

## Acts 17:5-12

November 9, 1976

We're in chapter 17 of Acts. It's remarkable how we never get out of our most happy playground--spiritually.

### Acts 17:5

"which believed not" - not in the critical Greek text

"but the Jews" - certainly it's axiomatic they believed not, or else they wouldn't have done what they did. There again, you know every time you read the word "Jew" in the Bible, in our translations of today, you've got to remember that that word never appeared in any translation until the year 17--something or other. There were no Jews. They were called Judeans in the text. Like in the Greek text and it isn't "Jesus, King of the Jews." The Greek text is "king of the Judeans." There's a lot of difference between Jews and Judeans. The Jews are the counterfeit. They paid a high price to get it in the Bible, so that all the Protestants who read it would support them in Israel, which is a bunch of crap.

Even men like Shakespeare never had the word "Jew." It doesn't appear even in English at Shakespeare's time. It's a real late introduction. But of course every translation today carries it. Because they have moved on all of our hearts to tell us that the Jews are the chosen people of God. If they're chosen, God did a hell of a trip choosing them, that's for sure. Of course, if He chose any Protestants, He did that too, maybe. But, the point is, the word literally is Judean. But they were Judean by religion. The religion of Judea in the Bible is called Pharisee-ism.

So, well anyway, these birds were moved with envy, whatever they were. Do any of you have marginal notes in there? A margin gives it in one as "indignation." Any of you have that? O.K. "Filled with jealousy" is Bullinger. The revised version, 1881 or 1902, has in the margin, I believe, "indignation". "Moved with envy" is in the King James. "Indignation" is in the margin of some of them. Bullinger says "jealousy" which is a synonymous word for "Envy" And this usage intrigued me because the word for "envy" in the Critical Greek text, the real word for "envy" is not the word that is used here. And yet I can see how they would translate it "envy." The Greek word, I think, for "envy" is *phthonos*. That's exactly what I'm gonna get to, I'm gonna show you a deeper depth. I'm talking about the real word for "envy." I think the word is spelled *phthonos*. The word, that's used here for "envy" is the word *zēloō*. *Phthonos* is really "envy." This word is the word *zēlos* - "zeal." *Zēloō* - is the verb form. This analytical says of *phthonos*, which is the real word, I believe, for envy, which is not the word used here in 17:5, and I'll show you why in a minute. The word is always used in a bad sense; jealousy of another's success; deprecation of its worth; envy of his excellence. While the word *zēlos*, which is the word which is used here in Acts 17:5 - *zēlos* generally is in a good sense; ardor; zeal for the cause of another; emulation to imitate superior worth; heartburning — from which they get "jealousy." These people were moved with *zēlos*, and we get our word "zealous" (to be zealous for something) out of this word *zēlos*. They were people with great zeal, and to me that's tremendous teaching; meaner than hell, as you'll see, they were wicked but they were convinced they were right and they were sold out to their wickedness. That's the word "zeal." Isn't that something? That's why I believe that this should have been translated:

"but the Jews, motivated, or moved with"

There's another word for "moved." Bullinger has it inside of his Bible. What did he do with "moved"? - Filled? - Okay.

Walter, can you find it in here?

[Walter - "It's part of the word *zēloō*. The verb means - filled with envy or zeal."]

Is it in the genitive?

[Walter - "No. It's a verb and the verb means to be filled with zeal."]

The reason I was looking for it is if it was really moved; filled, it is filled to overflowing capacity. It's so zealous, that you're willing to chop their heads off, if necessary. You're so committed that, even if you're dead wrong, you'd just chop their heads off. That's the word "zealousness" here and it's translated "envy." Therefore, when people are real zealous for the counterfeit, as you and I have seen time and time again, you will notice that they're almost green with envy. That's why jealousy is called "the green-eyed monster." And that zealousness is almost frantic. If you trace the basic word for *phthonos* through the Word, which I've done, envy and jealousy issues finally in murder. Here, in this record, is exactly what those fellows were after with Paul and Silas, as you will see.

Why did Cain murder Abel? One's offering was accepted, the other was rejected, and he was real zealous. That's why this "moved with envy," I understand it, or "filled with jealousy" as you said Bullinger has it there. I can understand the translation there. The in-depth greatness of it is to see it from a zealous point of view, rather than from the specific word which would culminate in murder. They didn't want to do the murder, but they would like, because of their zealousness, to see that they would get the treatment. And it wasn't the treatment of murder that is right at the top over here. It was just to get them really defamed because, as you will see, after they posted bail they let them go. "Security" is the word "bail." It comes up later on; b-a-i-l, not B-a-a-l. "Moved with envy", understand now?

"took unto them" - is a real interesting use of the word *proslambanō*. You and I know, from the previous working of the Word, to *lambanō* is to evidence; to receive. "Took unto them," is received, manifested certain lewd fellows.

"certain" - is the word "some"

"lewd" - evil

"baser sort" - are the leaders of the gang who did the stealing, and who instigated the city riots.

They received, "manifested meanies." That's what it really is.

"moved with envy, took unto them manifested meanies, evil fellows, leaders of the stealing, and the city rioting gang."

That's literally what that verse is doing. In other words, the leaders that were opposed to Paul and Silas, they sort of went to town and said, "Hey, we know what you guys have been up to, but we need your help." That's how they got them. Most likely paid them--30 pieces of silver; that's how they got the gang leaders to come.

"gathered a company" - what company? The rest of the gang. You know, the guy that led the gang in the west side of New York got his buddies together, east side of New York got his buddies together, south side, north side, and all the buddies got together with their gangs. And this is sort of neat, because all they are after is a man named Paul and his buddy called Silas. That's all they're after. To get those two fellows they get these gangs together and all Paul has ever done is heal people and bless people. All Silas has ever done is bless people; has never hurt anybody. You see the tricks of the Adversary and how devilish that thing really is, and how sincere these people really were; the people that hired the gangs. They really thought they were doing God a favor, I guess. If they could

get Paul and Silas, and defame them and beat them, and take care of them that way, it was good for them.

“set all the city on an uproar,” – can you see why the city would get in an uproar? – all the gangs coming together. They’re all disturbed about it getting together. But the gang goes over...

“and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people” - went to the house of Jason, and knocked on the door or yelled and said, “Look, we want Paul and Silas.

“to bring them out to the people” - I do not know whether it’s really to bring them to the theatre area where the judgment was made, or whether it was simply to bring them out to the gangs.

### Acts 17:6

“certain brethren” – believers; certain believers the brethren believers

“rulers of the city” - the word is *politarchēs* in the text, and that literally means “the rule of the citizens.” This city was a free city and it was to be ruled by the citizens. In other words, what you would call “a popular vote” rule or something. They brought them to these citizens who had the authority or rule of the city and their cry, their yell as a group, was...

“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also” - I think that’s a fantastic statement which simply means they turned it right side up wherever they went. It was already all screwed up. If this is the world, they turned it upside down which would be the right side up. It was all “kitty-wompass” to begin with. But as far as they were concerned, turning it right side up was the wrong way. Getting people delivered, instead of getting them circumcised, bothered them.

“Stretch forth thine hand”--to do what? Be healed. The fellow had been to that religious joint for years. Nobody ever delivered him. But one day when Jesus came in and he said “stand forth, stretch forth thine hand” and they got real mad about it. Why would they become angry about it? Because the system has to always keep you emaciated; has to keep you under; has to drive you into legalism, so that you never get that freedom or “bubbly-ness” of having a life that is more than abundant. Other times they said, “He didn’t do it on the right day.” They’re not interested at all in people and in their deliverance; only interested in maintaining the status quo or the system.

That’s what was going on here. Paul and Banabas were rocking the system and anytime you rock the system, the system will throw rocks at you. Right there it is. Just read the Word. Anytime anybody dared to hold forth the greatness of God’s Word: Stephen, they rocked him, stoned him; Jesus Christ, they hanged. There’s a record in the gospels, you remember? [**Matthew 21:33-39**, **Mark 12:1-8**, or **Luke 20:9-15**] First, he sends a lower servant to the vineyard or some place, then he sent a more important one, and finally he sent his only son and demanded what was required and they killed him.

It has always been that way, people; through all history. Now then why do men hazard their lives for others? Because of the greatness of the love of God they have, is the only answer I know. And they may die, like Paul, being executed but out of that sacrifice; out of that giving of self, there rise many, many other people who never rise to those great positions, maybe, but because this man Paul dared to, others live much higher than they would have lived had Paul not done it, or Silas, or any other man. And of this, of course, Jesus Christ gave it all.

To me, this is just a tremendous thing here. “Men, these that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.” In other words, “the same group that caused trouble at Thessalonica, or at

Amphipolis and Apollonia; those who caused trouble there and at other places, they're over here causing trouble." And the trouble was they were changing lives; turning them upside down; giving them something to live for, and that is what made them very, very indignant.

### Acts 17:7

"Whom Jason hath received" - every time I read that word I just take a breath, look it up, check it out, think it through spiritually in all of its inner depth. It is the word *hupodechomai*. *Dechomai* means a subjective reception, right? Therefore you know what that verse tells me? That the love of Jason; Jason took him into his home, inside the home.

"do contrary" - they practice things that are contrary

"decrees" - dogma, the doctrine

And here is what their complaint was...

"saying that there is another king, *one* Jesus" - that's the same thing that the envious Jews previously brought up at the time when Jesus Christ had been taken captive before Pilate or Herod. [Luke 23:1-2] I forget where he said, "He maketh himself king, and we have no other king than Caesar," [John 19:12, 15] I think. That's the essence of it. Remember? You know what I see in the teaching of Paul? And this, as far as I know, is the only place in the Word where you can really see it. He taught the same thing that Jesus Christ taught when he was here upon earth about his mission; that he was the king for Israel. He was Israel's king. Isn't that wonderful to see how Paul's teaching lines right up with what Jesus Christ was?

See, Jesus Christ was the good shepherd to Israel. He is not your good shepherd. We are not a kingdom of prophets and priests or whatever that says. We are sons of God. Priests are in Israel's stuff. We're neither Jew nor Gentile we're a new creation. That's why it says in the Word that we're joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our brother, it says. That's the "Big Brother Program." We are not sheep of his pasture. We are sons of God. Boy, you just watch the error that's written and taught; how they confuse this. We are sons of God with power.

"saying that here is another king, *one* Jesus" - this is the same truth we still teach today likewise; that there is a king, Jesus. But the king is to Israel, because if you're going to have a king, you have to have a what? Kingdom, because the word kingdom means "dom" - the reign of a king. You cannot have a king without a kingdom. No more so than you can have a bride without a bridegroom or something. That's why in the gospels the bridegroom and the bride, (that's true) the king and the kingdom (that's true). But in the Church of the Body of the born-again believers, there is no bride or bridegroom. There is no kingdom like Israel. There's the Kingdom of God which is over all, which I've taught you. But under the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven is used and the Kingdom of Heaven is Christ's kingship here upon earth. Then there's the born-again body of believers. There are a lot of things under kingdom; a lot of different things in the Word.

Here we're talking about this messianic king. And he's still king of Israel. Remember that because, even though his mission was not completed successfully, he is coming back. Acts told us that in the first chapter or someplace, or second or whatever it is. [Acts 1:11] And when he comes back, he doesn't come back to fulfill the body of the Church, because the Body of the Church will be fulfilled at his return; at the time just before he returns, then the dead in Christ shall what? Rise. And we which are alive and remain shall be caught away together with the lord. And so shall we ever be with the lord. That's the Thessalonians trip. [I Thessalonians 4:16-17] But when he comes back, he comes back as king. Therefore, there will be a kingdom, and that 'coming of this king' is the great

fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies in the gospels as well as the Book of Revelation. That is again to Israel, where he comes as king of kings and lord of lords. My, how simple this thing is and yet how confused people have been. But the point is, the teaching ministry in the age in which you and I live, the Church of the born-again believers, the body of Christ (not the bride; the body of Christ), has to recognize that he is still king; king to Israel. What God promised, God is going to do what with? Fulfill; that's why Jesus Christ is coming back. He is coming for his Church of the born-again believers, which is the greatest thing he's ever done. But then he's coming unto the earth to be king of kings and lord of lords. So this was one of the things they objected to; Jesus being king.

**Acts 17:8**

“the people” - the assembled crowd

What they were saying troubled the people and the rulers of the city when they heard these things.

**Acts 17:9**

“security” - security is bail. When they put down \$10,000 or whatever the trip was. The Greek text gives the word *hikanon*. That word means, and in secular literature at places is translated, bail. That's what they took.

“they let them go” - really something. They bailed them out; they let them go. It simply means they allowed them to be released and to go free.

**Acts 17:10**

“went into the synagogue of the Jews” - They have got to be stupid, these fellows. They go in the synagogue of the Jews and get in trouble. Then they go to the next town. They go right back and get in trouble. Isn't that beautiful? The average Christian always wants to avoid it. These believers just went right back into the hot spots. They just walked in and it's real terrific.

I love this word “immediately” in **verse 10**. That means “as quick as they could get to it.” In this essence, it was revelation. Now you will say to me, “Well, why didn't God give them revelation that they were coming in the first place?” Well, don't ask me, ask God. I don't know. I'm just reading you the Word. But I know enough about the Word that the reason they had not received revelation before was:

- 1- they either didn't ask for it, or believe for it, or;
- 2- in the whole plan of God's working out of the greatness of His ministry and Word, they didn't have it until after they had the testimony in that town; “These are the men that have turned the world upside down who preach of that king who's coming back.”

And oodles of people, that whole gang from western New York, Long Island, Manhattan, they all heard the what? The Word. Therefore, they are without what? Excuse. Had they been hungry they would have what? You don't tell me God doesn't know what He does. They never will have an excuse. They wouldn't take the truth of God's Word. Therefore, they are without excuse. If all of them go straight to hell, fry in three barrels of frying fat; it wouldn't bother me a bit. God was just to them and loving; leaned over backwards for them. They have no excuse as Romans says. [**Romans 1:20, 2:1**] Not a one of them.

“immediately” - is the revelation to get it ready. But they didn't do it pronto, you know. “Immediately” would mean; if I left immediately, right now, I could walk out. But if I had revelation immediately to get ready to send you out, then I'd sit here another twenty minutes teaching the Word,

then I'd go. Understand? That's exactly what they did because they left by night. That does not mean they left because they were scared to death. They left because revelation was, "Get them out of here."

"by night" - the word "by" means "during" or "through" the night

"Berea" - they went to Berea; about 30 miles west of Thessalonica

"synagogue of the Jews" - To have a synagogue any place there has to be 12 men. You could have 500 men, but you had to have a minimum of 12. Then under Judaism you could have a synagogue.

Well, they went into the synagogue of the Jews here. The reason they went to the synagogue was because that's where the people met. The revelation, to begin with, was to hit the synagogues. Later on they don't go back to synagogues. Like today, once you've seen the greater light, you no longer go back to the establishment that encases you. You find them here, there, and yonder. You'll see this coming up later in Acts, and in the Church epistles. You have to start with the people. I taught you this once from the crucifixion and other places to show you why, on the day of Pentecost, only Israel was present; Judeans were present to receive the fullness of the spirit in the new birth in **Acts 2**. I showed you that. Because God never breaks His Word to His people, He gives Israel the first opportunity to receive. Once they refuse to receive, as you will see later on in Acts, He just turns to the Gentiles. That's the reason for the change.

#### **Acts 17:11**

"they received the word" - What Word? Paul couldn't have read them **I Thessalonians 4**. He could not have read to them **Philippians 4:13**, for it was not yet what? But he could have spoken it to them and there is no difference between the spoken Word, and the written Word, as long as it is The Word. Then the question is: What is The Word? If you know it's The Word of God, not the word of a man, it's as much power, as much God's Word as if you read it in black on white, or green on yellow. It's the Word. And these in Thessalonica heard it from the mouth of Paul and Silas. And what they heard was the Word.

"received" - I didn't look up that word, "received" - *dechomai*-ed it has to be. They *dechomai*-ed; they subjectively received the Word.

"readiness of mind"- means - the willingness to listen it out, and to think it through before you make a decision. To me, when I think of readiness of mind, of course coming out of the Wierwille area, I think of fields that are ready to be planted with corn or beans or something else. Or a garden, that's ready to be planted. The ground has been plowed, or done properly, and tilled nice to where it's just beautiful and ready to put the seed in. That is what I see in my mind when I see the words "readiness of mind" in the Word. These people were open; they were willing to listen. They were willing to put new thoughts into their minds and evaluate it, at Berea.

This is what they did: they received it with readiness of mind, but they didn't immediately swallow it and say, "Oh, that's great. That's fantastic." They went to the one source, and the source was what?:

"searched the scriptures daily" - Now there's a tremendous key. I just told you they didn't read it from Philippians, or Thessalonians. Why? It had not yet been written. Therefore, what scriptures would they have studied? Old Testament. Therefore, Paul must have been teaching to them certain truths of the revelation of the Old Testament showing them about the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the messiah to Israel; but the rejection, carrying them right on. And they searched the scriptures to see.

“daily” - In **Acts 16:5**, remember that great thing I taught you there?  
And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

I showed you from the Book of Acts that at first it was believers increasing daily, then finally, with the growth of it, whole churches increased daily. Here, it's the same word. They searched the scripture daily. Now, if they're going to search the scriptures daily, somebody has got to be “twigging” daily, right? That means somebody had to hold forth the Word of God daily, so they could search the Scriptures daily.

Then where did we ever get the idea that the Church meets at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning for a fifteen minute message, so everybody can get home for fried chicken at 12:15? Boy, that has to be a whopper of a lie. The Church always met daily. Now everybody will always say to you, and especially adult adults, “They cannot meet daily.” Oh, I've heard that till my belly's full. You know why you can't meet daily? You don't want to. Why don't you just get honest? You don't want to because you don't think it's important enough, or necessary enough. It's remarkable how we as adults cannot meet daily in the Church, but we can sit down and eat three meals a day. You talk about counterfeit. Don't ever tell the people this, in the community. They'll draw you out and stone you. But it's the truth when you're honest.

They even tell us, in The Way Ministry, because our groups meet daily that we are fanatical. As a matter of fact, I have letters indicating, that if we don't watch out, I'll go insane because we meet so often. Boy, if that's insanity, somebody needs a good dose of it. They met how? Daily. You've got time to sit down and eat three physical meals a day, but not time to go to one Twig meeting. That's why we just need a complete overhauling.

Now, you don't know your history well enough either. Get into your history head that at the time of the Reformation, which really wasn't a reformation, it headed that direction but they really never got out of Roman Catholicism. But they got out of a lot of it. At that time, they met daily. As a matter of fact, Luther many times preached three, four times every day, seven days a week. First of all they did a meeting in the morning, between 4 and 5 a.m. in the church, because the people would go to work at daylight and therefore they wanted to hear the Word. And in Europe, they had no pews in the churches; everybody stood up. Still do, in the cathedrals in Europe, many of them; no pews in there. You know, pews are for tired people on the Word, like your chairs. They stood up to hear, then after the morning meeting, the men would go to work. Then whenever they had time, like at lunchtime, if they had a half hour off, they would eat while a man would be preaching to them. Then at night, when the day was over with, they'd do their homework as quick as possible then they'd get together and meet and eat the Word together. Many times during the Reformation, men, mainly men, women too (some of them), but men of households, would meet three times a day. That's what I call “twiggin.”

When the hour is critical enough you don't mind putting God first. It's when life is so easy and you make it all without God, you don't need to go, but Sunday morning at 11:00 a.m. And then the second week, you go straight; you're doing God a favor by coming twice. They're absolutely doing somebody a favor, but not God, because if you had any sense you wouldn't go in the first place.

They searched the scriptures what? Daily. So somebody had to be teaching it daily if they're going to search it.

“whether those things were so” - if they’re going to search the scriptures whether those things were so, they had to have the manuscripts or the scrolls to look at to check it out. Boy, you see why Paul was fantastic in his teaching? Went back to the Word, the revelation given; would document it.

**Acts 17:12**

“many of them” - many of them who? - That first heard the Word, but then went back and did what? Searched the scriptures daily; and it’s in the searching of that scripture that they were convinced, and that’s what caused them to believe.

“honorable women” - women of influence; prestigious women

“Gentiles” - Greeks. Boy, that’s an innovation

“of men, not a few” – that means a lot of men - not only a lot of men, but some real women of stature and influence in the community; women who were recognized as great women in the community; leaders in that community.

“many of them believed” - and again they believed because they heard Paul and Silas teaching it, and they searched the scriptures to see whether these things be so.