

Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes

Third Quarter 2018: *The Book of Acts*

Lesson 10 “The Third Missionary Journey”

Read for this week’s study

Acts 18:24–28; Acts 19; Acts 20:7–12, 15–27; 2 Corinthians 4:8–14; Acts 21:1–15.

Memory Text

“I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God’s grace” (Acts 20:24, NRSV).

Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide

- I. Introduction
- II. Ephesus: Part I
- III. Ephesus: Part II
- IV. Troas
- V. Miletus
- VI. Tyre and Caesarea
- VII. Further Study

Questions and Notes for Consideration

Facilitator: Jon Paulien

1. Read Acts 18:24 – 20:12. This is one of the strangest parts of the New Testament. What kind of context in Ephesus might have led to such phenomena? (Sabbath afternoon)?
2. Read Acts 18:24-28. Would you consider Apollos a Christian at this stage of his experience? Why or why not? Why do you think Priscilla’s name is mentioned before that of her husband in this passage? Is there any significance to the fact that Apollos was not re-baptized? Read Acts 19:1-7. What happened to Paul when he arrived in Ephesus? How does that experience relate to that of Apollos? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Acts 19:11-20. Are hankies and aprons capable of carrying power, divine or otherwise? What kind of “fear” overcame the people? Why did they burn books, something unique to this passage in the Scriptures? Why are there lots of miracles and dramatic events at some points in the Bible and not others? Read Acts 19:21-22. What plans did Paul make? What is the relationship between the plans we make and the work of the Holy Spirit? Read Acts 19:23-31. What was the real reason for the opposition to Paul that manifested itself toward the end of his stay in the city? (Monday’s lesson)

4. Read and summarize Acts 20:1-6 and then read Acts 20:7-12. What's wrong with the common argument that these verses help prove the Sabbath was changed to Sunday already in Paul's day? What does it tell us about God when Saturday is preferred to Sunday as a worship day? (Tuesday's lesson)
5. Read Acts 20:13-27. What was Paul's emphasis in the beginning part of his farewell speech? What prediction does he make toward the end? Read 2 Corinthians 4:8-14. What is Paul saying here that we need to apply to ourselves, especially when trials come? Where does Paul put his ultimate hope? (Wednesday's lesson)
6. Read Acts 21:1-6. Why is the Spirit moving people to warn Paul? Why isn't he listening? Read Acts 21:7-9. Certainly all prophets prophesy, but is everyone who prophesies a prophet? Read Acts 21:10-14. What special incident took place in Caesarea concerning Paul's trip to Jerusalem? What's going on with these messages? What does this whole situation tell us about God? (Thursday's lesson)
7. How would you answer those who charge Sabbath-keepers with legalism? What is the true meaning of the Sabbath? How does it relate to the gospel of Jesus Christ? (Friday's lesson)

Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

Many Christians observe the first day of the week as a memorial of Christ's resurrection. Surely it is a good thought on a Sunday morning to remember, This is the day on which Christ rose from the grave. And on Friday would it not be well to reflect, This is the day on which Christ was crucified? And on Thursday evening, This is the time when Christ met with his disciples in the upper room?

But the only weekly Sabbath of which the Bible speaks is the day set apart to remind us that the Person who lived among us as such a gentle man, the One who gave his life for us, is himself the One who made us, for he too is God.

Our salvation includes not just forgiveness but the healing of the damage sin has done. It is no less a miracle of creation to restore fallen human beings than it was to create them perfect in the beginning. No wonder David prayed as he did after his sad experience with Bathsheba, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10).

When Moses repeated the Ten Commandments in the book of Deuteronomy, he mentioned the exodus rather than the creation as the reason for Sabbath observance: "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God brought you out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and for that reason the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:15, NEB).

This is no discrepancy in Scripture, nor a lapse of the great leader's memory. The purpose of the Sabbath is to remind us of the truth about God. He is not only our Creator but our Saviour and Redeemer as well. The One who created us free in the beginning is now exercising his creative power to release us from any kind of bondage and give us back our freedom once again.

{Maxwell, Graham. *Can God Be Trusted?*, 130-131. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 2002} <http://speakingwellofgod.org/written-materials/can-god-be-trusted-chapters/chapter-12>

Further Study with Ellen White

The precious Saviour will send help just when we need it. The way to heaven is consecrated by His footprints. Every thorn that wounds our feet has wounded His. Every cross that we are called to bear He has borne before us. The Lord permits conflicts, to prepare the soul for peace. The time of trouble is a fearful ordeal for God's people; but it is the time for every true believer to look up, and by faith he may see the bow of promise encircling him. {GC 633.1}

Amidst great discouragement, Nehemiah made God his trust, his sure defense. And He who was the support of His servant then has been the dependence of His people in every age. In every crisis His people may confidently declare, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Romans 8:31. However craftily the plots of Satan and his agents may be laid, God can detect them, and bring to nought all their counsels. The response of faith today will be the response made by Nehemiah, "Our God shall fight for us;" for God is in the work, and no man can prevent its ultimate success. {PK 645.2}

Let all who are afflicted or unjustly used, cry to God. Turn away from those whose hearts are as steel, and make your requests known to your Maker. Never is one repulsed who comes to Him with a contrite heart. Not one sincere prayer is lost. Amid the anthems of the celestial choir, God hears the cries of the weakest human being. We pour out our heart's desire in our closets, we breathe a prayer as we walk by the way, and our words reach the throne of the Monarch of the universe. They may be inaudible to any human ear, but they cannot die away into silence, nor can they be lost through the activities of business that are going on. Nothing can drown the soul's desire. It rises above the din of the street, above the confusion of the multitude, to the heavenly courts. It is God to whom we are speaking, and our prayer is heard. {COL 174.1}

While slander may blacken the reputation, it cannot stain the character. That is in God's keeping. So long as we do not consent to sin, there is no power, whether human or satanic, that can bring a stain upon the soul. A man whose heart is stayed upon God is just the same in the hour of his most afflicting trials and most discouraging surroundings as when he was in prosperity, when the light and favor of God seemed to be upon him. His words, his motives, his actions, may be misrepresented and falsified, but he does not mind it, because he has greater

interests at stake. Like Moses, he endures as “seeing Him who is invisible” (Hebrews 11:27); looking “not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen” (2 Corinthians 4:18). {MB 32.2}

We are in danger, by worrying, of manufacturing yokes for our necks. Let us not worry, for thus we make the yoke more severe and the burden heavy. Let us do all we can without worrying, trusting in Christ. {HP 120.3}

With the continual change of circumstances, changes come in our experience; and by these changes we are either elated or depressed. But the change of circumstances has no power to change God’s relation to us. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and He asks us to have unquestioning confidence in His love. {HP 120.4}

God has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. He provides opportunities and opens channels of working. If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and are ready to cooperate with Him, they will see mighty results. {PK 660.3}