

Acts 21:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

Analysis

All the city was moved (ἐκινήθη ἡ πόλις, ekinethe he polis)—The verb 'moved' suggests violent agitation, like an earthquake shaking a city. The mob's fury stemmed from false accusations that Paul brought Gentiles into the temple's inner courts (v. 28-29), a capital offense punishable by death even for Roman citizens. **They took Paul, and drew him out of the temple**—The Greek heilkusan (dragged) implies violent force. Removing Paul before killing him prevented temple defilement by bloodshed, showing the mob's twisted priorities.

Forthwith the doors were shut—Temple Levites immediately closed the massive gates separating the Court of the Gentiles from the inner courts, preventing further ritual defilement. Ironically, those claiming zeal for the temple's purity were attempting murder, violating the sixth commandment of the very law they professed to defend.

Historical Context

Jerusalem during feast times swelled to massive crowds, creating volatile conditions. The temple police (Levites) had authority to maintain order and shut gates. The riot occurred in the Court of the Gentiles, the outermost temple area. Roman soldiers stationed in the Fortress Antonia overlooking the temple courts would have seen the disturbance.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How can religious zeal become divorced from genuine righteousness and love?
2. When have you witnessed people defending 'truth' through methods that contradict the gospel itself?

Interlinear Text

ἐκινήθη τε ἡ πόλις ὅλη καὶ ἐγένετο συνδρομὴ τοῦ
was moved **And** ^{G3588} **the city** **all** **and** **ran together** ^{G4890} ^{G3588}
^{G2795} ^{G5037} ^{G4172} ^{G3650} ^{G2532} ^{G1096}

λαοῦ καὶ ἐπιλαβόμενοι τοῦ Παύλου εἴλκον αὐτὸν
the people **and** **they took** ^{G3588} **Paul** **and drew** **him**
^{G2992} ^{G2532} ^{G1949} ^{G3972} ^{G1670} ^{G846}

ἔξω τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ εὐθέως ἐκλείσθησαν αἱ θύραι
out of ^{G3588} **the temple** **and** **forthwith** **were shut** ^{G3588} **the doors**
^{G1854} ^{G2411} ^{G2532} ^{G2112} ^{G2808} ^{G2374}

Additional Cross-References

Acts 26:21 (Temple): For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.

2 Corinthians 11:26 (Parallel theme): In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in

perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

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