

The Book of Acts  
Chapter 20  
The Third Missionary Journey (Continued)

*Acts 20:22-25*

*22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there:*

*23 Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.*

*24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

*25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.*

I. Review

1. Chapter 19 began in Ephesus with Paul meeting, ministering to, and baptizing 12

followers of John the Baptist, who also received the Holy Ghost.

2. Next, he preached in the synagogue in Ephesus, but after being rejected by some hard-hearted Jews, took some disciples to the School of Tyrannus, and taught there for 2 years. All Asia, Jews and Greeks heard the word.
3. Paul's ministry included deliverance and miracles brought about by clothing articles from Paul, copycats who tried to use the name of Jesus but got beat up by a demon-possessed man, and deliverance of many from magical arts.
4. The chapter ended with a riot stirred up by a silversmith who complained that those of his trade were losing business since people were not purchasing their idols to the goddess Diana.

## II. THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Continued)

1. **[map: third missionary journey-full map]**  
follow from Antioch, through Galatia, Asia  
(spent 3 years), Macedonia, Achaia  
(Greece), and return over land.

III. Paul's Second Visit to Macedonia and  
Greece (Verse 1)

A. Leaving Ephesus

1. Before the uproar in Ephesus, Paul had  
planned a second visit to Macedonia and  
Greece.

2. He had sent Timothy and Erastus into  
Macedonia, intending to follow them  
shortly:

*Acts 19:21-22*

*21 After these things were ended, Paul  
purposed in the spirit, when he had passed  
through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to  
Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I  
must also see Rome.*

*22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them  
that ministered unto him, Timotheus and*

*Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.*

3. Paul seems to have taken severe persecution as a signal from the Lord that it was time to move on to other fields.
4. If the message is rejected, as Jesus had instructed His disciples, shake the dust off your feet and go elsewhere.
5. So soon after the town clerk quieted and dismissed the mob in Ephesus, he had a farewell meeting with the disciples in Ephesus, and left for Macedonia. That is where chapter 20 begins:

*Acts 20:1 And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia.*

6. Luke provides only a brief account of Paul's ministry in Macedonia on this occasion (verse 2), but there is much more implied in this brief mention of "those parts:

*Acts 20:2 And when he had gone over **those***

*parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,*

- B. Exhortation to “those parts”
  - 1. “Those parts” likely referred to all the cities in Macedonia where he had preached the gospel and left congregations of Christians during his visit on the second missionary journey (Acts 16:6-40; 17:1-14), including Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. **[map: Those parts]**
  - 2. In these cities, Paul gave them much exhortation.
  - 3. Based on Paul’s letters to the church in **Thessalonica**, written earlier during his second missionary journey, likely while he was in his 18 month stay in Corinth, we can learn what he said when he exhorted them on this trip.

*1 Thess 2:11-13*

***11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you,***

*as a father doth his children,*

*12 That ye would **walk worthy of God**, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.*

*13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when **ye received the word of God which ye heard of us**, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

4. And also, based on Paul's later letter to the church in **Philippi**, we can get an idea of how he exhorted them:

5. In a letter to the saints in Philippi, written later when he was a prisoner in Rome, he gave both warnings and thanks:

*Phil 3:17-19*

*17 Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.*

*18 (For many walk, **of whom I have told you often**, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:*

*19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)*

6. He also gave them words of encouragement based on the example they had seen in him when he was with them:

*Phil 4:6-9, 13*

*6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

*7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

*8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

*9 Those things, which ye have both learned,*

*and received, and heard, and **seen in me**, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.  
13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*

7. Going back to Acts 20:2 again, we see that on this third missionary journey, after he exhorted the churches in Macedonia (Philippi and Thessalonica and others), he went to the city of **Corinth** in Achaia (Greece).

*Acts 20:2 And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,*

8. He had written the church in Corinth advising that he would come to them from Macedonia and planned to stay with them through winter:

*1 Cor 16:5-8*

*5 Now I will come unto you, when I shall pass through Macedonia: for I do pass through Macedonia.*

*6 And it may be that I will abide, yea, and*



*winter with you, that ye may bring me on my journey whithersoever I go.*

*7 For I will not see you now by the way; but I trust to tarry a while with you, if the Lord permit.*

*8 But I will **tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.***

9. We can also read in his letters to Corinth about the nature of his ministry there. His first and second letters included correction for many errors in the church, yet he also encouraged them to forgive and accepting back those who had done wrong after they repented.
10. Paul was not only their missionary, he was their founding pastor and preached to them the truth they needed for survival. He gave them much exhortation.

#### IV. THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY (Return Trip)

##### A. Paul the missionary recruiter (Verses 3- 5)

1. After spending three months in Corinth, Paul prepared to return to Antioch in Syria, by way of Jerusalem.
2. Notice from this list of cities he had traveled through, how he picked up many people along the way and recruited them as missionaries.

3. **[map: note cities Paul recruited from]**

*Acts 20:3-5*

*3 And there abode three months. And when **the Jews laid wait for him**, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia.*

*4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of **Berea**; and of the **Thessalonians**, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of **Derbe**, and Timotheus **[from Lystra]**; and of **Asia**, Tychicus **[mentioned in 4 of Paul's letters as a beloved brother in Ephesus]** and Trophimus **[from Ephesus (Acts 21:29), Paul left him sick at Miletum (2 Tim 4:20)]**.*

*5 These going before tarried for **us** at **Troas**.  
[Luke's town]*

4. Troas had been important to them on the second missionary journey, for it was there that Paul received direction in a dream that he was needed in Macedonia. That dream started a major ministry effort.
5. He intended to sail from Cenchrea as he had done on his previous trip, but learning of the plot that the Jews laid wait for him at this seaport, he changed his plans, and returned overland through Macedonia.
6. He and his fellow workers traveled back through Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi.

B. Paul at Troas (Verses 6- 12)

1. Paul and Luke remained in Philippi a few days after the other members of the party had departed for Troas.
2. We learn from Luke's use of the pronoun "we" that he was with Paul at this time.

*Acts 20:6 And **we** sailed away from Philippi*

*after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where **we** abode seven days.*

3. Paul and Luke left Philippi after the days of unleavened bread (Passover season) and, after five days of travel by boat, joined their company at Troas, where they remained for another seven days.
4. On their last evening there they met with the disciples of Troas in a third-floor room where they had a memorable meeting.

*Acts 20:7-8*

*7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, **ready to depart on the morrow**; and continued his speech until midnight.*

*8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.*

5. It was Sunday night church, and the preacher was long-winded.

6. Paul was about to depart but felt the need to urgently impart to the disciples many truths and admonitions in this last service.
7. His sermon went until midnight until he was interrupted by a serious accident.

*Acts 20:9 And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.*

8. Eutychus sat in a window and fell asleep and fell three stories to the ground and died.
9. You talk about a sermon stopper—maybe.

*Acts 20:10-11*

*10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him.*

*11 When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and*

*talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed.*

10. Now remember, Luke, the physician was with them. But instead of screaming, “Is there a doctor in the house?”, the preacher ran to the scene.
11. And Paul did the opposite of what most medical personnel would advise when dealing with accident victims with a potential for broken bones. Paul fell on him and embraced him.
12. And likely with a prayer of faith for Eutychus, his life returned to him, creating great comfort for the church:  
*Acts 20:12 And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted. [were very much comforted]*
13. After this notable miracle that woke everyone up (apparently, they didn’t need Starbucks), the group returned to the upper room, where they broke bread, and

unhindered, Paul continued his sermon preaching till daylight.

14. Notice the many details that are included in the Acts account when Luke is with them.

v. Paul's Charge to the Ephesian Elders (Verses 13-38)

A. Review of cities on the path to Ephesus

1. Let us follow the path of Paul's journey from Troas to Miletus. **[map: return cities]**

2. *Acts 20:13-17*

*13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto **Assos**, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself to go afoot. [a 19 mile walk]*

*14 And when he met with us at **Assos**, we took him in, and came to **Mitylene**.*

*15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against **Chios**; and the next day we arrived at **Samos**, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to **Miletus**.*

*16 For Paul had determined to sail by*

*Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.*

*17 And from **Miletus** he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.*

3. According to 2 Tim 4:20, Paul left Trophimus (mentioned in verse 4) here sick and that is the last time his name is mentioned.
  4. You have to wonder about that since he had just left Troas where he raised up Eutychus from death. Only God knows.
- B. Little known facts about Paul
1. Going back to v. 13  
*Acts 20:13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, **minding himself to go afoot.***
  2. It would be easy to miss the fact that Paul chose to walk from Troas to Assos, a 19-



mile journey that would take 6 to 7-hours to walk.

3. But he sent his companions to go by ship. This gives a further insight into his manner and practice of personal devotion to the Lord.
4. The exhausting impact of his more than 2500-mile mission journey did not hinder him from wanting to take this 19-mile walk alone. Perhaps he wanted some alone time for the purpose of prayer.
5. Another important point that is easy to overlook, is the priority Paul gave to making sure he got to Jerusalem for Pentecost  
*Acts 20:15-17*

*15 And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios; and the next day we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium; and the next day we came to Miletus.*

*16 For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were*

*possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.*

*17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.*

6. This part of the journey was approximately four days by boat from Troas, and now Paul wanted to bypass Ephesus because he desired to reach Jerusalem in time for the next feast of Pentecost.
7. He knew that if he was to stop in Ephesus, his many friends there would require so much of his time that he would not likely be able to reach Jerusalem in time for the feast of Pentecost. And there was just something special about being in Jerusalem on Pentecost!
8. Not only was it an important Jewish feast, it was the anniversary of the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.
9. So instead of traveling to Ephesus, himself, he called for the elders (ministers) of the

church to travel the 50 miles to meet him in Miletus. [**map: Ephesus to Miletus**]

10. This meeting was inspirational yet also very sad.
  - c. Paul's departing message to Elders of Ephesus
    1. Paul's final message to the elders of Ephesus was very passionate, emotional and inspirational.
    2. After spending three years with them, it was a heartbreaking departure, especially when he had been told what was waiting him in Jerusalem.
    3. Read Acts 20:18-38.
      - a. dedication to the Lord's work even when facing bonds and afflictions when he reached Jerusalem
      - b. he was ready to die for Jesus
      - c. Paul sensed that he would not be able to return to Ephesus

- d. Paul told the elders that the Holy Ghost had made them overseers of the church of God, warning of grievous wolves who were coming
- 4. Luke, after recording Paul's message and charge to the Ephesian elders, described the very touching scene of their farewell prayer meeting.
- 5. As they knelt to pray, the elders, who were Paul's own converts and children in the Lord, wept and embraced and kissed him whom they loved as a father for the work he had performed among them.