

Lesson X.

PAUL AT EPHESUS

March 8, 1903

Acts 19: 13-20. Study Acts 19: 8-20. Commit to memory vs. 18-20.

13 Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Je'sus, saying, "We adjure you by Je'sus whom Paul preacheth."

14 And there were seven sons of one Sce'va, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Je'sus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?

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

17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Eph'esus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Je'sus was magnified.

18 And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds.

19 Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

20 So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Revised Version—¹ But certain also of the strolling Jews; ² name; ³ the; ⁴ I; ⁵ a chief priest; ⁶ mastered both of them; ⁷ became; ⁸ Many also of them that had believed came confessing, and declaring their deeds; ⁹ and not a few of them that practised; ¹⁰ in the sight of all; ¹¹ the Lord.

EXPLANATION

Connection—This lesson continues the story of Paul's work at Ephesus, where he labored for nearly three years (ch. 20: 31) with great success. Jewish opposition caused him to leave the synagogue and to hold his meetings in the school of one Tyrannus, where he taught day by day for more than two years. (vs. 8, 9.) His preaching and miracles had great effect, and from Ephesus the gospel was carried to all parts of the Roman province of Asia, vs. 10-12.

13. **The vagabond Jews**; literally, strolling Jews, who went from place to place like gypsies. They pretended to read the future from the stars, and by uttering strange words from their magic books, to be able to summon spirits to help or hurt, and then to dismiss them at pleasure. **Exorcists**; who falsely claimed power to cast out evil spirits. **The name of the Lord Jesus**. It was a common practice with them to charm with the name of Jehovah, and after seeing Paul's miracles they used the name of Jesus instead. **We adjure you**; a solemn command to depart. **Whom Paul preacheth**; Paul, who wrought such miracles (vs. 11, 12) by the power of Jesus.

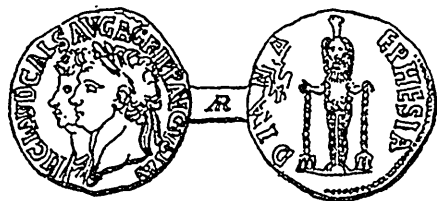
14. **Seven sons**; who used to imitate Paul. In the instance here given only two of the seven acted (Rev. Ver., v. 16). Their father being a priest, they

Christ's servant, v. 12. **Who are ye?** words of anger and contempt. **And the man . . . leaped on them**; with the fury of a mad beast. **Mastered both of them** (Rev. Ver.). See above on v. 14. **Naked**; the outer garment torn off, nothing but the short tunic left. Their impiety was punished and their false claim to cast out evil spirits exposed. Paul's miracles, too, were thus shown to be genuine.

17. **This was known**. The news would quickly spread. **Fear fell on them all**; not the terror that filled the minds of Sceva's sons, but a sense of God's presence in their midst. (Compare ch. 5: 11.) **Magnified**; greatly honored as Lord and Saviour. The incident created a deep impression upon the minds of all who saw and heard of it.

18, 19. **Many . . . that had believed** (Rev. Ver.), and had united with the church. **Came, confessing, and declaring their deeds** (Rev. Ver.); their evil deeds. They had not fully given up belief in magic. Meaningless words copied from the image of the goddess Diana were carried about as charms to keep harm away. This they now saw and confessed to be sinful. **And not a few of them** (Rev. Ver.); of the magicians themselves. **Which used curious arts**; arts of magic (see on vs. 13, 18). "The curious arts were magic, jugglery, and all such practices as make pretense to supernatural agency. Among them were the famous Ephesian Letters. These Ephesian Letters were small slips of parchment in silk bags, on which were written strange cabalistic words and sentences, mysterious and often apparently meaningless. These, men and women were in the habit of carrying about on their persons as charms or amulets to shield them from danger and from harm, or to procure them good fortune in their undertakings." Books; parchments, containing the rules and mystic words for practising magic. **Burned them**; publicly in the market square. **Fifty thousand pieces of silver**; perhaps \$10,000. The fact that they burned such costly books shows how real was their conversion.

20. **So mightily**; with such power. **The word of God**; the gospel. **Grew**; in influence over the hearts and minds of men. **And prevailed**; over the forces of evil. Such was the splendid result of Paul's ministry in Ephesus and throughout the province of which it was the capital.



Coin of Ephesus

were priests too. A chief priest (Rev. Ver.): not the high priest (John 18: 13), for he would be only at Jerusalem, but the head of one of the 24 classes into which the Jewish priests were divided, or perhaps simply a leading priest at Ephesus.

15, 16. **The evil spirit answered**; speaking through the man whom he possessed. **Jesus I know**, etc. The evil spirits knew and had to obey the power of Jesus (Mark 1: 25, 26), and of Paul,