

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Acts 20:6-16 | Session 56 | Back to Jerusalem via Troas

A.D. 57

We continue with Paul on his Third Missionary Journey which began in Acts 18:23 (see your map). Last time Paul departed from Ephesus in what would be his final visit there. From Ephesus, presumably, traveled north to Troas (although this passage does not say). There is a mention of him going to Troas in 2 Corinthians 2:12-13, and this might be the time Paul is referring to there. He also was in Troas when he received the Macedonia Call in Acts 16:8, while on his second missionary journey. The 2nd Corinthian passage could be referring to that visit to Troas, or it could be alluding this journey, although just not mentioned by name in Acts 20:1,2. Notice in the Corinthian passage that “A door was opened unto me of the Lord” but apparently Paul doesn’t go through the door, rather he writes, “but taking my leave of them, I went from thence to Macedonia.” This is a wonderful *Grace* passage, and I think there is application for us. God may open a door, but he has given us the opportunity to act on it, or, He may provide other opportunities depending on our own freedom to decide (e.g., what job should I take, who you I marry, where will I live, etc.). We have freedom in Christ to make decisions and choices and then, through the help of the Lord, work through those opportunities or burdens, for better or for worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health. Several months pass between verses 1-5 and our next verse.

Verse 6—

We made note of this before, but it is here that the author (Luke) begins using the pronouns *us* and *we*. This would indicate that Luke is now traveling with Paul and company. Therefore, we should expect a first-hand account of everything he writes. **And we sailed...after the days of unleavened bread** would refer to Passover. The Passover feast marked one of the most momentous acts of divine intervention in Israel’s history; the beginning of their deliverance from bondage in Egypt when, in the final plague, God destroyed the firstborn of the Egyptians but spared those Israelites whose homes had blood of a sacrificed lamb smeared on their doorposts. In Exodus 12:14, God commanded that this feast be kept as an ordinance (a law) forever. The **days of unleavened bread** were the seven days following Passover when nothing leavened was to be eaten. Paul was still participating and observing very Jewish things. **And came unto them to Troas** the *them* refers to the group who sailed to Troas ahead of Paul (and Luke) in verses 4,5. In Troas, Paul and company will spend **seven days** there.

Verse 7—

And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together. Probably most evangelicals read this verse and say, “See, the first church always met on Sunday.” That may be true, but this verse does not actually say that. Notice that the word **day** is italicized, meaning, the translators placed it there for clarity. The passage literally says **the first of weeks**, as **weeks** is in the plural; Or even more literal the *first of the*

Sabbaths. The Jews would count seven Sabbaths from the first harvest (See Deuteronomy 16:9) to the day of Pentecost. This then is probably the *first of the seven weeks leading up to the day of Pentecost*. Paul wants to be back in Jerusalem for the **day of Pentecost** (Acts 20:16). The text here says nothing about Sunday worship (or the lack of it) so we probably shouldn’t build our doctrine of meeting on Sunday from this passage. **The disciples came together to break bread**, the word for **bread** here is leavened bread which would indicate the feast of unleavened bread is over. **Paul preached unto them...and continued his speech until midnight**. Here again, if we take this passage to teach that we should meet for worship on Sunday morning, then Paul certainly preached a long, long time. More likely it began in the late afternoon or evening and continued on until midnight (In fact until the next morning, vs. 11). Paul had a lot to cover with these new believers.

Verse 8—

Since Luke is with Paul, we are now getting a first-hand account of some details such as **and there were many lights in the upper chamber**. For indoor use, people used lanterns, which consisted of lamps or candles inside glass. But most lamps were small enough to hold in the hand and were made of clay or bronze, and had an external wick extending into olive oil. Regardless of which kind of lamp, the flames would have made the room very warm throughout the evening and into the night.

Verse 9—

In a crowded room, a window seat would have been preferred because of packed bodies and heat. **And there sat...a young man named Eutychus**. Because we know the date of the feast of unleavened bread this would have been in April, and while it would have been warm in the room, the night air would have been cool. First century windows would have been open, but may have had shutters to keep out rain and wind if necessary. This particular upper room was on the **third loft**, and so as **Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep, fell down** out of the window it was a serious fall. **He was taken up dead**. The phrase **taken up** means *they picked him up dead*. Was he?

Verse 10—

It was thought the boy was dead but the text doesn’t explicitly say so, rather he was taken up dead. In this verse **Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him**. There is no indication Paul performed a miracle. If he did and it’s possible, Luke doesn’t give any mention of it, rather the literal reading is people thought he was dead, but when Paul embraced the young man he sensed there was life in him. Paul returned to the upper room, they ate, and he continued to teach until morning—and the people **were not a little comforted** that the young man was alive.