

# Happenings in Ephesus

Acts 19:1-20



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While Apollos was at Corinth,  
Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus.

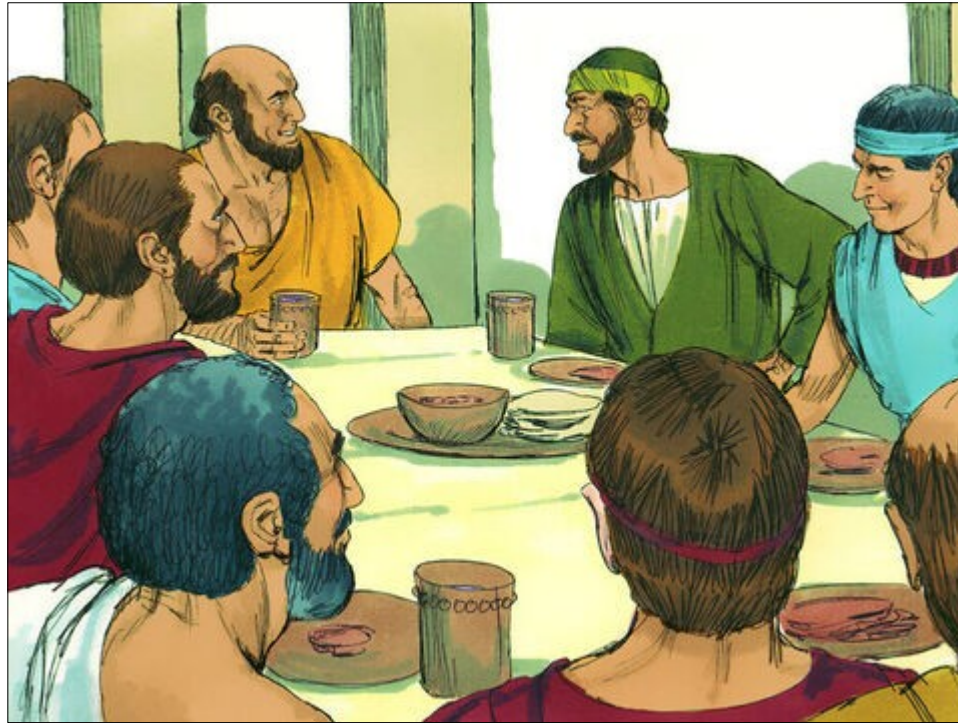


‘Meanwhile’ - the roles are reversed. Paul’s story continues ...



Ephesus was a large and strategic port city  
full of people who didn't know God

There he found some disciples



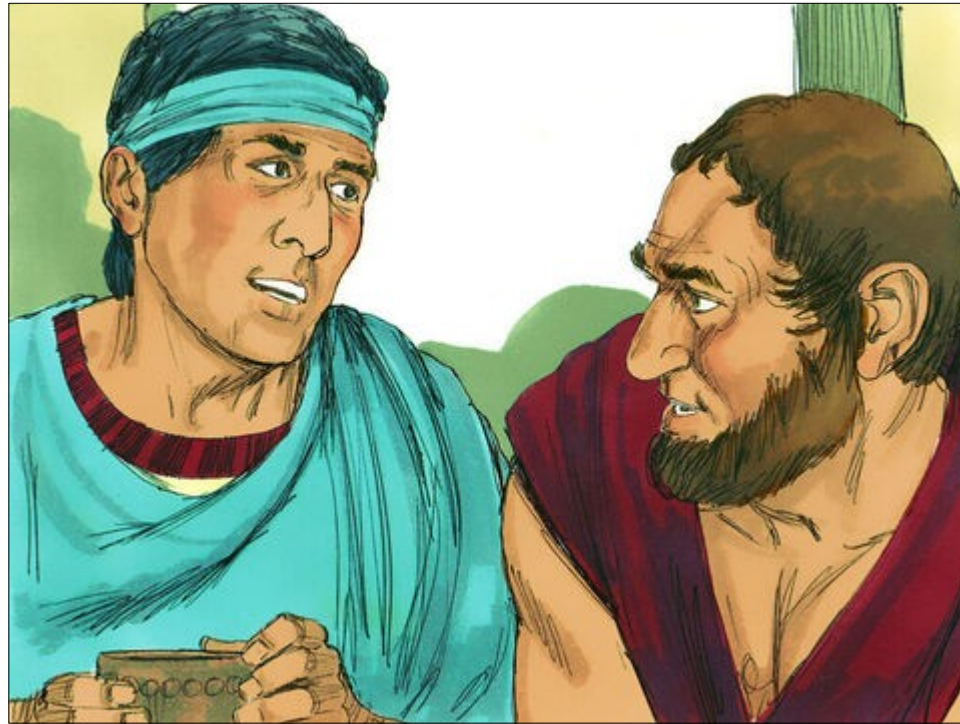
Who were they? – Were they a separate group from the others?  
Are they part of the small church in Ephesus? – It's a large place!  
They are called 'disciples'. What does that mean here?

There he found some disciples and asked them,  
"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"



This is a searching question – then and now.  
There has been some controversy over this verse.  
Does ‘when’ mean ‘after’ (having believed)?  
It is about the role of the Holy Spirit in our conversion and our  
subsequent Christian experience.

They answered,  
"No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."



They already knew of the Holy Spirit (the OT refers to the Spirit of God frequently and so did John the Baptist) but the fact that He had come on the day of Pentecost from heaven to indwell believers was unknown to them.

So Paul asked,  
"Then what baptism did you receive?"  
"John's baptism," they replied.



Paul wanted to know how far they had got in their understanding of the faith and salvation. Just like Apollos had been, they were really disciples of John the Baptist.

Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."



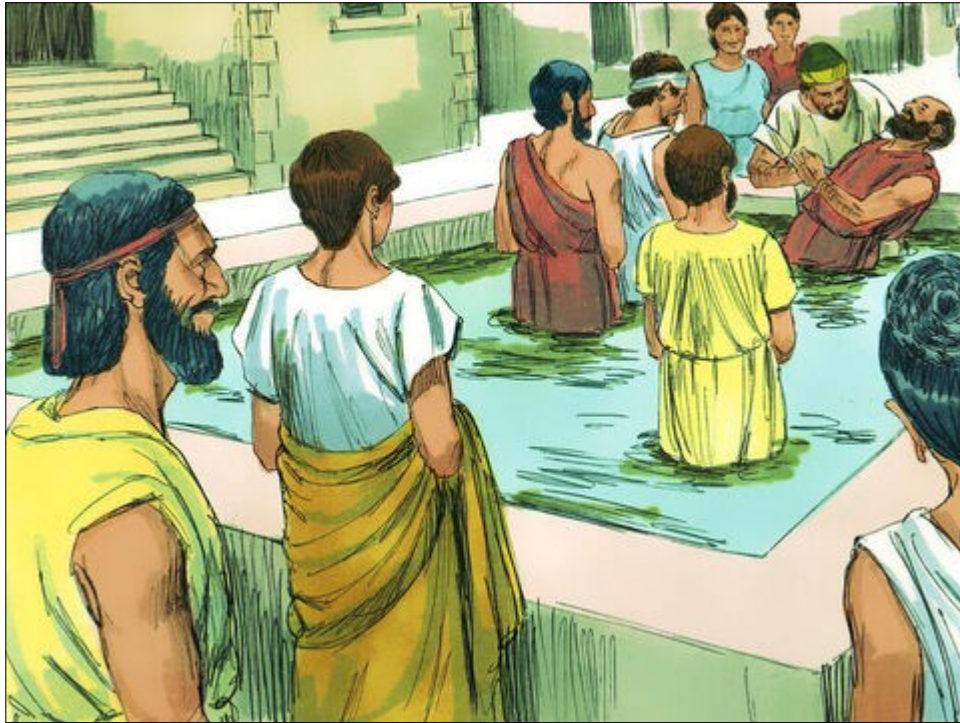
They had been baptised as John had instructed – as a sign of repentance.

That should lead to faith in the Messiah-Saviour Jesus. John was the prophesied 'fore-runner'.

Had they become believers in the Messiah – Jesus?



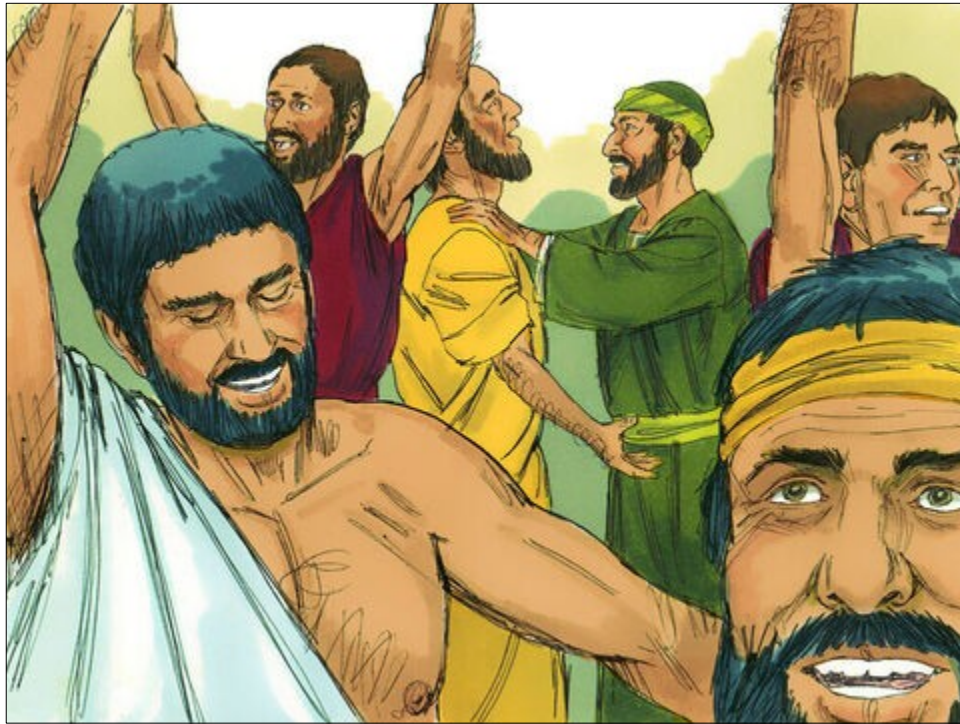
On hearing this,  
they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.



They responded to Paul's message.  
He must have explained more to them than we read about here.  
Then they were baptised as a sign of their coming to faith in Jesus.

Note: they were baptised INTO the **Name** (the Father and the Holy Spirit – are included in the NAME cf. Matthew 28:19) - this was a sign of their union/ commitment to God.

When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

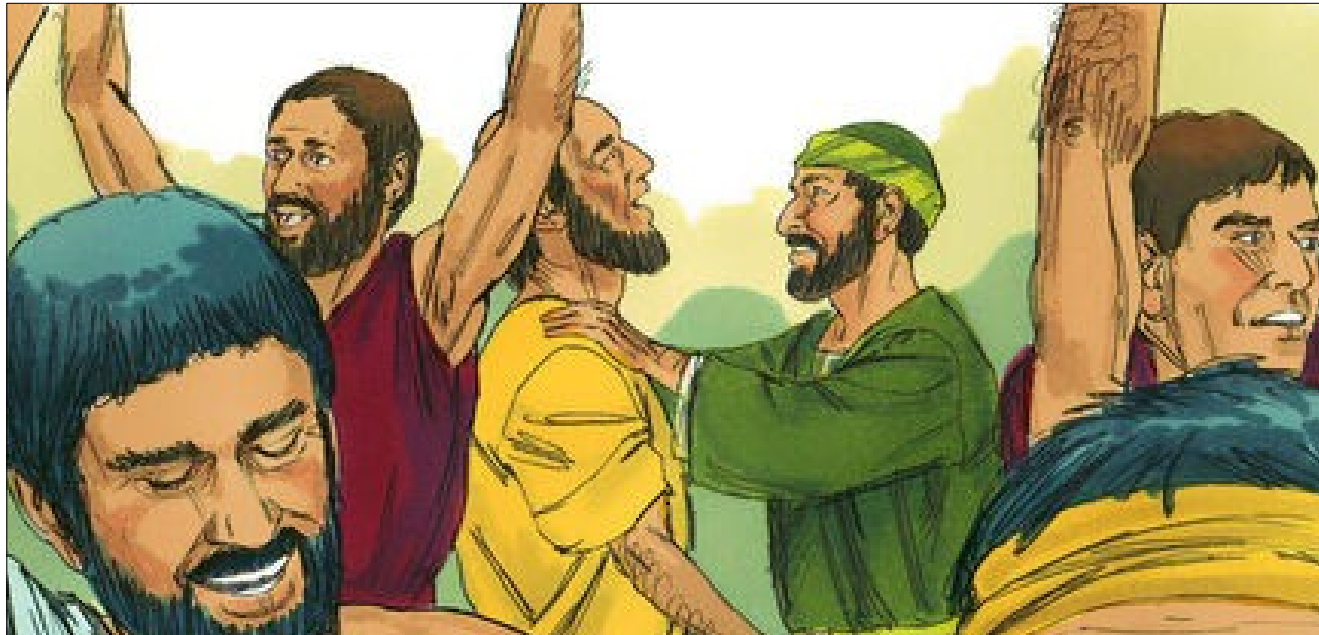


Was the laying-on of hands still just something only the apostles did at this time?

(cf. Acts 8:14-15)

Parts of Pentecost were being repeated – are they still evident today?

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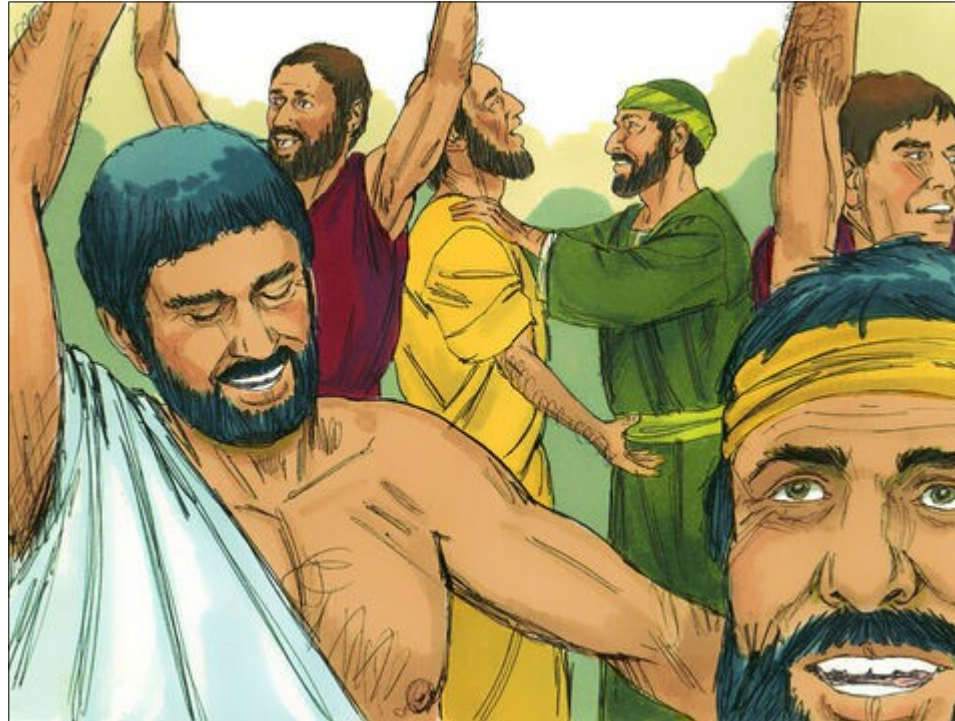
What were the signs of baptism of the Holy Spirit?

(1 Corinthians 12:28-30 - do all speak in tongues etc?)

It isn't mentioned, but a very real part of the Holy Spirit's working is assurance, joy, boldness - holiness of new life.

They prophesied – not about the future but in praise and worship

There were about twelve men in all.



Why does Luke tell us the number in this way?  
(synagogue quorum?) These disciples may well have been  
Jewish men, since they were disciples of John.  
Was it an estimated number or a simple recollection?  
In the end it is never about numbers.

Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.



Back to the synagogue – Paul fulfilled the promise he had made in Acts 18:21.

He spent a longer time there to give a fuller explanation about ‘the kingdom of God’ - what it is, who belongs to it, and how to enter it.

The Kingdom of God is at the heart of the Good News

But some of them became obstinate;  
they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way.

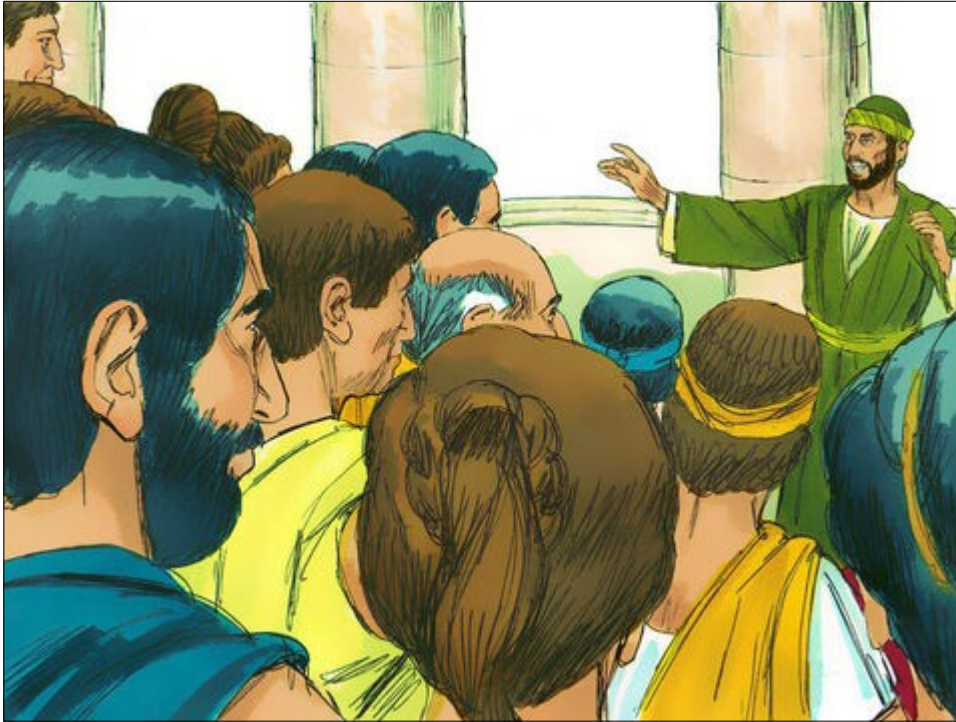


Here we go again!  
“Refused” means they couldn’t  
deny the truth of Paul’s  
message but didn’t want to  
follow the consequences of  
accepting – pride’s resistance.

So they sought to drown the  
message by abuse.

‘The Way’ was an early name for Christianity – it came from Jesus.  
(John 14:6)

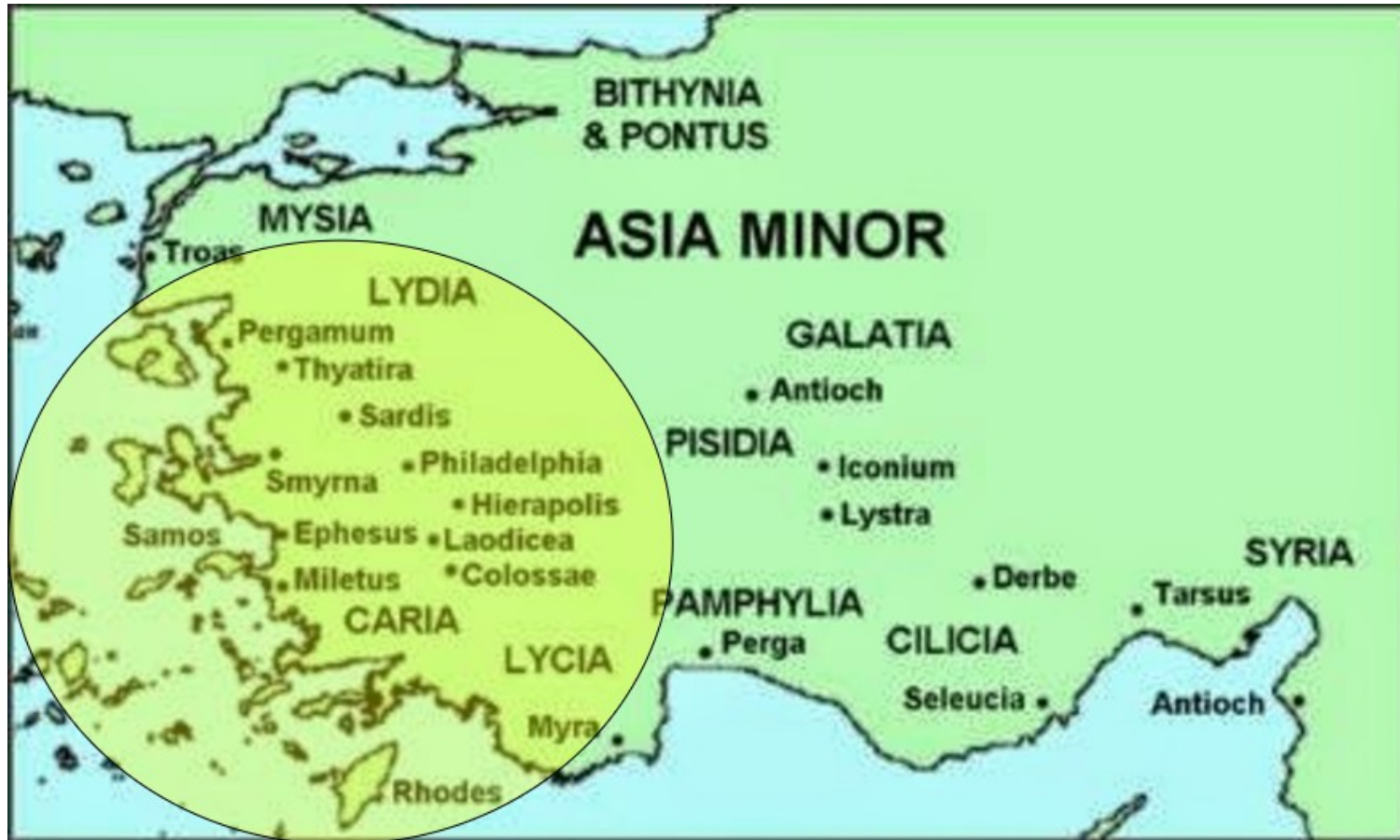
So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus.



Paul followed the same procedure as in Corinth – he moved to another place in the city. It would have been a large covered area in which the people could meet.

The daily teaching for learners(disciples) and visitors may have taken place during the afternoon ‘rest’ period between working hours. ‘Discussions’ suggests that there was preaching and feedback

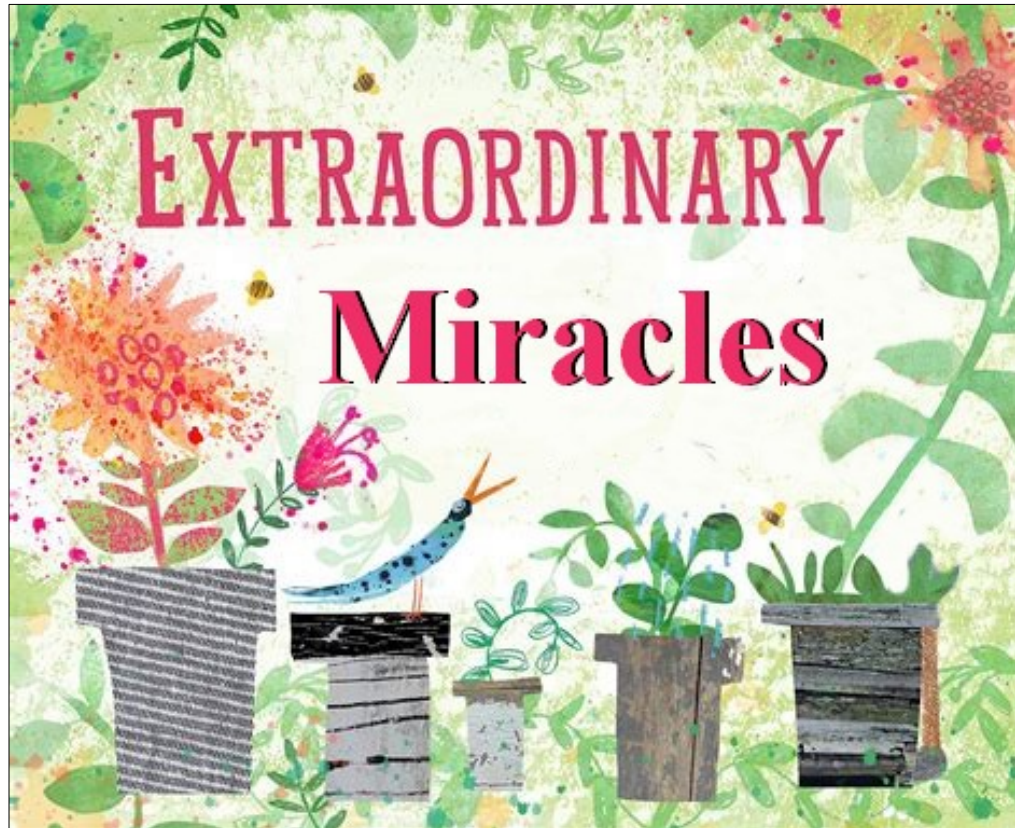
This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.



It was a very fruitful time. The message was spread from the centre to the surrounding cities eg. to Colossae by Epaphras (Colossians 1:7) (The word 'all' means 'a large number')



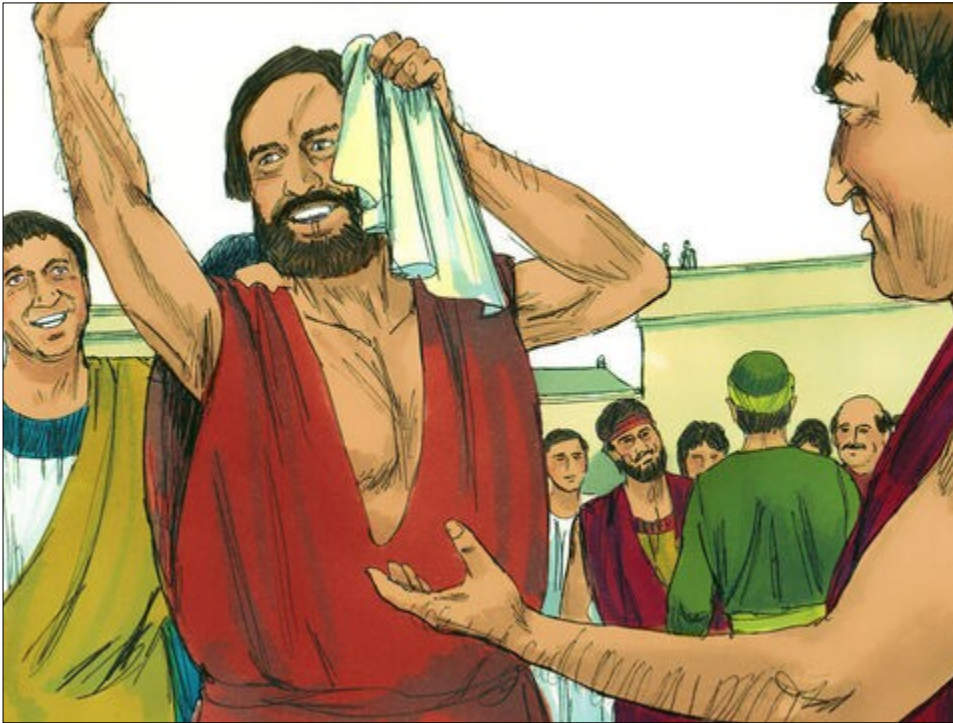
God did extraordinary miracles through Paul,



How frequent were miracles?

They were part of the gospel proclamation. Mark 16:17

God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

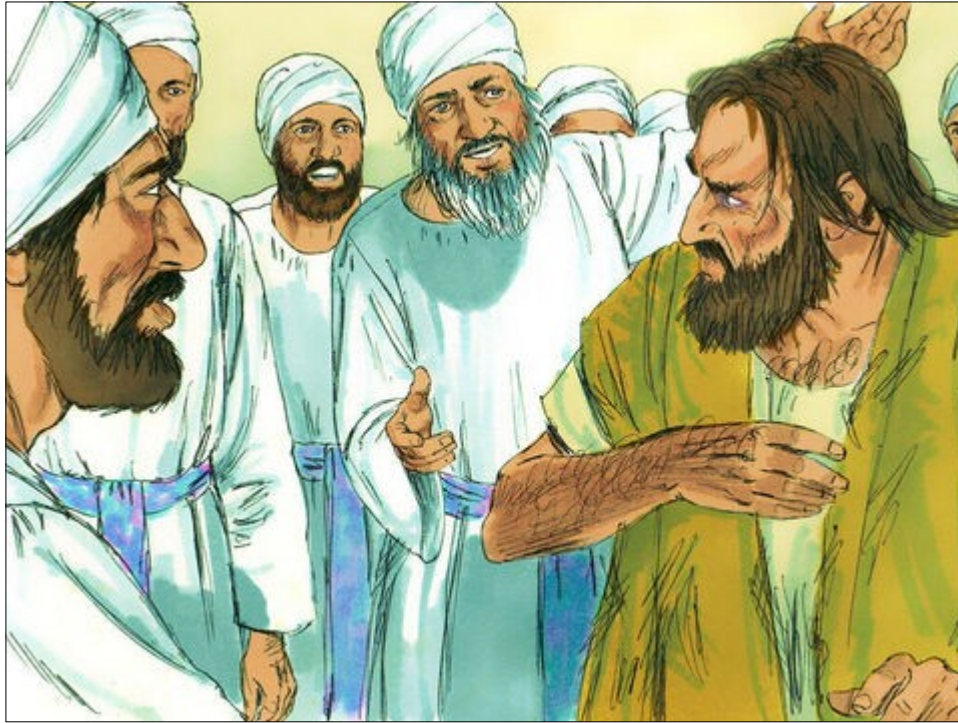


What was the difference between ordinary miracles and extraordinary ones?

The fact that these were extraordinary suggests that God usually works in different ways.

They were remote items – it was not magic. It required faith in the heart of the recipient – the item gave focus to the promises.

Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed.



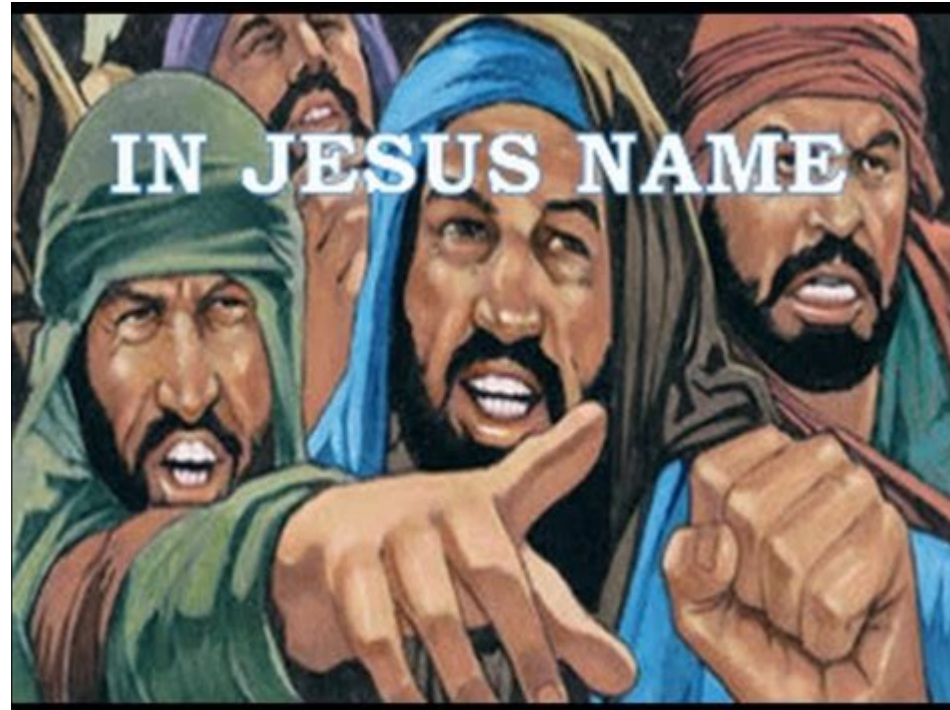
There were itinerant copycat exorcists -

They had been impressed by the miracles so they tried to do some themselves – but by a magical use of the name...

(without true faith in Jesus)

They TRIED with a hard case of a demon-possessed man.

They would say,  
"In the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches,  
I command you to come out."



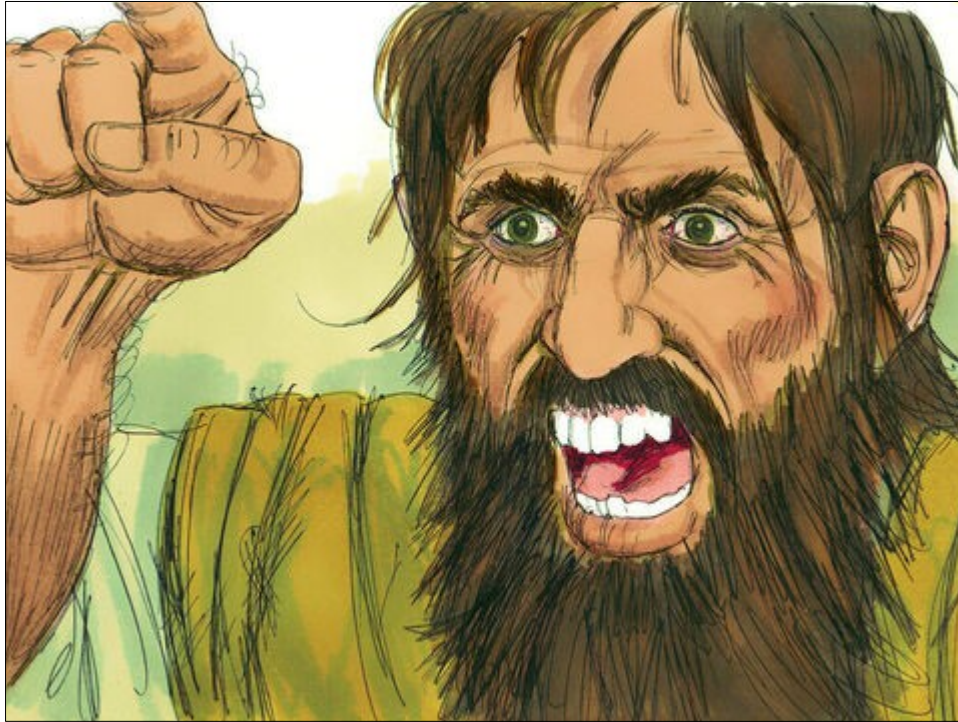
(They) worked together, each playing their role (I).  
Perhaps they had seen or heard about Paul ministering.  
They point to the 'right' Jesus but notice the absence of the  
LORD Jesus)

Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.



Priests with pedigree and personality but no power.

But the evil spirit answered them,  
"Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"



The demon speaks  
through him – it is  
not impressed!

The demon was :-

Very aware of who Jesus is

Well aware of his servant (troubling their dark kingdom)

Dismissive of insignificant humans on their own.

Our **ONLY** authority rests in your relationship to Jesus

Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.



1 versus 7 –The demonised man shows supernatural strength. They lost the contest – so now we can see the contrast of make-believe with the proper use of the authority of the Lord Jesus.

When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honour.

The grapevine worked!



The news spread and the Lord Jesus got the glory!  
There was now serious respect - not just for the demonic powers (they were aware of that already) but the vastly superior power of Jesus – and the demon had given its personal testimony.



Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds.

Were they half-hearted believers?  
Or were they new believers who now said what they had turned from was evil? They had been involved in occult practices.  
What don't we see as evil when it is?

**CONFESS  
YOUR EVIL  
DEEDS**

A number who had practised sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly.



They made a clean break and there was no going back!

Are there things in our lives that need to go?

When they calculated the value of the scrolls,  
the total came to fifty thousand drachmas.



This was a great fortune that went up in smoke  
1 drachma was an average day's wage.  
It is estimated as worth over £1 million!  
It was worth it. (What is your soul worth?)  
What a testimony!

In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.



As a result of this and Paul's work,  
Ephesus became the centre of a wide mission outreach.

People being saved  
Disciples growing  
Miracles happening  
The word of the Lord going out

These are evidence of the  
working of the Holy Spirit

