "the forum" and "the market place." The Roman forum was a place where goods were sold and information was exchanged. It was also for public gatherings and assemblies where people could present ideas or have their grievances aired. In some ways it was like a court where offenses were heard and judgment passed. Luke, the writer of the book of Acts,

calls the gathering an "ecclesia" in verse 32. This is the same word usually rendered "church" in English Bibles. But here the translators rendered it "assembly"—referring to a hearing in the market place.

In verse 29 it says the mob rushed Gaius and Aristarchus into a hearing to be tried. This was a "rushing to judgment." The silversmiths were rushing Gaius and Aristarchus into "the theater" to pass judgment upon them. But it seems they neglected to use the prescribed protocol required to legally bring someone to trial in a Roman province. As today, courts require you to observe procedures (court procedures) to "please the court." Otherwise the court will not "hear" your case. Later on the mob was warned by a Roman official that they were in danger of being charged with wrongdoing for rushing them into the theater and not using official prescribed procedure.

Paul was ready to crash into the theater and defend his colleagues, but he was held back by friends. Verse 32 says that the ecclesia (the called-out participants in the hearing) became confused, and many were wondering why they were even there.

That brings us to this very important term: ECCLESIA. This public gathering was termed an "ecclesia." I've been writing and defining this term for some time now, and there are those who still can't understand why I have stressed the importance of the term. But once you understand the difference between an ecclesia and a church, a whole new insight will be yours! By the time you get through this lesson you will know more clearly what an ecclesia is.

Remember, in most cases where the Greek word "ecclesia" appears in the Bible, English translators have rendered it "church." But, the word "ecclesia" NEVER means "church." NEVER! Not even once! Therefore, when English-speaking people read their English versions of the Bible, they are getting the wrong meaning; they are being deceived.

Whenever you see the word "church" in your English Bible, correct it with the word "ecclesia" so

## ARTEMIS

With her torch, *Artemis* was known as the luminous god of the night and became identified with the moon and darkness. Being a goddess of nature, she is usually thought of as a mighty huntress, as well as a goddess of fertility (conception and childbirth). In Roman society she was called Diana. Young girls revered Diana as the guardian of their maiden years, and before marriage they offered her a lock of their hair, their girdle, and their maiden garment. They also believed she assisted at childbirth. At times human sacrifices had been offered to *Artemis*. A remnant of this savage practice was observed annually at Sparta where they flogged boys till they bled at the altar of a deity known as *Artemis Orthia*.

## THE TEMPLE

The temples at Ephesus were elaborate edifices. The temple of Artemis was one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world - a magnificent structure with 127 columns 60 feet high standing on an area 425 feet long and 220 feet wide.

*"Once in the year there was a public festival in honor of the goddess at Ephesus, to which all the Ionians who could do so prepared with their wives and children, bringing costly offerings to Diana and rich presents for the priests."*

—Unger's Bible Dictionary

These Ephesian temples may have been almost as impressive as some of the large Catholic and Anglican churches you see in Europe and Britain. They also could be compared to the grand temples revered by Americans today in Washington D.C. - i.e., The Capitol Building, Senate Buildings, The White House, etc..

The goddess is mounted atop the dome of the U.S. Capitol Building - one of the many proofs of the un-Christian roots of the U.S. Government.

as to avoid confusion. Furthermore, until you better understand the true meaning of “ecclesia,” you need to mark these places the word “ecclesia” appears in the Greek. For instance, the KJV translates it “assembly” (not “church”) in Acts 19:32, 39 & 41.

The scene in these verses is obviously not a church! Luke called it an “ecclesia” – the word rendered “church” in every other occurrence in your bible.

Now, it’s passing strange how the translators take license to translate this word “church” at one time, “assembly” another time ... and NEVER ONCE translate it correctly. They are not being honest with the Word of God! If you don’t find this suspicious then you lack a healthy skepticism.

The folks in this gathering were called an “ecclesia.” Why? Because they were “called out.” Verse 25 says that Demetrius, the silversmith, called them together. The word “ecclesia” means “called out ones.” It was a Greek ecclesia. Greek and Roman bodies politic were called “ecclesias.”

The gathering itself took place where ecclesias were commonly “called out” – in the town square or market place.

By making that application we can more clearly see that Christ’s “ecclesia” is “The Community of Saints.” Christ calls us out from the world system into HIS KINGSHIP SYSTEM; HIS ECCLESIA. It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to see that this is NOT “church.”

**QUESTION:** Is there any connection between a “called out one” and someone receiving a “call” to become a minister or to suddenly “get religion?”

**QUESTION:** Isn’t your preoccupation with word meanings confusing? If the Bible is the number-one selling book in the world, wouldn’t translators take their time and be very accurate in their translation? Aren’t you just muddying the waters by picking apart the King James Version?

## **ACTS 19:33-41 MORE EVIDENCE OF ECCLESIA**

Then, together, they brought Alexander out of the crowd, some of the Jews thrusting him

up front. And Alexander motioned with the hand, wanting to defend himself before the people.

But when they recognized that he was a Jew, they all cried

with one voice for about two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.”

And when the scribe [i.e., recorder] had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who among men does not know that the city of the Ephesians is keeper of the temple of the great goddess Artemis, the one fallen from Zeus?”

“Therefore, since these things are indisputable, you should calm down and do nothing rash.

“For you have brought these men who are neither robbers of temples, nor blasphemers of our goddess.

“Wherefore if Demetrius, and those with him, have a complaint against anyone, forum days [i.e., scheduled court days] are held, and there are proconsuls: let them bring charges against one another.

“But if you seek anything more, it will be judged in a lawful ecclesia.

“For we are in danger of being charged with sedition for this day, there being no cause whereby we can give an account for this conspiracy.”

And when He had said these things he dismissed the ecclesia.

**A**LEXANDER, a Jewish silversmith (2 Timothy 4:14-15) was dragged into the theater to be tried. Aristarchus and Gaius were too. Alexander wanted to give his defense but he was drowned out by the shouting mob of Artemis worshippers. They opposed both Christians and Jews.

When the mob learned that Alexander was a Jew, they started chanting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Chanting is an age-old method of putting people into an altered state of consciousness. The mob of chanters got in such a hyper state of mind they continued chanting for two hours! Imagine! This kind of animalistic exercise demonstrates that mobs are the products of an altered state of conscience in which intelligence is overpowered by impulse. You can see it in mobs, demonstrations, churches, etc.. People excite one another into chanting and screaming and yelling. This can be seen, for example, in rock music concerts, and political rallies.

Verse 35 must be carefully examined. The Ephesians in the theater had been called out. They were an ecclesia. This ecclesia gathering had a scribe (i.e., a recorder or town officer). Combine that with the fact that the gathering was a court hearing, and we see the meaning of "ecclesia."

We're talking about a town meeting, a hearing, a court session ... not a church.

### **MODERN WORSHIP OF ARTEMIS (TRINITY AND INCARNATION)**

"... the great goddess Artemis, the one fallen from Zeus." (vs. 19)

Who was this "great goddess Artemis" that fell from Zeus? The worship of Artemis was powerful in Ephesus. It had spread throughout Asia Minor. Furthermore, it has endured to modern times. We see it often today ... by other names. I call it Churchianity. Look at some of the things Churches have in common with the Artemis cult of ancient

Greece.

First, let's recall the incident in chapter 14, just after God had healed some people through Paul's ministry. In response, the people believed that Paul and Barnabas were gods who came down from heaven in the form of men.

*11. And the crowds having seen that which Paul did, lifted up their voices, in the Lycaonian tongue, saying "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men."*

Acts 14:11

These were worshippers of Artemis. They believed gods came down (fell) from the sky and took human form.

*12. And they were calling Barnabas "Zeus" [i.e., Jupiter], and Paul "Hermes" [i.e., Mercury], because he was the chief of the word [literally "chief of the logos"].*

Acts 14:12

Paul was the chief speaker. Thus, they labeled him "the chief of the logos" which, to the Lycaonians, corresponded to their god "Hermes" ("Mercury" in Latin). In Roman theology, Mercury/Hermes was "the logos" ("the word") – the communicator for Zeus. Mercury was "the Word" – the swift messenger who carried Zeus' (God's) messages to man. Notice how these prototypes fit modern church characters that have been given other names.

The Lycaonians labeled Paul "Hermes, the Communicator," or "Chief of the word."

The Artemis church had a triune "godhead" ... vis-a-vis: 1. Jupiter (Zeus) the father god; 2. Mercury (Hermes) the son god (called "the logos"); 3. Artemis (Ishtar) the mother god. This threesome is also the Trinity of the churches.

In the churches' trinity, Mercury became their Jesus (the logos/word); Artemis became their Holy Ghost ... shared with Mary in Catholicism; and Zeus became their Father God. The trinity/godhead is a pagan concept incorporated in the churches.

Someone may argue, "There is no mother in the traditional Trinity of the churches." But, there is! The churches do have a female principle in their Trinity. They claim that their "Holy Ghost" is feminine. The Catholics' Mother Mary compares to Ishtar/Artemis as "queen of heaven" (Jer. 7:18, 44:17-19, & 25).

The Judeo-Christian Trinity compares to the Trinity of the Artemis cult, except the names have been changed. This is established pagan doctrine ... demonstrated as The Worship of Artemis.

Another point of comparison between typical church doctrine and the Artemis cult is the belief that "the logos" (the Word) "fell down" from heaven (compare Acts 14:11 with Acts 19:35 as rendered in the King James Version). Churches teach that "the son" was immortal in heaven before he came down to Earth (like the Greek Hermes), appeared in the form of a man (like Mercury), and became a "logos" or spokesman on Earth (like Mercury). Thus, the churches twisted Scripture to fit Greek myth!

In contrast, true Scripture teaches that Jesus was the Logos (the Communication from God), but He was born a mortal man, was crucified, and only then became immortal when He was raised from the grave by his Father, Yahweh. He didn't start out a god, and He didn't come down from the sky. (see INCARNATION: THE GREAT IMPOSTURE, The American Christian May/June 1992).

True Christianity does not teach trinity nonsense. True Christianity does not teach the doctrines of pagan cult religions. Therefore, it is logical and reasonable to conclude that triune godheads, and gods descending from heaven to pose as men, are myths ... regardless what they name them!

Because of this mix of mythology, and because many people have been thoroughly indoctrinated in the churches masquerading as Christian, there's a cloud of confusion. Churches have traded the true Jesus for the myth of Hermes/Mercury ... and they are stubbornly loyal to their Pagan/Church Trinity doctrine.

## THE ELEMENTS OF AN ECCLESIA:

In this passage, Acts 19:35-41, we see that the town recorder was a follower of the goddess Artemis. In spite of this he displayed some restraint. He said, in essence, *“You all know the truth. You know that Artemis is real, and that she fell down from Zeus. And if these things are true they are beyond question. And besides, these men have committed no real crime”*

He goes on to state that if Demetrius and his cronies had a matter against the men, there were prescribed legal ways to pursue it so that laws would not be broken. There were regular court days (forum days), and proconsuls would preside in the matter. (A proconsul was a governor of a Roman province.)

This is basically what we hear today from the government: *“Don’t take the law into your own hands. Call the police; take ‘em to court.”* This ploy is obviously not new. It was the Roman way. It’s also the church way. *“Let them bring charges against one another before the judges in the courts in accord with the approved procedure commanded by the government.”* Modern American procedure is a repeat of old Roman procedure

Now in verse 39 we notice there were certain elements present that made up a body called a “lawful ecclesia.” For one thing, it had been called out. And let us notice also that it wasn’t a church meeting. It was a hearing by a body politic ... attended by a deputy proconsul or governor of the province. This ecclesia was a civil body. Of course, keep in mind that this was not a Christian ecclesia. It was a Roman ecclesia – a body of “called out” men. The prerequisite to being an “ecclesia” is that it must be a body called out ... whether Christian or secular. While this particular group was not a Christian ecclesia, it WAS STILL an ecclesia. It was a body of people called out by Demetrius and his colleagues. It was an ecclesia by definition.

How, then, did the Greek word “ecclesia” in the New Testament come to be translated “church” (a completely different word) by the English church translators? Do you see the problem? Here is one of the major deceptions of all time! Its subtle introduction into Christendom has literally changed the message of the Bible. A people who were once Christian have been turned anti-Christian ... without them realizing it.

It was with one word! One concept! One lie ... invented by anti-Christ, and spread by Churchmen.

Hopefully this recorded incident gives you more insight into the true nature of an ecclesia, as well as the intrigue that, over the centuries, disguised the meaning of this word and brought it to disuse by replacing it with the Roman concept of “church.”

**QUESTION:** Did you ever stop to think that maybe the Artemis cult borrowed the original true Christian doctrine of the Trinity, and thus the resemblance?

**QUESTION:** It sounds like you are saying that a government can be an ecclesia ... like the ancient Roman government. What about the American constitutional structure of government? If this can be an ecclesia it would seem to contradict your attack upon Central Government. How can you justify ecclesias as called-out bodies, and at the same time condemn a called-out bodies of government?

## ANCIENT BANKS

In verse 37, we find the phrase, *“... robbers of temples ...”* This is a curious case where the King James translators chose the English word “churches” instead of “temples.” Here, the Greek word is not “ecclesia,” but *“hieroculos”*. “Temple” is the correct translation.

In Paul’s day, temples were also treasuries. That made priests bankers. So what the town’s clerk was actually saying was that *“These men are neither bank robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess.”* This is just one more interesting thread in the weave of deceit from the churches. Pagan temples and banks are cut from the same cloth ... and churches cover for them both.

# END OF CHAPTER NINETEEN

FOR ANSWERS AND NOTES, SEE ENCLOSED "ANSWER SECTION."

These lessons are produced by ACM.



## POINTS TO REMEMBER:

1. "Spirit" is an English word that comes from the Hebrew *RUWACH*, and the Greek *PNEUMA*, both of which literally mean AIR IN MOTION; WIND; BREATH.

Spirit is that which compels and motivates. Wind compels leaves to flutter; as breath compels the chest to heave. Likewise, it implies life as evidenced by movement.

Thus, "spirit" came to be the general term used to signify *life* in people and animals. It compels us to act and/or move. Any influence that causes movement, thus indicating life, is thought of as "spirit."

In Gen. 1:20-25 we read about creatures that lived and breathed. Breath (moving air) indicates life in a physical body.

In John 3:3-8, Jesus gave an important description of spirit. He said it is like "wind" which pushes things along with it as it goes: "... so is every one that is born of the spirit."

2. The word "ghost" is used in the KJV to replace "spirit." It comes from the German and Old English "*geist*" (a form of a root word meaning *fear, anger or fury*). Thus "ghost," (*signifying fear or fury*) is a paganized, inaccurate term.

The King James translators apparently chose the word "ghost" because it matched their own pagan concept of "spirit."

Biblically, "spirit" is motivation or disposition of any kind ... not only fear, fury, or anger. When the translators replaced the word "spirit" with "ghost" they injected pagan superstition into God's Holy Word.

3. "Holy spirit" simply means a spirit of holiness. It is not a being. It is a motivation; a disposition; a mood. A spirit of holiness is a motivation to be, to think, or to act in a *holy* way. "Holy" means "separate" – therefore, "holy spirit" is motivation to separate yourself from something.

4. "Receiving spirit," or having the spirit come upon you, simply means to receive inspiration: to be inspired.

5. The holy inspiration received by Christ's disciples by the good news of Christ's Reign separated them to the work of Christ's Kingship.

6. Paul stubbornly kept trying to rescue the unreachable. Time after time, he attempted to reach people who didn't want truth. He went to the synagogues in the cities he entered, trying to reason with people who didn't have holy spirit. It was vain and hopeless. Men may think it is up to them to choose who will hear Christ's call, but it isn't. Only those with "ears to hear" will respond to the call.

We tend to think that we can bring to Christ anyone we choose. Paul learned, eventually, to let Christ do the choosing; that Christ chooses whom He will.

Instead of investing time, energy, and love where we choose, we should invest where Christ chooses. No one can come to Christ unless God draws him (Jn 6:44).

7. "Faith healers" are frauds. Men do not have supernatural power to heal.

Christ chooses whom He heals.

Supernatural healing is not a learned art, nor is it a formula that can be taught to men to be repeated at will. When we pray for healing we ask that Christ's will be done. He does not heal everyone who asks, obviously. If He did many would never die. Nonetheless, it is right for us to pray to Him for his will in our lives. He understands and decides what is best, even when it seems otherwise to us.

8. "Exorcists" are sorcerers operating under the cloak of religion. They are smoke-and-mirror con men.

9. Ephesian worshippers of Artemis believed "gods" could come down from the sky in the form of men (or women). They also believed their gods could incarnate humans (i.e., enter into physical bodies). Thus, the people of Ephesus believed their goddess Artemis had descended from the sky ... from their father god, Zeus (Jupiter).

A variation of this pagan doctrine

is taught in churches. They teach that Jesus existed as an immortal in a distant realm in the sky (i.e., "Heaven") before He descended to Earth; that He was God before He took the temporary form of a man.

However, the Bible tells us Jesus was born a mortal man, and became immortal ONLY after Yahweh raised him up after his crucifixion and death. Jesus was not a "god" descended from "Heaven." Rather, He was the first mortal to be raised to immortality; the Firstfruits of many brethren (1 Cor 15:20).

10. The word "ecclesia" means "the called out." With respect to the Ecclesia of Christ, it means "those called out by Christ." However, not all "callings" are of Christ. Men can be called out in various ways and for various reasons. In Ephesus, in chapter 19, we read of a calling out (an "ecclesia") by some silversmiths. This was a "calling out," but it was not of Christ. It was, by definition, an ecclesia, but not Christ's ecclesia. There can be Christian ecclesias (groups called out by Christ) as well as non-Christian ecclesias (groups called out by others).

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## ANSWERS:

pg.2

"Getting religion" is not necessarily the same as receiving the spirit of holiness (holy spirit). Holy spirit motivates us to separate ourselves to godly thinking and godly action, not to religious ritual and church tradition.

If "getting religion" makes people do things that aren't in accord with Scripture, then it is not from holy spirit but from religion. Religion may be equated with church ... and church engenders self-delusion and confusion.

### pg. 3

Anthropomorphism (attributing human traits to inanimate things) is common in the writings of the Bible. For example, wisdom is called “she” and “her” in Proverbs 1:20, 21. The pronouns “he” and “his” are used often for inanimate things: Gen. 29:3 (a stone), Lev. 13:23, 28 (a spot), 2 Sam. 6:17 (the ark of Yahweh), Ezra 2:68 & 6:7 (the house of God), Job 37:1 (the heart), Eccl. 1:5 (the Sun), Mtt. 26:52 (a sword), Rev. 2:5 (a candlestick). The ecclesia is called “the elect lady” in 2 Jn. 1. New Jerusalem is our “mother” in Gal. 4:26.

Holy spirit is also called “he” for the same reasons. But spirit is no more a person than is a sword or a candlestick.

Today, we use similar expressions. Ships, hurricanes, and countries are referred to as “she” and “her.” Examples are too numerous to list.

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### pg. 4

Yes!

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### pg. 6

**a)** No. Just the opposite. Truth and science was on the side of Galileo, Marconi, and others like them. They fought religious prejudice and superstition much the same as we.

Dowsing, however, is superstition, sorcery, and trickery. It is not true science. It cannot be compared to the discovery of gravity, radio waves, or heliocentricity.

Dowsing, and other forms of “divining,” are condemned by Scripture: Deut. 18:14, Jer. 29:8, Ez. 13:19, 23, 21:29, 22:28, Micah 3:11, Zech 10:2.

Dowsing is easily proved false and unscientific by testing and analysis. If dowsing were a real

science it could be demonstrated and repeated in controlled tests. But it can't.

**b)** COUNTERPOINT: By their own definition, demonologists claim “Ghosts” (sic) are not comprised of “matter” ... thus, since atoms are matter, the configuration of atoms is irrelevant to the pagan concept of “ghosts.”

Demonologists believe demons take over a man's thoughts, thereby controlling him. Thoughts have no atoms.

The weird concepts involved in demonology cannot appeal to real science or the atomic construction of matter.

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### pg. 9

**a)** Anyone can issue a call, and anyone can be “called out.” However, Christ's calling is not to be confused with other “callings.” In principle the term “ecclesia” can be applied to any called-out group. But Christ's calling is singular and distinct ... in that Christ's Kingship is singular and distinct. It is this Kingship into which we are called.

Any “calling” is distinguished by the caller, whoever or whatever it may be. Preachers can be “called out” by a church. Politicians can be “called out” by a government. Etc.. These “callings” and the bodies represented by them are distinguished by whom they are called. Christ calls us to “come out” (separate ourselves) from the world system and its various “callings.”

**b)** The waters have been muddied by the KJV. We are trying to clarify and elucidate what has been confused in the past. Ignoring word meanings is a sure way to get lost in the confusion and in the muddy waters of church mythology.

The various versions of the Bible represent more sales than any other book, but popularity certainly does not reflect truth and accuracy. No

book has been twisted more than the English “versions” of the Bible. Truth and accuracy are NOT the goals sought by churches and Bible sellers like Zondervan Press, the largest Bible publisher in the world. Zondervan is owned by Rupert Murdoch, the powerful, billionaire owner of News Corp and FOX news. He has owned Zondervan since the late 1980's. This speaks for itself.

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### pg. 11

**a)** The Trinity doctrine predates Christ by several millennia (see THE TWO BABYLONS, by Hyssop – Chapter II, Section I, *Trinity In Unity*.) Therefore, it is a great stretch of the imagination, and a breach of logic, to suggest that Pagans got the Trinity doctrine from Christianity.

**b)** I don't attempt to justify all “called-out bodies.” Only those called by Christ are justified (as his ecclesia). The American government was “called out” by Masonic politicians and bankers. It is a non-Christian calling, and a non-Christian establishment.