

Gods and Money

Acts 19

Great is Artemis of the Ephesians
(vv28,34)

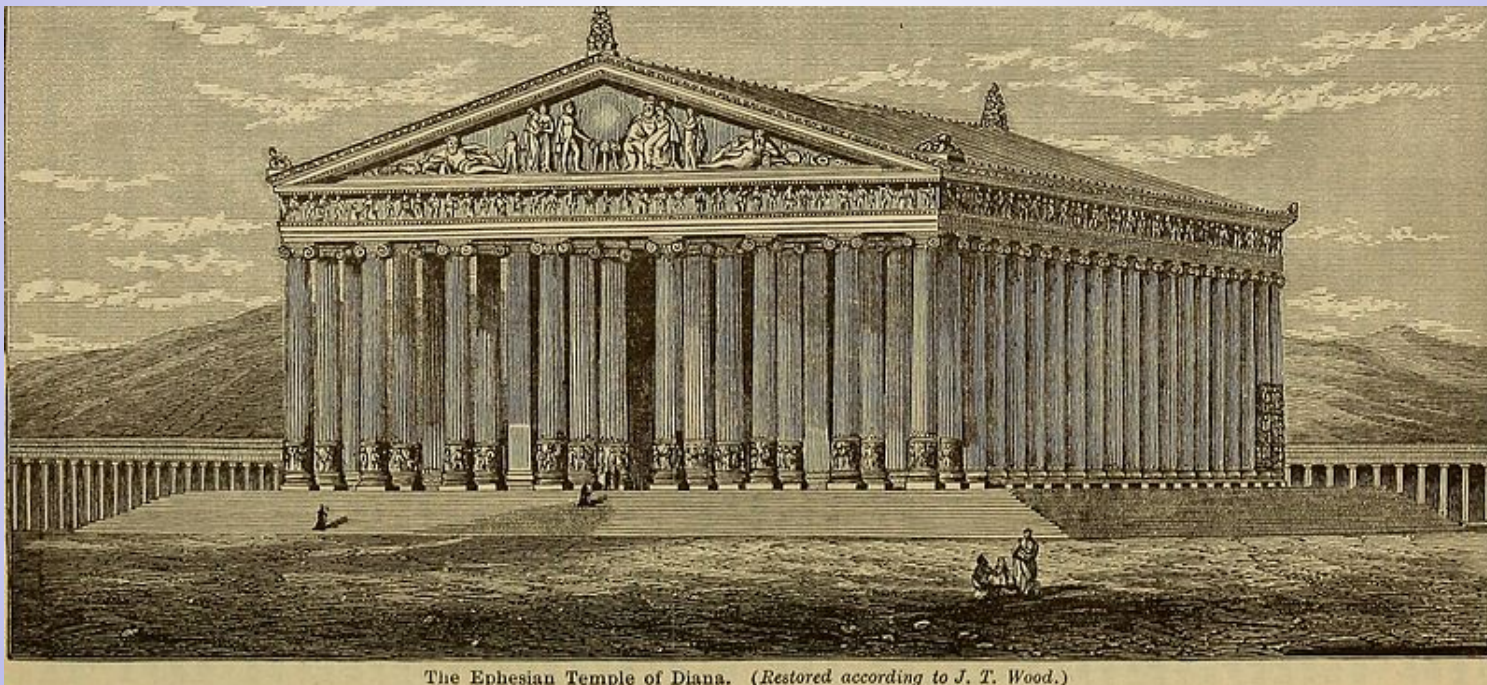


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Three pictures of religious life

Spiritual baptism

Spiritual authority

Spiritual kitsch—and how to sell it

Reflections on the significance of history

Spiritual baptism (vv1-6)

A leftover from Apollos?

Spiritual power comes from God
Jesus baptises in the Spirit

Spiritual authority (vv11-20)

God or magic (vv11-13)?

"I know all about Jesus, and I understand how Paul fits in, but why should I take any notice of you guys?" (v15)

No regular 'happy ending', instead a very expensive bonfire

Real spiritual power comes from the 'word of the Lord' (v20)

Spiritual kitsch—and how to sell it (vv21-41)

Demetrius' argument is a mix of economics, theology, civic pride and perhaps even a genuine loyalty to his goddess. But his method is to rouse a mob

A mob does not engage in rational discussion (v34)

A civil servant earns his keep (vv35-41)

Reflections on the significance of history

Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

(NIV Lk 1:3–4)

Compare John 20:31: the Messiah of prophecy

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

(NIV Lk 2:1)

Compare Matthew 1:1-17: The king in David's line

Reflections on the significance of history

The Holy Spirit works within history

Even in the Jewish rejection of their Messiah, the hand of God may be traced

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

(NIV Jn 3:8)

Reflections on the significance of history

Wisdom can be found in unlikely places

Wisdom uses persuasion not mob rule

It values peace and respects the rule of law

Yet the gospel *is* subversive

The tide of history has swept Artemis away

We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

(NIV 2 Cor 10:5)