

June 26, 2022

**“The Wiles of the Devil
and the Power of God”
Acts 19:11-20**

Prel Rmks

Last week: 8-10 = overview of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus

Beginning in v. 11 = record of some specific events

LOGW ~ title ~ text ~ read

(11) Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, **(12)** so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. **(13)** Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." **(14)** Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. **(15)** And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" **(16)** Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. **(17)** This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. **(18)** And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. **(19)** Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. **(20)** So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual battle ... power of darkness v God's power – the power of light

I. The Power of God in Miracles

VV. 11-12

We see the power of God in the miracles He worked:

(11) -----

Now God worked **unusual** miracles

- Who worked these miracles?
- What kind of miracles were these? – not usual

by the hands of Paul,

[What was the nature of these unusual miracles?]

(12) -----

so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

[What are we to think of this?]

1. This is very unusual, but it's not the only time in Scripture we see God performing miracles of this nature:
 - **Matthew 9:20-21** And suddenly, **a woman who had a flow of blood for twelve years** came from behind and **touched the hem of His garment**. (21) For she said to herself, **"If only I may touch His garment, I shall be made well."**

- **Acts 5:15** so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.

[It seems somewhat superstitious, but God did work miracles like this. And so the question becomes: **why?**]

2. He wanted to authenticate, validate, to confirm His Apostles and a few others as being His chosen vessels, His messengers that should be heard and listened to.
 - **[Mount of Transfiguration] Matthew 17:5**
While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"
 - **Acts 8:4-8** Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. **(5)** Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. **(6)** And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. **(7)** For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. **(8)** And there was great joy in that city.

[that was the purpose of signs and wonders and miracles ...]

3. Paul understood this was true about his own ministry:

2 Corinthians 12:11-12 ... in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing. **(12)** Truly **the**

signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

Romans 15:17-18 ... I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things *which pertain* to God. (18) For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient— **ESV - Romans 15:18** For I will not venture to speak of anything **except what Christ has accomplished through me** to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, (19) **in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God**, so that from Jerusalem and round about to **Illyricum** I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

4. Does God work miracles today?

- Yes He does! In answer to prayer and according to His will and for His own glory!
- But not through miracle-working men or women – **why not?**
 - Because now that the Bible is complete, including the New Testament, He does no longer needs to validate His spokesmen
- {Robert Tilton ...}

[First of all, we see The Power of God in Miracles]

II. The Power of Darkness in Ephesus

vv. 13-17

Ephesus was like Corinth – a city of moral and spiritual corruption:

- Temple of Artemis – bulletin cover (425 x 220 x 60)
 - Antipater of Sidon: “Apart from Olympus, the sun has never looked upon ought so grand.”
 - Artemis = goddess of wild animals, the hunt, and childbirth (fertility)
 - She was the pre-eminent deity worshipped in Ephesus: in her own temple
 - That worship = drunken orgies ~ immorality
 - practices of an occultic nature:
 - sorcery
 - witchcraft
 - necromancy
 - magic
 - divination
 - conjuring up of spirits
 - [sorcery = pharmakeia – to administer drugs or spells; medicines; witchcraft; magic, Gal. 5:20 & Rev. 18:23]

- [Very dark place spiritually ... in the absence of the spiritual truth of God’s Word, people seek out something spiritual, and they often find it]

- [We would expect to find a lot of people under the influence of demons in Ephesus – dark place spiritually]

(13) -----
 Then some of the **itinerant Jewish exorcists** took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who

had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.

[Example]:

(14) -----
Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so.

(15) And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"

(16) Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

1. Demons are real – fallen angels ... fallen angels
 - **1 Peter 5:8-9** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (9) Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.
 - **John 10:10** The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.
2. Demons are powerful beings! We dare not confront them in our own strength and power.
 - **Jude 1:9** Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you! ...

- We are told a lot of things to do as believers, but we are never told to go around rebuking demons or trying to cast demons out of people.
3. Demons have no claim on or power over the life of true Christian to control us.
- We are to live as it says in Eph 5:18 filled with the Spirit = controlled by the Spirit of God

(17) -----
This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

[The Power of God in Real Miracles]
[The Power of Darkness in Ephesus]

III. The Power of God in Deliverance vv. 18-20

God delivered many of these people from the power of darkness that ensnared them:

- **1 Peter 2:9** But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who **called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**;
- **Colossians 1:13** He has **delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love**,

The works of true repentance of those who were converted in Ephesus.

- **Acts 26:20** but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and **do works befitting repentance**.

(18) -----

And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds.

(19) Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. – **drachma = a days wage = \$15/hr x 8 = 120 x 50,000 = \$6,000,000**

1. Believers have no business even dabbling in those kind of occult practices.
 - **2 Corinthians 6:14** Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And **what communion has light with darkness?**
2. Any believer who has been involved with anything related to occult practices, including the use of illicit drugs and alcohol in order to induce an altered state of consciousness, **MUST REPENT!**
 - {Buddy Sequeira brought to a state of repentance by the Lord}
 - That's what God did with these who came to believe in Ephesus – he powerfully brought them to repentance, and it was evidenced by their outward actions befitting repentance.

(20) -----

So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. ...

So, we see that the power of the light of God's truth is greater, far greater, than the power of darkness!

Conclusion / Applications

Ephesians 6:10-20 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and **in the power of His might**. **(11)** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against **the wiles of the devil**. **(12)** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. **(13)** Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. **(14)** Stand therefore, having girded your waist with **truth**, having put on the breastplate of **righteousness**, **(15)** and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; **(16)** above all, taking the shield of **faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one**. **(17)** And take the helmet of **salvation**, and the sword of the **Spirit**, which is **the word of God**; **(18)** **praying always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,

{R.A. Torrey – “Prayer is important because there is a devil and because **prayer is the God appointed means of resisting him**.”

- **James 4:7** Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
- **prayer is the God appointed means of resisting him**

#53 – A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1 A mighty fortress is our God,
 a bulwark never failing;
 our helper he, amid the flood
 of mortal ills prevailing.
 For still our ancient foe
 does seek to work us woe;
 his craft and power are great,
 and armed with cruel hate,
 on earth is not his equal.

2 Did we in our own strength confide,
 our striving would be losing,
 were not the right Man on our side,
 the Man of God's own choosing.
 You ask who that may be?
 Christ Jesus, it is he;
 Lord Sabaoth his name,
 from age to age the same;
 and he must win the battle.

3 And though this world, with devils filled,
 should threaten to undo us,
 we will not fear, for God has willed
 his truth to triumph through us.
 The prince of darkness grim,
 we tremble not for him;
 his rage we can endure,
 for lo! his doom is sure;
 one little word shall fell him.

4 That Word above all earthly powers
 no thanks to them abideth;
 the Spirit and the gifts are ours
 through him who with us sideth.
 Let goods and kindred go,
 this mortal life also;
 the body they may kill:
 God's truth abideth still;
 his kingdom is forever!

The power of God prevails mightily over the wiles of the devil
 – **one little word shall fell him.**