

Acts 19:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.

Analysis

No small stir about that way—Luke's characteristic understatement (λιτότης, litotes) masks intense opposition. The term **that way** (ἡ ὁδός, hē hodos) became an early designation for Christianity, appearing throughout Acts (9:2, 19:9, 22:4, 24:14). This 'Way' language echoes Jesus' self-identification as 'the way, the truth, and the life' (John 14:6).

The Greek ταραχος (tarachos, 'stir') implies public disturbance and tumult. Paul's ministry in Ephesus—spanning three years (20:31)—had so thoroughly impacted the city that economic and religious structures faced collapse. The gospel's transforming power threatened not just beliefs but entire industries built on idolatry.

Historical Context

Ephesus (circa AD 54-57) was Asia Minor's commercial hub and home to the Temple of Artemis (Diana), one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The cult of Artemis generated massive revenue through religious tourism and idol manufacturing. Paul's prolonged ministry (the longest recorded in Acts) had created widespread conversion.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. When the gospel genuinely transforms a culture, what economic or social structures might be threatened?
2. How does identifying Christianity as 'the Way' shape your understanding of exclusive truth claims?

Interlinear Text

Ἐγένετο δὲ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ταραχος οὐκ
there arose **And** G2596 G3588 **time** **the same** **stir** **no**
G1096 G1161 G2540 G1565 G5017 G3756

ὀλίγος περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ
small **about** G3588 **that way**
G3641 G4012 G3598

Additional Cross-References

Acts 19:9 (Parallel theme): But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

Acts 24:22 (Parallel theme): And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.