

Acts of the Apostles – 20

I. The Inspired History

- A. Paul Spent a Week at Troas (1-12).
 - 1. Paul covered Greece and Macedonia (1-6).
 - 2. Paul met with the church at Troas (7-12).
- B. Paul Visited Ephesus Again Briefly (13-38).
 - 1. Paul arranged to meet with the elders of Ephesus (13-17).
 - 2. He summarized his ministry in Asia (18-27).
 - 3. He warned them of future heresies (28-31).
 - 4. He exhorted them to growth in grace (32-35).
 - 5. He affectionately bid them farewell (36-38).

II. The Sense and Meaning

- A. Paul left Asia for a season and covered the regions of Greece and Macedonia (1-6).
 - 1. It had been his plan to revisit Macedonia prior to the uproar in Ephesus (19:21-22).
 - a. Let us observe the embracing of fellows in the gospel of Christ, for the relationship we have in Christ is excellent – blood is thicker than blood.
 - b. After greatly exhorting the churches of Macedonia, he went south into Greece.
 - c. **Exhort.** To admonish earnestly; to urge by stimulating words to conduct regarded as laudable.
 - (1) Ministers should exhort (I Timothy 4:13; 6:2; II Tim 4:2; Tit 1:9; 2:15).
 - (2) Members should exhort (Hebrews 3:13; 10:25; I Thessalonians 5:14).
 - 2. He spent three months in Greece and returned through Macedonia due to the Jews.
 - a. By his plans, he intended to sail from Greece for Syria and Jerusalem (19:21).
 - b. The Jews must have blocked the ports of exit, so he went north to Macedonia.
 - c. Even Paul at times had to use natural wisdom to avoid the clutches of the Jews, as saints should use means to avoid capture but not to take life for the gospel.
 - 3. His revised plan was to travel through Macedonia and then sail by Asia (Ephesus).
 - a. Most of his company went to Asia directly, as they were not the most wanted.
 - b. Paul went up through Macedonia and sailed for Troas from Philippi with Luke.
 - c. They were in Philippi during Passover and then took five days sailing to Troas.
 - d. Pressed for time to get to Jerusalem, he spent a week at Troas with the church.
- B. Paul met with the church at Troas on the first day of the week for a lengthy service (7-12).
 - 1. Let the ridiculous heresy of the SDA be forever silenced about Saturday worship.
 - a. These Judaizers corrupt Moses' dietary laws and sabbath laws among others.
 - b. We follow apostolic tradition (II Thess 2:15; I Cor 11:1), rather than Ellen G. White's or any other silly woman's fantasies and hallucinations.
 - c. In Troas on Saturday (the Holy Spirit tells us neatly he was there seven days), Paul met the whole church for communion and preaching as usual on Sunday.
 - d. In Corinth and Galatia, the churches came together on Sunday (I Cor 16:1-2) for religious worship, regardless of where you place this "laying by in store."
 - e. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, the day of His resurrection (Re 1:10).
 - f. The reason for moving from Saturday to Sunday, in this time of reformation, was the resurrection (Matthew 28:1; Mark 16:2,9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1,19).
 - g. Jesus appeared the second Sunday also to His assembled disciples (Jn 20:26).
 - h. And the Holy Ghost was given on the first day (Acts 2:1 cp Lev 23:15-16).
 - i. John Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles reformed things (John 4:21-24; Heb 9:10).

- j. Paul abolished sabbath days for New Testament saints (Colossians 2:16-17).
 - k. Paul condemned the Judaistic weaknesses of the Galatians (Galatians 4:9-11).
 - l. The sabbath is not taught positively a single time in the epistles to churches.
 - m. The sabbath was a Jewish peculiarity of Moses' law (Ex 31:12-17; Eze 20:12).
 - n. The Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), convened officially to apply Moses law to the Gentiles, totally ignored this "essential" subject and golden calf of SDA.
2. It is the custom of Christ's churches to assemble for the Lord's supper (I Cor 11:20).
 - a. The breaking of bread can be natural or spiritual (I Cor 10:16 vs Luke 24:35).
 - b. Regardless of what Paul the apostle did, as a servant of Christ responsible for all the churches (II Cor 11:28), we practice closed communion.
 3. It is also the custom of Christ's churches to emphasize preaching, as Paul did here; and it is a problem of Christ's churches that some fall asleep during long preaching.
 4. Even with a young man falling down dead, Paul continued preaching until morning.
- C. Paul arranged to meet the elders of the church at Ephesus before sailing to Jerusalem (13-17).
1. Luke and the others sailed from Troas to Assos, while Paul went by foot; then they sailed together through several stops until they arrived at Miletus.
 2. To avoid the delay traveling to Ephesus, he asks the elders to meet him in Miletus.
- D. Affectionate and concerned for this church at Ephesus, Paul summarized his ministry (18-27).
1. A minister's consistency is very important to make his message credible and powerful.
 - a. Paul was a humble apostle, though he blasted all opposition and claimed truth.
 - b. Paul was a hunted apostle, for he proved his sincerity by suffering for the truth.
 - c. Paul was an honest apostle, for he taught all profitable subjects plainly to all.
 - d. Paul was a holy apostle, for he emphasized repentance and faith as essentials.
 2. Paul lived a life of suffering for two reasons – he had persecuted and he chose Christ.
 - a. The Lord had called him to suffer for His sake for these reasons (9:16).
 - b. His resume had more suffering than any minister of Christ (II Cor 11:23-28).
 - c. Being an apostle was not the cushy life of living in the Vatican (I Cor 4:9-13).
 - d. He knew by the Spirit's internal witness he was going to Jerusalem to suffer.
 - e. **Abide**. II. *trans.* To wait for, await the issue of, endure. 12. To wait for, await; remain ready for, watch for, expect.
 - f. Paul lived above these trials by (1) focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ as His Captain and (2) the unimportance of his own life in consideration of Him.
 3. He knew by the same Spirit witness that he would not see these Ephesian elders again.
 - a. He calls them to record he had done all he could for all men in Asia (19:10,26) and more particularly for them (20:18-21,27).
 - b. Great ministers proclaim all the counsel of God to protect and prepare hearers, which includes holiness, hell, election, prophecy, child training, heresies, etc.
- E. Knowing the nature of men and Satan, he warned of coming heresies among them (28-31).
1. A minister's duties include taking heed to himself and to the flock (I Timothy 4:16).
 2. The ministry is not a career option: it is an appointment from God (Hebrews 5:4).
 3. They must feed the saints, for He purchased them with His own blood (Rom 14:15).
 4. False ministers will come without affection for Christ or His flock (Ezek 34:2,10).
 5. True ministers will also fall to ambition and spread personal heresies (I Cor 11:19).
 6. Anything contrary to the wholesome words of Jesus is perverse (Gal 1:7; I Tim 6:3-5).
 7. While Paul was there, they were safe with an authoritative man of God (Eph 4:14).
 8. Consider the seriousness of Paul's warnings. Was he paranoid or wise and prudent?
 9. Ministers must watch, and they must remember the solemnity of their charge.
- F. Knowing the nature of men and Satan, he exhorted them to growth in grace (32-35).
1. The Word of God is the foundation for all ministerial efforts to growth and perfection.
 2. Paul exhorts to ministerial compassion and charity rather than personal ambition.

3. Our Lord Jesus Christ taught a glorious fact: *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*
- G. Concluding his wonderful remarks, Paul affectionately bids farewell with prayer (36-38).
1. What a glorious example for us to follow . . . commend them to God and pray!
 2. Blood is thicker than blood, so physical affection by Christian men is holy and good.