Acts 20:1-16, Ministry in Troas
February 6, 1993
H. Van Dyke Parunak

Overview

1. *Historical*: Alternation of detailed bits of voyage and visits
   with previous churches. Cf. Christ's last trip to Jerusalem, the
   whole focus of Luke's gospel.
   a) 19:21-22, Preparation to Depart from Ephesus
   b) 20:1-6, Farewell to Greece: Macedonia (Phil. and Thess.),
      Greece (Corinth), Back through Mac. to Troas (7-12)
   c) 20:13-16, From Troas to Miletus (17-38, message to the
      Ephesian Elders)
   d) 21:1-3, Miletus to Tyre (4-6, meeting with believers)
   e) 21:7, Ptolemais
   f) 21:8, Caesarea (9-14, Agabus' prophecy)
   g) 21:15-16, Caesarea to Jerusalem (17ff, events there)

2. *Spiritual*: Working out the details of the Spirit's burden from
   ch.19. Various obstacles and how they are overcome:
   a) Physical
   b) Enemies
   c) Well-meaning friends
   d) His own natural attraction to those whom he is leaving.

A. **19:21-22, Preparation to Depart**
   1. Spirit's leading; contrast 16:6-9. There, the Spirit led step by
      step, and it would have been folly for Paul to impose a
      longer-range objective. Here, he has his marching orders, and we
      will see how he subdues lesser objectives in order to carry them
      out.
   2. Preparation via messengers
   3. Sometime between this and ch.20, wrote 1 Cor (16:5-9). Visit is
      planned, but he is still in Greece. Not sent with this team; cf.
      1 Cor. 16:10, "if Timothy come"

B. **20:1-6, Farewell to Greece**
   1. About a year in vv. 1-3!
      a) 2a, Macedonia (Philippi and Thessalonica), wrote 2 Cor.
      b) 2b-3, Greece: in Corinth; wrote Romans.
   2. 3-4, team of seven Corinth -> Troas; Paul via Macedonia
   3. 5, Luke rejoins; has been at Philippi, where they celebrate
      Passover together.
   4. 6, took five days to cross the Aegean Sea; took only two going
      the other way in 16:11. --> a reminder that the journey is not
      trivial; it will take determination, strength, and courage to
      carry out the Spirit's burden. Not just "if it happens, it
      happens, and otherwise it wasn't to be."

C. **20:7-12, Ministry in Troas**
   A valuable glimpse into the ordinary meetings of the church;
   important for us as we seek to pattern our worship after theirs.
   Characteristics of the meeting:

1. First day of the week.
   a) Cf. 1 Cor. 16. for the other evidence that this was the common
      meeting time of the believers.
   b) All four gospels (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1)
      explicitly mention this day as the time of the resurrection.
   c) --> Shift from God's rest from the first creation (seventh
      day) to the time when the Lord rested from the new creation
      (first).

2. Purpose: to break bread. This was the center of their meeting,
   not an occasional addition to it.

3. Accompanied with lengthy instruction by Paul.

4. Had social as well as ceremonial aspect
   a) Eating distinct from the eucharist, v.11
   b) talked until dawn
      1) both the informality of the conversation,
      2) and its duration beyond any reasonable limits for a set
         meeting
   c) Their concern for the young man.

D. **20:13-16, Troas to Miletus**
   The itinerary here is typical of how people traveled by boat:
   "coasting" from one town to the next along the shore. Two unexpected
   details catch Luke's attention:

1. 13, Paul's Solitude. The geography here requires that a boat
   travel nearly 40 miles around Cape Lectum, while there is a
   straight road of only 20. He takes advantage of this circumstance
   to gain some solitude, even as the Lord withdrew into a desert
   place to pray, and on one occasion (Mark 6:45,46) he even sent
   his disciples away by boat to gain some solitude! (Luke does not
   have this episode in his gospel, so deliberate parallel is
   unlikely, but see Luke 4:42; 6:12; 22:39 "as he was wont.")

   Application: If the Lord needed time alone with his heavenly
   father, and if the Apostle Paul thought it important to follow
   his example, so should we. Recall OT emphasis on "seeking God";
   Psa. 63:1,2.

   We may be able to guess the object of his meditations. The
   experience in Troas brings to the fore the tension he feels
   between carrying out his local immediate ministry and fulfilling
   the long-range burden that the Spirit has given him. He would
   love to stay among his friends throughout Turkey and minister;
   yet the Spirit is calling him on to Jerusalem and Rome. Perhaps
   this walk is to sort out his priorities, leading to the decision
   to pass by Ephesus.

2. 14-16, Passing by Ephesus.
   Shows Paul's sense of priorities, perhaps refined by his walk
   from Troas. He had spent a year in Macedonia and Greece; had not

been able to get away from Troas in less than a week; imagine the delay if he were to be back among the believers in Ephesus! But if he will not go to them, still he can call them to him for a farewell, which occupies our next study.

Summary
Sometimes God leads only a step at a time (ch. 16:6-9); other times he gives a clear, long-range burden. We need to learn to keep these straight.

Hymn: Guide Me, Oh thou Great Jehovah

Analysis

A. 19:21-22, Paul Prepares to Depart
   1. 19:21 (Ws de\ e)plhrw/qh tau^ta,
   2. e)/qeto o(Pau^los e)n tw^| pneu/mati
      a) dielqw\n th\n Makedoni/an kai\ )Axai/+an
      b) poreu/esqai ei)s (Ieroso/luma,
      c) ei)pw\n o(/ti Meta\ to\ gene/sqai me e)kei^ dei^ me kai\ (Rw/mhn i)dei^n.
   3. 19:22 a)postei/las de\ ei)s th\n Makedoni/an du/o tw^n diakonou/ntwn au)tw^|, Timo/qeon kai\ )/Eraston,
   4. au)to\s e)pe/sxen xro/non ei)s th\n)Asi/an.

B. 20:1-6, From Ephesus to Troas
   1. e)ch^lqen
      a) 1 Meta\ de\ to\ pau/sasqai to\n qo/rubon
      b) metapemya/menos o(Pau^los tou\s maqhta\s
      c) kai\ parakale/sas,
      d) a)spasa/menos
      e) poreu/esqai ei)s Makedoni/an.
   2. h)^lqen ei)s th\n (Ella/da,
      a) 2 dielqw\n de\ ta\ me/rh e)kei^na
      b) kai\ parakale/sas au)tou\s lo/gw| pollw^|
      c) 3 poih/sas te mh^nas trei^s
   3. e)ge/neto gnw/mhs tou^ u(postre/fein dia\ Makedoni/as.
      a) genome/nhs e)piboulh^s au)tw^| u(po\ tw^n)Ioudai/wn
      b) me/llonti a)na/gesqai ei)s th\n Suri/an
   4. 4 sunei/peto de\ au)tw^| Sw/patros Pu/rrou Beroiai^os, Qessalonike/wn de\ )Ari/starxos kai\ Sekou^ndos, kai\ Ga/i+os Derbai^os kai\ Timo/qeos,)Asianoi\ de\ Tuxiko\s kai\ Tro/fimos.
   5. 5 ou(^toi de\ proelqo/ntes e)/menon h(ma^s e)n Trw|a/di:
   6. 6 h(mei^s de\ e)cepleu/samen meta\ ta\s h(me/ras tw^n a)zu/mwn a)po\ Fili/ppwn,
   7. kai\ h)/lqomen pro\s au)tou\s ei)s th\n Trw|a/da a)/xri h(merw^n pe/nte,
   8. o(/pou dietri/yamen h(me/ras e(pta/.

C. 20:7-12, Ministry in Troas
   1. 7)En de\ th^| mia^| tw^n sabba/twn sunhgme/nwn h(mw^n kla/sai a)/rton o(Pau^los diele/geto au)toi^s, me/llwn e)cie/nai th^| e)pau/rion,
   2. pare/teine/n te to\n lo/gon me/xri mesonukti/ou.

3. 8 h)^san de\ lampa/des i(kanai\ e)n tw^| u(perw/|w| ou(^ h)^men
   sunhgme/noi:
4. e)/pesen a)po\ tou^ triste/gou ka/tw
   a) 9 kaqezo/menos de/ tis neani/as o)no/mati Eu)/tuxos e)pi\
      th^s quri/dos,
   b) katafero/menos u(/pnw| baqei^
   c) dialegome/nou tou^ Pau/lou e)pi\ plei^on,
   d) katenexqei\s a)po\ tou^ u(/pnou
5. kai\ h)/rqh nekro/s.
6. 10 kataba\s de\ o(Pau^los e)pe/pesen au)tw^|
7. kai\ sumperilabw\n ei)^pen,
   a) Mh\ qorubei^sqe,
   b) h(ga\r yuxh\ au)tou^ e)n au)tw^| e)stin.
8. 11 a)naba\s de\ kai\ kla/sas to\n a)/rton kai\ geusa/menos e)f'
   i(kano/n te o(milh/sas a)/xri au)gh^s ou(/tws e)ch^lqen.
9. 12 h)/gagon de\ to\n pai^da zw^nta,
10. kai\ pareklh/qhsan ou) metri/ws.

D. 20:13-16, From Troas to Miletus
   Two itineraries and two reasons

   1. reason p
      a) text: 13 (Hmei^s de\ proelqo/ntes e)pi\ to\ ploi^on
         a)nh/xqhmen e)pi\ th\n)^Asson, e)kei^qen me/llontes
         a)nalamba/nein to\n Pau^lon,
      b) reason: ou(/tws ga\r diatetagme/nos h)^n me/llwn au)to\s
         pezeu/ein.

   2. reason p
      a) text:
         1) 14 w(s de\ sune/ballen h(mi^n ei)s th\n)^Asson,
            a)nalabo/ntes au)to\n h)/lqomen ei)s Mitulh/nhn,
         2) 15 ka)kei^qen a)popleu/santes th^| e)piou/sh|
            kathnth/samen a)/ntikrus Xi/ou,
         3) th^| de\ e(te/ra| pareba/lomen ei)s Sa/mon,
         4) th^| de\ e)xome/nh| h)/lqomen ei)s Mi/lhton:
      b) reason:
         1) 16 kekri/kei ga\r o(Pau^los parapleu^sai th\n)/Efeson,
         2) o(/pws mh\ ge/nhtai au)tw^| xronotribh^sai e)n th^|
)Asi/a|,
         3) e)/speuden ga\r ei) dunato\n ei)/h au)tw^| th\n h(me/ran
            th^s penthkosth^s gene/sqai ei)s (Ieroso/luma.