

## **A Riot in Ephesus**

Acts 19

by Don Falkos

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Paul went back to Ephesus and stayed there for a few years. He proclaimed the word of the Lord every day in the synagogue and in a popular public forum. He expelled evil spirits, he healed people of all sorts of illnesses, and he laid his hands on believers that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

A group of Jewish men was traveling from town to town casting out evil spirits by saying, "I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out." But one time, the evil spirit replied, "I know who Jesus is, and I know who Paul is, but who are you?" Then the man with the evil spirit attacked them, beat them, and drove them away. News spread all through Ephesus, and the name of Jesus was greatly honored.

A silversmith who made his living manufacturing shrines to the goddess Artemis called together a group of workers who made their living in similar ways. "This man Paul is convincing people gods made by human hands aren't really gods at all. If this keeps up, the temple of Artemis will lose its influence, and we will be out of a job."

Soon the whole city was in an uproar. Everyone ran to the amphitheater. Paul wanted to go too, seeing this as an opportunity to speak to all of Ephesus. Fearing for his safety, Paul's followers wouldn't let him go. Inside the amphitheater, the people were all shouting, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" They kept it up for about two hours. Finally, an official of Ephesus was able to quiet them and said, "If the silversmith has a legitimate complaint, he needs to take it to the courts. In the meantime, we all need to go home before we're arrested for rioting." So they all went home.