

RUSSELL SANDERS

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THE APOSTLE PAUL – LESSON 36

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY – PART 1

DIANA

Scholars speak of Paul's three missionary journeys. They point to Acts 18:21-23 as the end of the second as he visits Jerusalem with a brief stop at Antioch and beginning a third as he departs Antioch for Galatia and Phrygia. It might be a vague or arbitrary division, but I will choose to go along with it. That being said, Lessons 30 to 35 are re-classified as "third journey" to align with their reasoning.

We pick up today in Acts 19:21-22 near the end of Paul's ministry in the Ephesian school of Tyrannus. Although Paul remained a short time longer in Ephesus, he sent Timothy and Erastus ahead into Macedonia where he had established churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea.

As Paul remained in Ephesus, trouble was brewing relating to the Roman goddess Diana (or Artemis in Greek mythology). Although Paul was not preaching against the worship of Diana, the fact that so many Ephesians converted to Christ, they were no longer worshipping Diana.

This affected the business of the silversmiths who crafted artifacts that were little "temples" containing her image. They were likened to her elaborate temple in Ephesus which drew attention throughout all of Asia. It was a big business. The decline in business hurt them "in the pocketbook."

Tomorrow we will delve more into this matter as described in Acts 19:23-41.