

Acts 19:32

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together.

Analysis

Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused—Luke's ironic observation: the ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia, assembly—the word for 'church') was συγκεχυμένη (sunkechumenē, thoroughly confused). Most participants **knew not wherefore they were come together** (οὐκ ἤδεισαν τίνος ἔνεκα συνεληλύθεισαν, ouk ēdeisan tinos heneka sunelēluthēisan). This wasn't reasoned debate but mindless mob action—people shouting without understanding the issue.

Luke's satirical tone is unmistakable: calling this chaos an 'assembly' mocks pretensions to civic order. True ekklēsia (the church) operates by the Spirit with discernment; false ekklēsia (angry mobs) operates by emotion without understanding. The contrast highlights the church's countercultural nature—we gather around truth, not rage; we speak with understanding, not confusion.

Historical Context

Greek cities prided themselves on democratic assemblies where citizens debated civic matters rationally. Ephesus's descent into incoherent shouting exposed how quickly civic ideals collapse under economic threat and religious passion. The Roman Empire increasingly viewed such assemblies as dangerous and curtailed them—this riot vindicated Roman suspicions about mob democracy.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do modern social media mobs mirror this ancient confusion—people passionate about issues they barely understand?
2. What distinguishes Spirit-led church gatherings from emotion-driven movements that co-opt religious language?

Interlinear Text

ἄλλο μὲν οὖν ἄλλο τι ἔκραζον· ἦν γὰρ ἡ
Some G3303 **therefore** G3767 **Some** G243 **one thing** G5100 **cried** G2896 **was** G2258 **for** G1063 **G3588**
G243 G1063

ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη καὶ οἱ πλείους οὐκ ἤδεισαν
the assembly G1577 **confused** G4797 **and** G3588 **the more part** G4119 **not** G3756 **knew** G1492
G1577 G4797 G2532 G4119 G3756 G1492

τίνος ἔνεκεν συνεληλύθεισαν
wherefore G1752 **they were come together** G4905
G5101 G4905

Additional Cross-References

Acts 21:34 (Parallel theme): And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle.