

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

found, not in any supposed abatement of the Spirit's power in the subapostolic generation,¹ but in the circumstance that the Pauline doctrine of the Spirit had become, when our epistle was written, the common possession of the Church.

A. B. BRUCE.

EPHESUS.

A POSTSCRIPT.

MY paper in THE EXPOSITOR for June, and the conjecture which I ventured to lay before its readers, will have done good service, if only by eliciting the interesting observations on "Saint Paul at Ephesus" which Professor Ramsay contributed to these pages last month. His acquaintance with the geography and the antiquities of proconsular Asia is so thorough, that his criticisms and remarks upon my paper could not fail to be valuable and suggestive.

This is not the place for controversy, and I am writing these lines under circumstances which preclude any reference to my books and papers. But I should like to add a few words by way of postscript to my previous paper, and in order to remove one or two misconceptions of my meaning which may be entertained by Professor Ramsay.

1. My chief object was to suggest the identification of the Demetrius of the inscription with the silversmith of Acts xix. That identification stands or falls with the date to be assigned to the inscription. Professor Ramsay was inclined at first, as I was myself, to assign both the documents engraved on the marble to the same date, *viz.* the

¹ So Ewald in *l.c.* Ewald seems to regard the doctrine of the Spirit in the Epistle to the Hebrews as essentially Pauline.

second century. Upon examining the marble, he has reversed his judgment, and places the Demetrius inscription a century earlier than the other. I still think that its date is earlier than the time of Vespasian, and may be contemporaneous with St. Paul. I am however well aware that, when the only evidence is that of the lettering, our judgment must be cautious. And although I have had the handling of inscribed Ephesian marbles so habitually, I am not prepared to dogmatize on a point like this. I do but express my opinion; I still think the lettering of this document earlier in character than the lettering of the *Salutaris* documents of A.D. 104, perhaps by half a century.¹

2. If Demetrius the silversmith of the Acts was also the temple-warden of the inscription, I still think the fact would throw new light upon the narrative of the uproar. I should be sorry to be misunderstood to say that the annoyance of the silversmiths was not the cause and occasion of the riot. On the contrary, I accept the narrative of St. Luke as entirely true to human nature, and true to historical fact. At Ephesus, as elsewhere, the consequences of the new teaching were first felt by the pocket; pecuniary interests began to be threatened, and immediately an indignant outcry was raised against the apostle. But if the preaching of St. Paul—though he never denounced the goddess Artemis, nor outraged the sentiments of her worshippers,—yet began to have such effect as to rouse the apprehensions of the silversmith, surely it was likely also that the hierarchy of the temple, whose wealth was drawn from the gifts, the sacrifices, the dedications of worshippers, would not be unconscious of

¹ Professor Ramsay suggests that *ἐσοσηνεύσας ἀγνῶς* refers to ceremonial purity. This is quite possible, and had occurred to me. I preferred however to translate *ἀγνῶς* (-ῶς) in its well-known sense, in which it is the recognised equivalent of the Latin *integer*, in reference to the honest and upright conduct of a public official. This use is well known both from coins and inscriptions.

the new influence. To the spontaneous outburst of opposition proceeding from the threatened metal-workers there would be superadded a tributary stream of opposition from the temple itself. And if, as I conjectured, Demetrius was not only the head of a large firm or guild of image-makers, but also the chief warden of the temple fabric,¹ then (as I ventured to suggest) we had a hint given us that the riot which began with the artisans, and was prompted by their jealous fears for their trade-interests, was further abetted by the influence of the temple authorities. Certainly if Professor Ramsay thinks that I exaggerate the indifference of the Roman officials towards the local cults, I think that he over-rates the tolerance of the local hierarchies. The famous letter of Pliny surely points not only to the impatience of the sellers and graziers of sacrificial animals, but also of the temples and the priests, at the serious inroads made by Christianity upon pagan devotions. Nor should we forget that Ephesus was a large city, and the theatre which received the mob is reckoned by its excavator, Mr. Wood, to have held over 20,000 people. "The whole city," says the writer (ver. 29), "was filled with confusion"; and without pressing this and similar expressions unduly, it may be urged that the narrative by no means excludes the idea that the meeting which began under the presidency of Demetrius (ver. 25), and which then, fired with his address, rushed off intent on violence (vers. 28, 29), was swelled by accessions from other sources and from other parts of the city. It was not a "got up" demonstration. All was entirely spontaneous. It does not detract from the truthfulness of the narrative, nor from the spontaneous origin of the tumult, if it be

¹ I did not mean to imply that *νεοποιός τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος* was an official phrase. *Νεοποιός* at Ephesus always, so far as I know, occurs alone, without such qualification. But its reference is none the less to the Artemisium in particular. This appears from abundant evidence.

proved or suggested that there was inflammable material other than the threatened interests of the Ephesian artisans, and others beside Demetrius who were ready to fan the flame which he had kindled.

3. Most interesting is the suggestion made by Professor Ramsay in answer to my question, What were the "silver shrines"? He points to the existence of terra-cotta shrines of Artemis and similar deities elsewhere in Asia, such as were manufactured, and sold, for the purpose of dedication. Here, again, I do not dogmatize; it is a question of evidence. If Professor Ramsay can untie the knot, it is better than to cut it, as I was proposing to do, by a conjectural alteration of the text. But I should like to see and handle some specimens of metal shrines of Artemis discovered at Ephesus. So far as I am aware, none are as yet to be produced. In default of such metal shrines, or of any mention of them elsewhere than in this passage, I made bold to suggest metal statuettes. Such metal statuettes of Ephesian Artemis are well known in modern museums, and I pointed to the catalogue of silver statuettes of Artemis dedicated at Ephesus in A.D. 104. These appear to have belonged to Salutaris for some time before, and he dedicates them, not to the temple, but to the civic authorities, to enable them in their own processions to render new honour to the national goddess. These facts seemed to point rather to statuettes than to shrines. But if sufficient evidence is forthcoming to explain what is meant by these metal shrines (*vaot*), then I should be the first to welcome a satisfactory explanation of a passage of the Acts which has perplexed me not a little, and where I have always felt that the commentators (from St. Chrysostom to our own days) were quite at fault.

4. Let this suffice to make clear one or two points in my own paper, and by way of thanks to Professor Ramsay for his criticisms, and for the contributions he has made

toward the exposition of the Acts. For, assuredly, that nineteenth chapter marks a momentous period in the work of the apostle and in the propagation of the Christian faith. When St. Paul left Antioch for Ephesus (Acts xviii. 23), it has been well said¹ that "he by no means undertook a new missionary journey, but changed his residence permanently from Antioch to Ephesus." Here he resides for nearly three years, the longest period he had ever spent in continuous preaching at any one city. This long stay may probably have been broken by brief visits to Corinth and elsewhere; but it is noteworthy that the Churches of the Lycus, which we may suppose to have received the gospel from converts of St. Paul during this period, had yet never been visited by him in person. Ephesus itself supplied him with ample opportunities and over-abundant toils. Here, in the capital of proconsular Asia, he could be in communication with all the towns of the province; here, in a seaport which was on the highway between East and West, he was in touch with Europe and Asia at once. No wonder if he writes of his work, "a great door and effectual is opened unto me" (1 Cor. xvi. 9). It is true "there are many adversaries." The Jewish fanatics dogged his steps and threatened his life (Acts xx. 19); it was like fighting with wild beasts (1 Cor. xv. 32). He could not, moreover, be unaware of the storm that threatened him from the side of pagan zeal. Other references to this time speak of it as a time of "many tears" (Acts xx. 19), and of terrible bodily danger and suffering (2 Cor. i. 8 foll.). But none the less (nay, all the more) it was a time of mighty spiritual success. It is, in a sense, the culmination of the apostle's career. His faith, his hope, gather strength. The accession of miraculous powers which came upon him at this time (Acts xix. 11) seems to be in accord, not only with the greatness of the occasion, or the force of spiritual opposi-

¹ Weiss, *Introduction to N.T.* (Eng. Tr.), i. 249.

tion, but also with an accession of spiritual strength in the apostle's own soul. In the letters which he writes at this period of his life there is a sense of exultant effort and of anticipated triumph. "Now can he see, . . . and his heart fears, and is enlarged," at the prospect of the advancing gospel. It was significant that he had transferred his basis of operations to this great city of western Asia. But already his horizon is extending farther westward. "I must see Rome" (Acts xix. 21). From the capital of Asia his eyes turn to the capital of the world (Rom. i. 13). Nor is it unworthy of note that the riot at Jerusalem, which was the original cause of his being carried a prisoner to Rome, and thus strangely fulfilling his desire, arose out of the fanaticism of Ephesian Jews. His Ephesian dangers and triumphs followed him to Jerusalem. It was "the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple," who "stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him. . . . For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple" (Acts xxi. 27, 29). But, in truth, the arrest at Jerusalem and the imprisonment at Cæsarea are but episodes in the great drama. The next movement in the apostle's life, after his labours in Asia, is to Italy. It is this which St. Luke desires his readers to perceive. The ministry at Ephesus is succeeded, in effect, by the ministry at Rome.

E. L. HICKS.