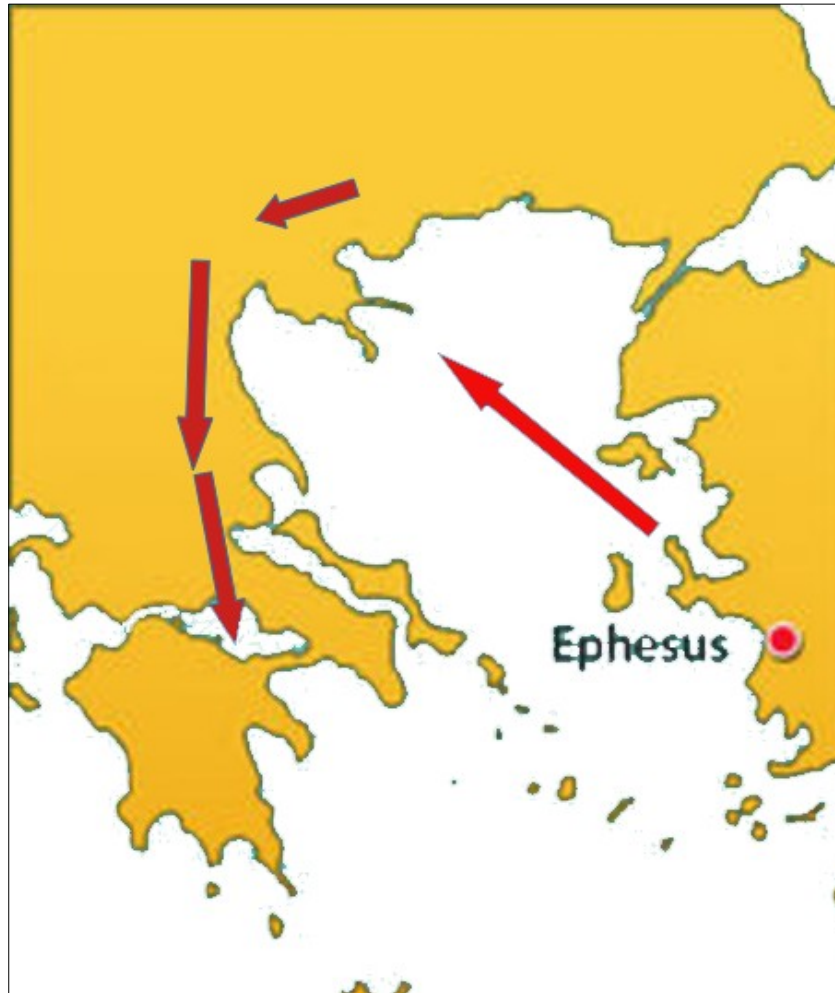


A Riot in Ephesus because of the Effects of Christianity

Acts 19:21-41



After all this had happened, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, passing through Macedonia and Achaia.



“all this” refers back to the events in Ephesus – the new disciples, the destruction of occult books and scrolls and the spread of the Good News.

Sensing it was time to move on, Paul’s destination is Jerusalem via the Greek churches taking the aid collection made for the believers in Israel.

"After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome also."



His goal – the capital of the empire. He wants to go there. God will get him there – but not in quite the way or time he expected. This verse gives a 'map' of the rest of Acts.

He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.

He sent some of his trusted helpers ahead while he stayed behind for a while. Helpers are essential!

They were given the responsibility of sorting out the aid collection before Paul arrived eg.. 1 Corinthians 16:1-3 ..



The following events are linked to this building:-



The temple to Artemis (also known as Diana) in Ephesus was regarded as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

It was supported by 127 pillars, each 60 feet high, and was decorated with great sculptures.

The Ephesians were very proud of this.

About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way.

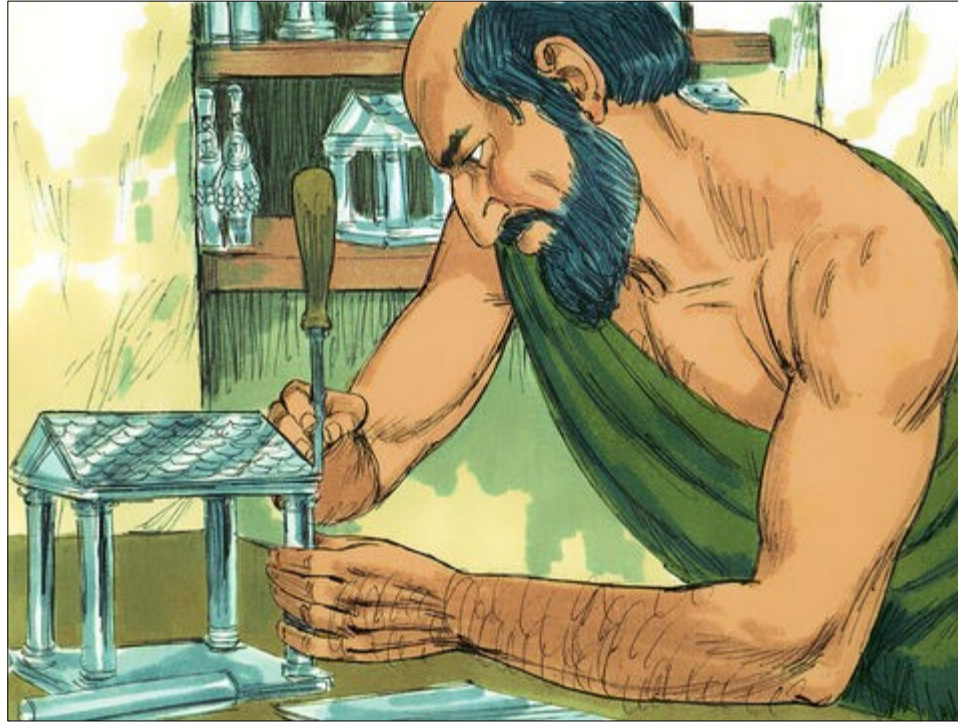
This was the result of Christianity's impact on the society and culture in Ephesus

Satan's kick-back.



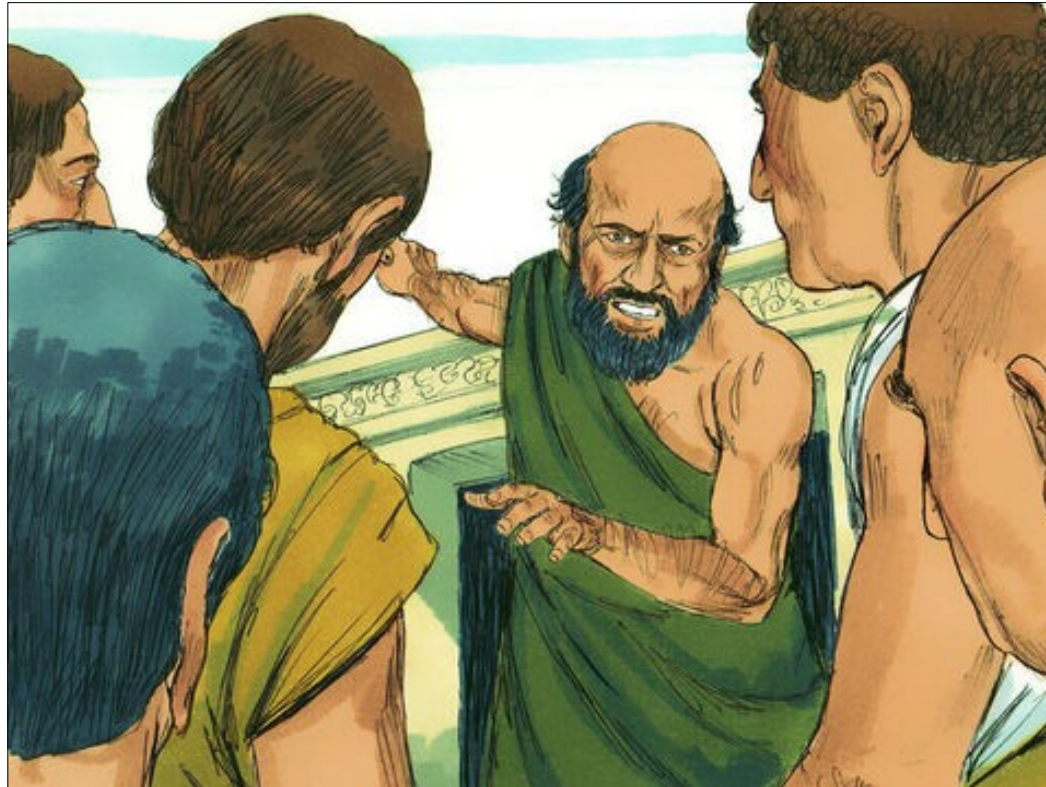
In the early years of the Salvation Army, they were so effective that pimps and bar owners organized a “Skeleton Army” to oppose them with threats and violence – and even a few Salvation Army workers were murdered.

A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen.



Demetrius was the man who set things in motion - Ephesus was a centre of pagan worship. The sale of goods for tourists, worshippers etc..was a thriving business. It was really all about 'money'.
"No little business" is an understatement - it was hugely profitable.

He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades,



He organised a grand meeting. It was time for action. He got together everyone involved in the 'idol' business - related trades – shop keepers, packaging advertising etc.

and said.. "Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia.

"This fellow" was an angry term of abuse.
Paul is to blame for the down-turn in sales.
He had led astray so many (ie. put them right)
This is his spin on what has happened!

It was a real testimony to the new faith's spread through the area.



He says that man-made gods are no gods at all.

Anyone with eyes to see and half a brain would agree.



It is sad what people can convince themselves of
(It is deception by the enemy)

There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name,

This was the real motive – business
With a spin (describing their trade as respectable)



There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited,

More spin - disguise the real reason behind another thing ...
The temple will be discredited = nobody will come and buy our stuff.



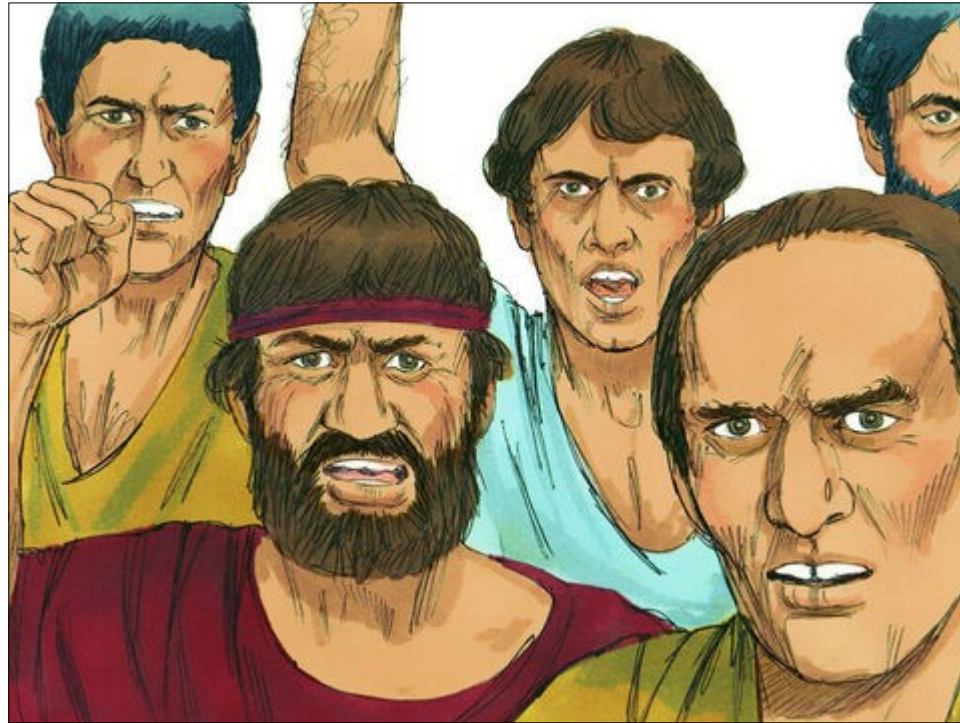
and the goddess herself, who is worshipped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.

More spin – the personal touch on civic pride
– poor Artemis can't look after herself!

These were the methods that Demetrius used to inflame the situation while providing a cover for his real motive.



When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting..
"Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"
Soon the whole city was in an uproar.



He pushed the right buttons to get people upset about the secondary thing cf. the Marxist method (useful idiots)
There's nothing new under the sun.

The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus,
Paul's travelling companions from Macedonia,
and rushed as one man into the theatre



The lynch mob couldn't find Paul so they got his friends
Again we see God's over-ruling for Paul.

The theatre was the main public venue.
It was a building that could hold 25,000 or 30,000 people

Paul wanted to appear before the crowd,
but the disciples would not let him.



Paul was brave and may have seen this as an opportunity to share the gospel, but his friends did not think it wise at this time.

The crowd was not in a listening mood.

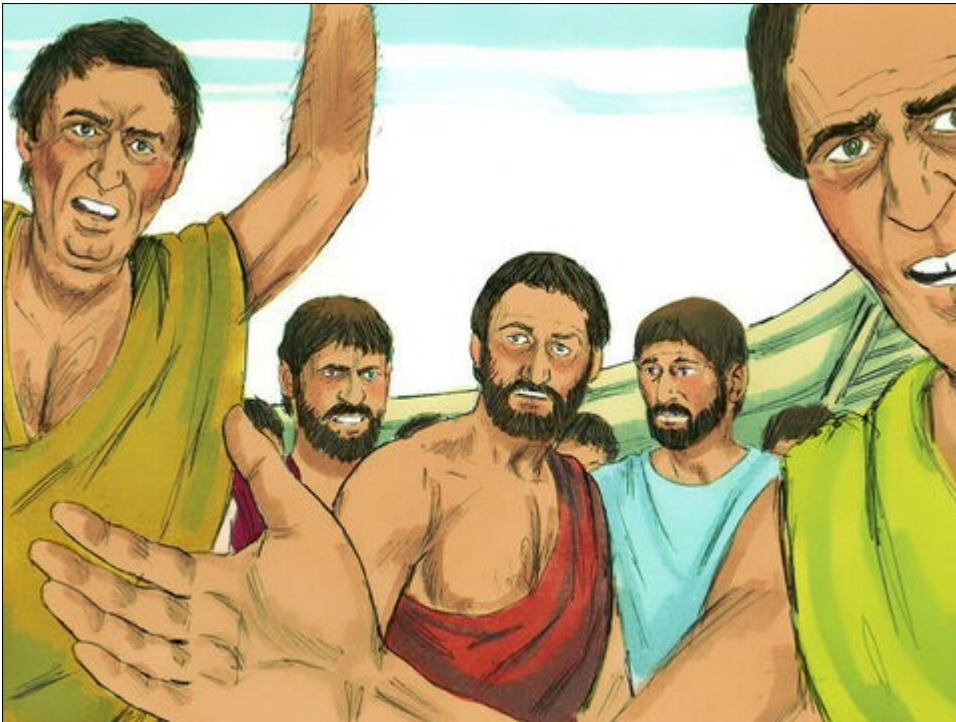
The disciples showed a loving concern for his safety

Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theatre

Friends in 'high' places earnestly gave Paul their advice, perhaps also out of respect for his Roman citizenship.



The assembly was in confusion..
Some were shouting one thing, some another.
Most of the people did not even know why they were there.



People were caught up
in the excitement of the
moment

This illustrates the
danger of mass action.

The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defence before the people.

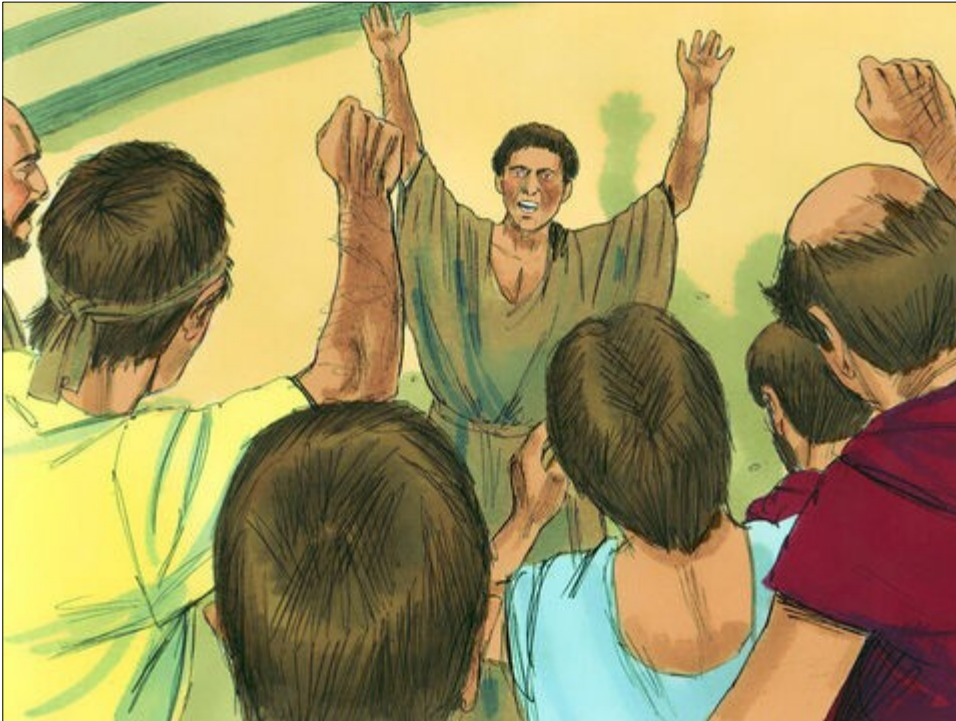


This was a delegation from the ‘unbelieving Jews’ trying to explain ..

“It isn’t us – it’s that Paul and those Christians”
(followers of the Way)

It was an attempt to distance themselves from the ‘new faith’

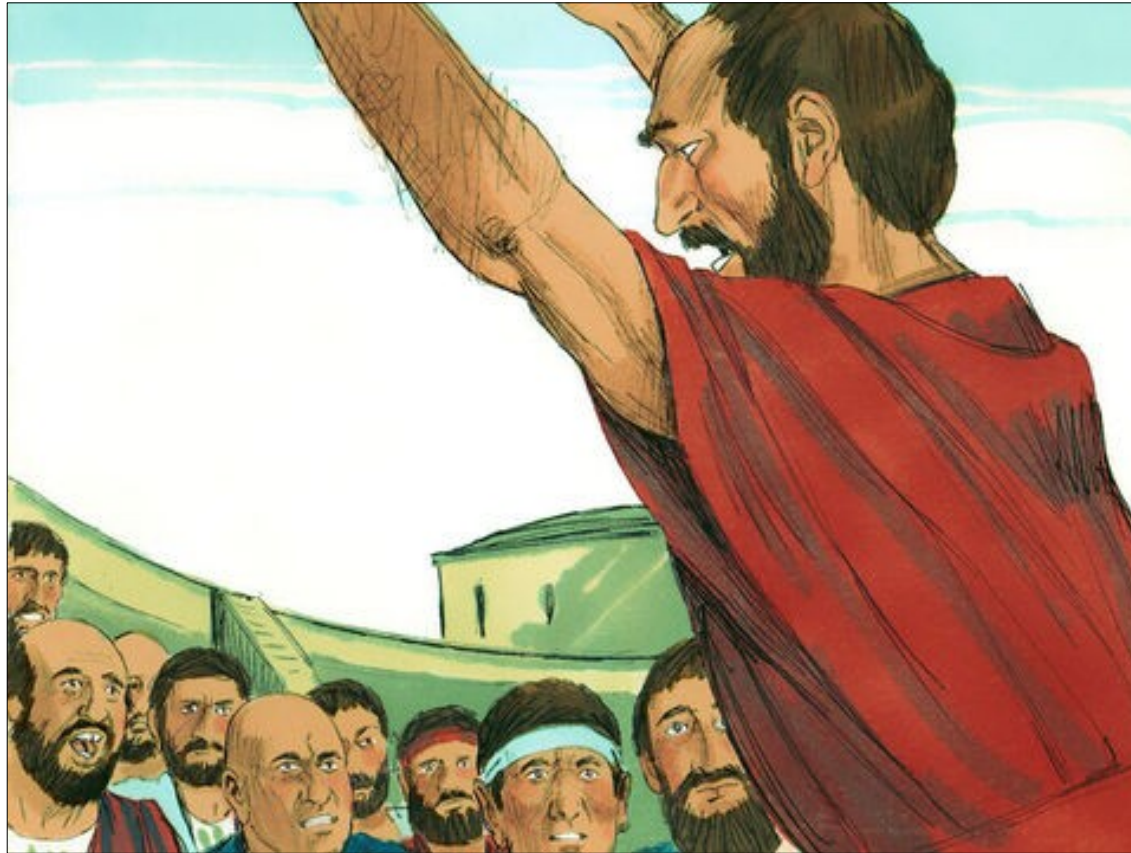
But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours.. "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"



He didn't get a chance.
This was a pagan Ephesian
anti-Semitic response

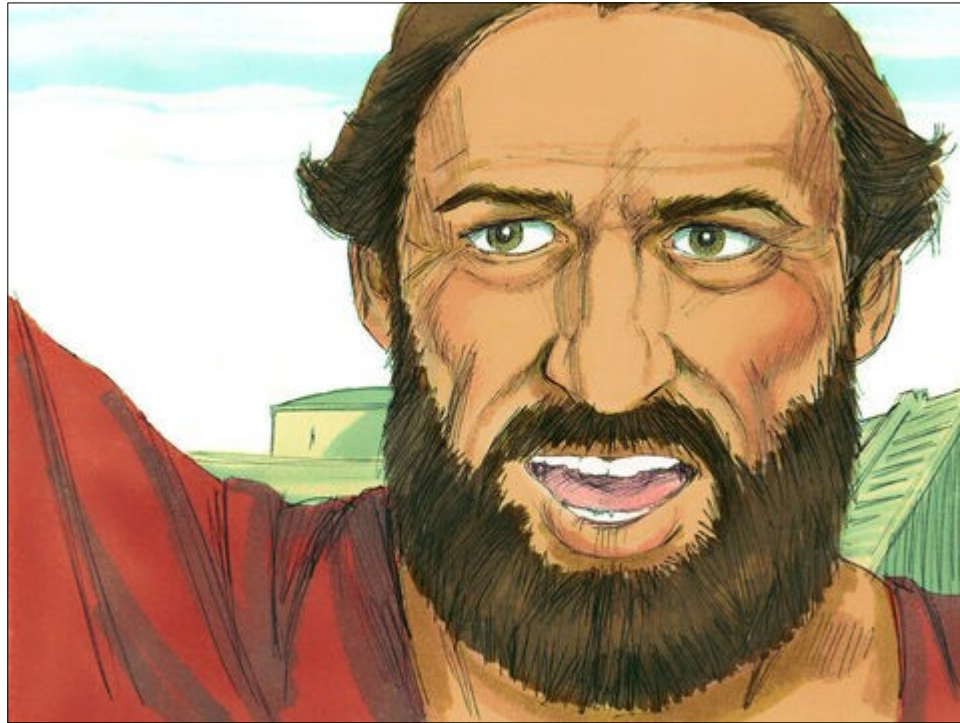
They are really shouting
"Our goddess is greater"

The city clerk quietened the crowd



The people recognise the arrival of the top city official.
After 2 hours it was time to be quiet!
He had something important to say.

and said.. "Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven?"



He attempted to reason with the crowd.

“There’s no need to prove Artemis is greater. We know she is.

The temple stores the ‘image’ (meteorite) that fell to earth.”

her image, which fell from heaven

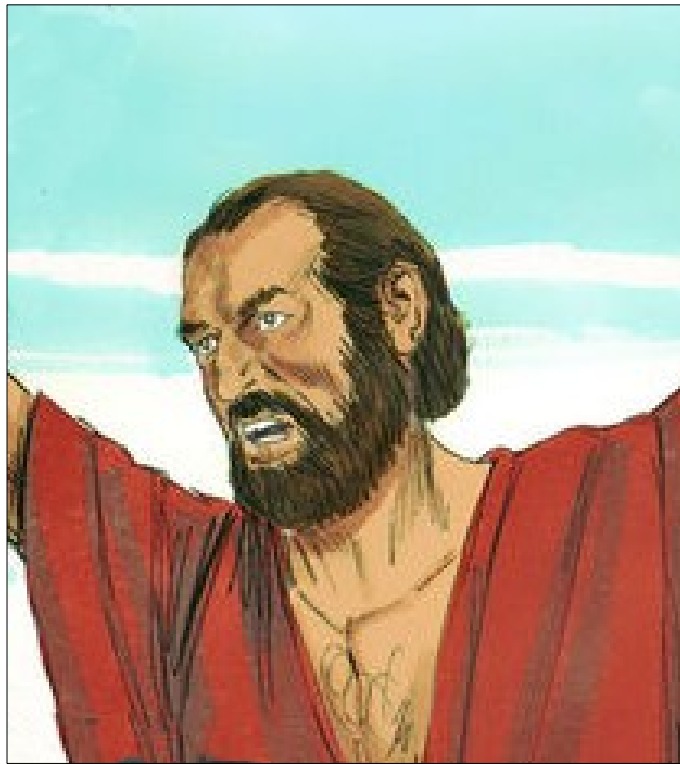


The centre of Artemis worship was a black meteorite that either resembled or had been fashioned into an image of a woman. The lower part was wrapped like a mummy...the idol was covered with breasts, that symbolized fertility.

Superstition can have a strong hold.

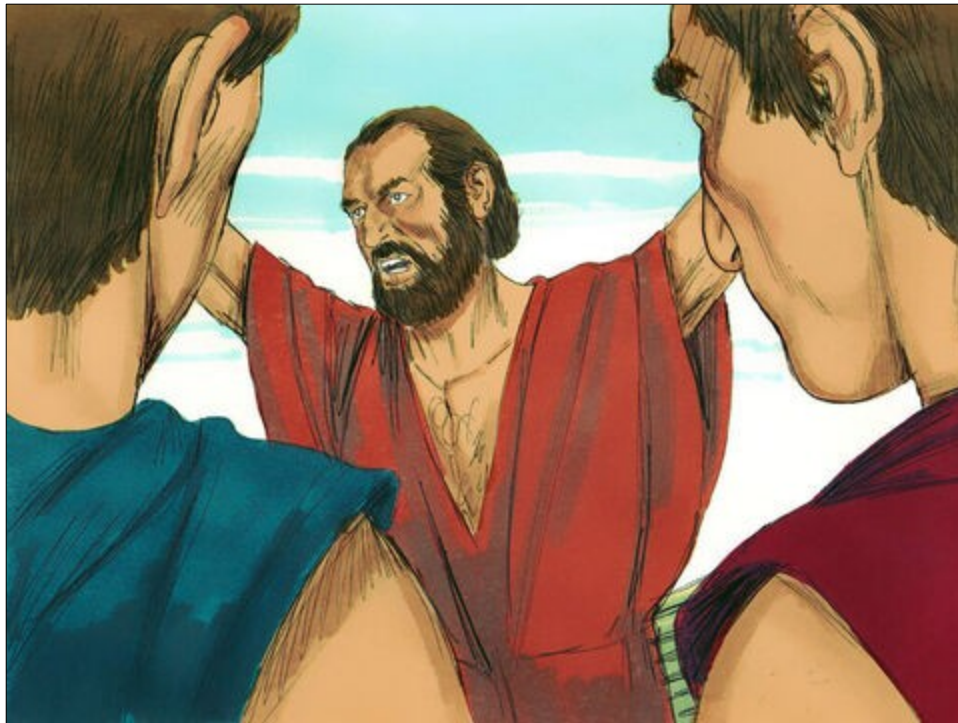
Therefore, since these facts are undeniable,
you ought to be quiet and not do anything rash.

Calm down because the facts are 'undeniable facts'
(but there can be another interpretation of the facts)



CALM DOWN

You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess. If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges.



Let the law take its course. You have accused innocent men. Wisely, the disciples were not running an anti-Artemis campaign but a pro-Jesus one.

It's Demetrius and his men who need to go about things in a lawful way.

The city official can see the root cause of the issue.

If there is anything further you want to bring up,
it must be settled in a legal assembly.

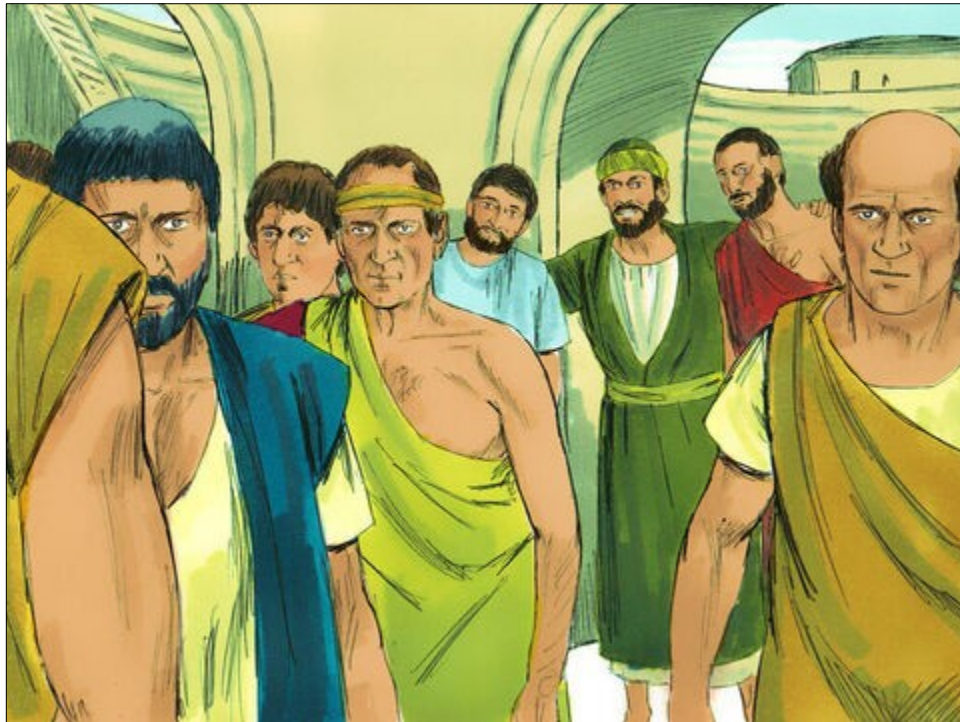
There were proper ways of dealing with things.

Not like this

The blessing of Law and justice (when done right)



As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of today's events. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it."
After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

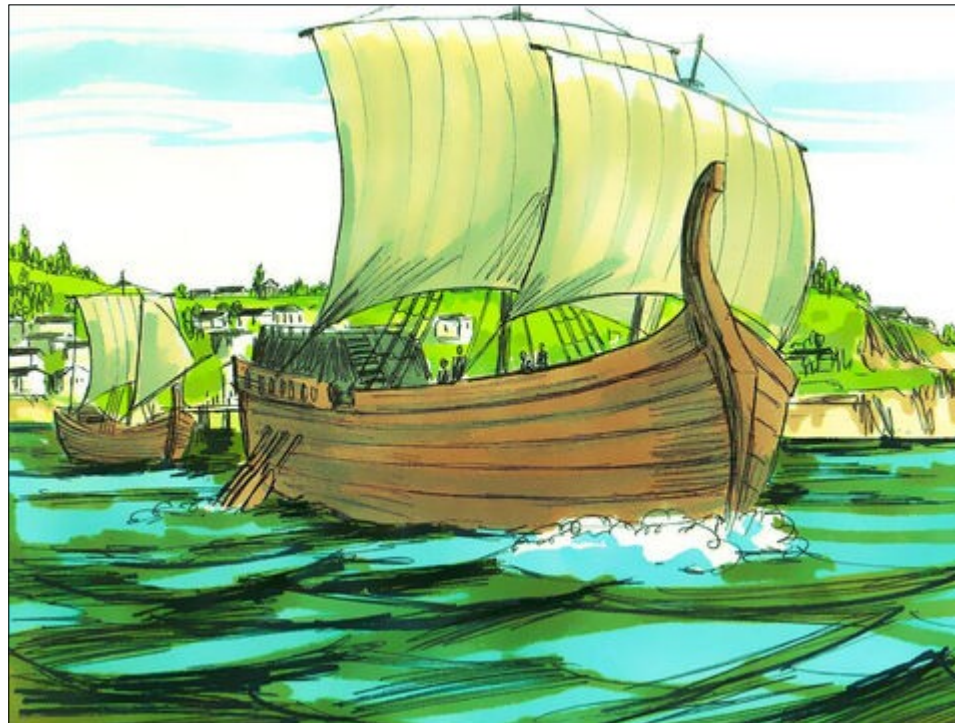


This is the official's major concern:
The Roman authorities didn't like riots (he avoids using the word) – this could spell trouble for the city officials and the city if things got out of hand.

Go home quietly!

Acts 20:1 After the uproar ceased,
Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them,
he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.

It was time for Paul to leave now.
– the Lord can look after his people in Ephesus.
This may have been his final visit to Ephesus.



How to change society for the better:

The power of the Gospel.

History shows that where the Gospel has changed people, then their society and culture has been transformed.

The Judaeo-Christian values that greatly influenced Western societies, are now seriously under threat from atheistic forces attempting to use events in our world as a cover for their destructive schemes.

There is a need for the church to recognise what is going on and to stand for Biblical truths and if necessary, face the consequences until Christ returns.

1 Timothy 4:1-2 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,

Godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. That is why we labour and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all people, and especially of those who believe.

1Timothy 4:8-10

