

Quarter 3 Lesson 10

Sixth Grade

# Changing the World with the Gospel

## Paul in Ephesus

Acts 19-20

After his second missionary trip, Paul spent time in Antioch before setting off inland through Galatia and Phrygia encouraging the Christians who met there. He then made his way to Ephesus, the fourth largest city in the Roman Empire, with a population of over 250,000.



Following are some of the scenes Paul would have seen in Ephesus:

The city of Ephesus as seen from a nearby mountain.



Temple to the Greek goddess, Artemis, virgin goddess of the hunt and the moon. The Ephesians worshipped this pagan god. This temple was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.



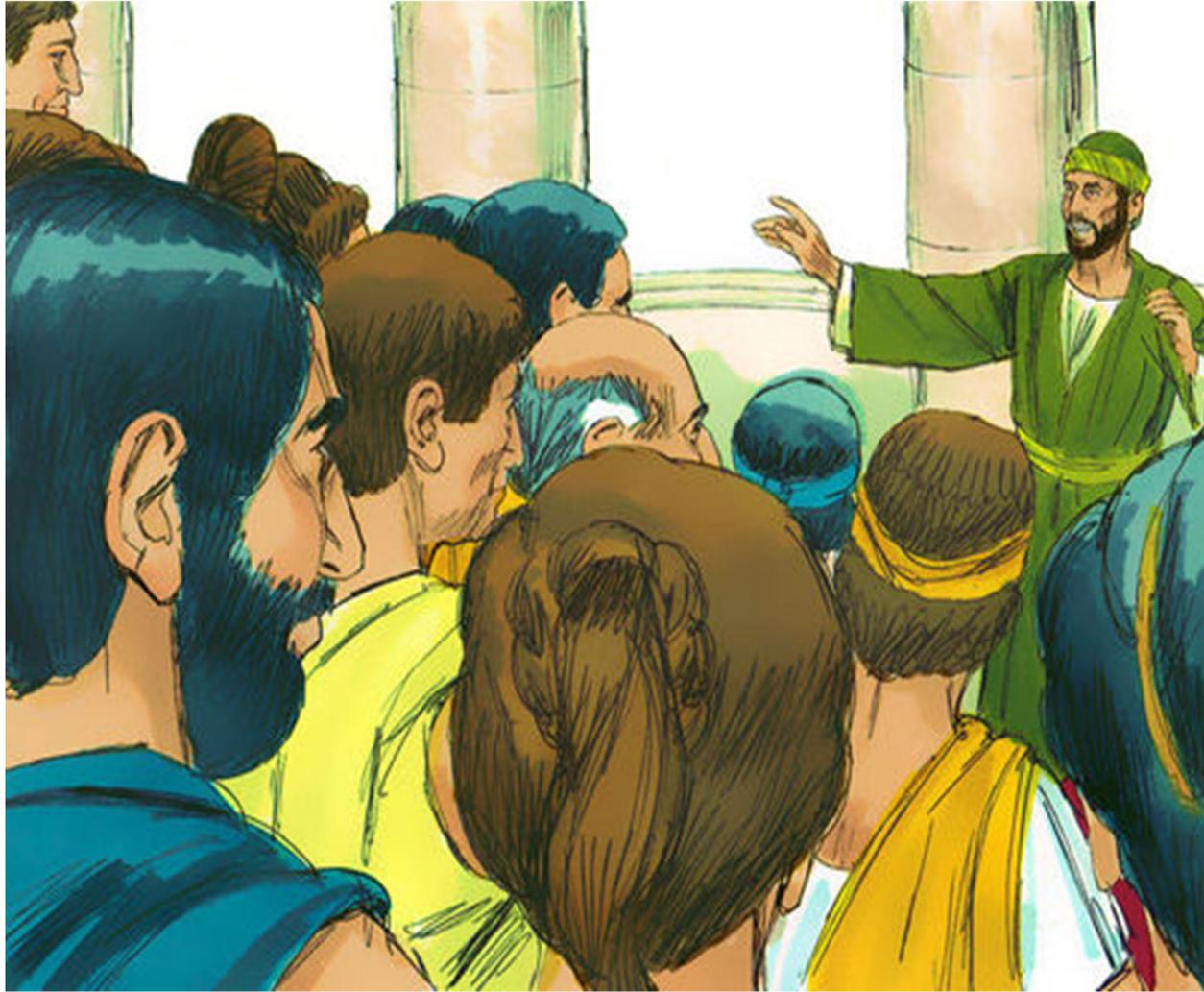
The theater at Ephesus seated an estimated 25,000 people. Below are the ruins of the theater as seen today.



Now, imagine seeing Paul journey through this ancient city as it would have looked 2,000 years ago.



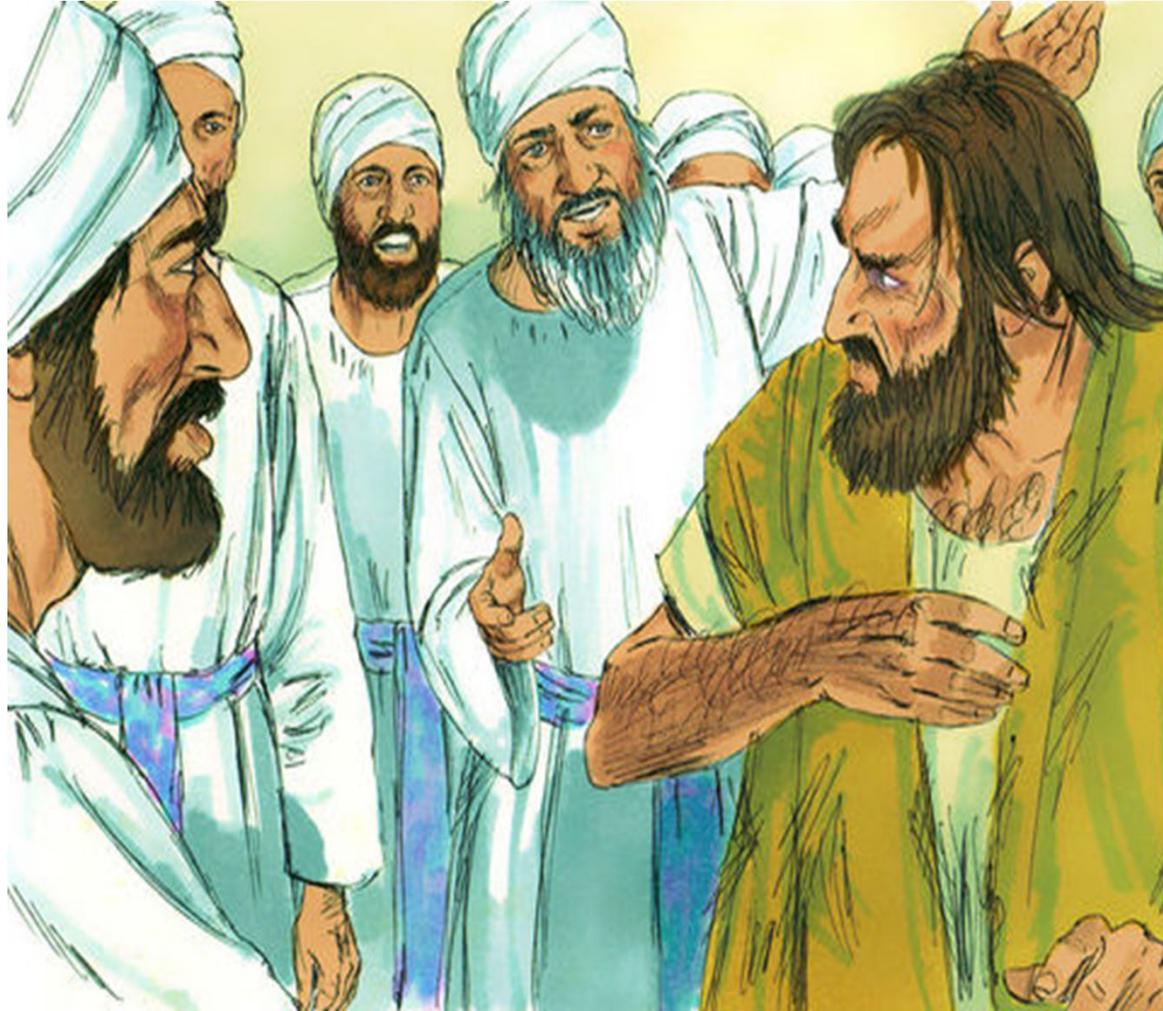
For the next three months, Paul preached in the synagogue. However, some Jews rejected his message and opposed Jesus being taught as “The Way” to God. So Paul and the believers left the synagogue. For the next two years, Paul held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Jews and Greeks throughout the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.



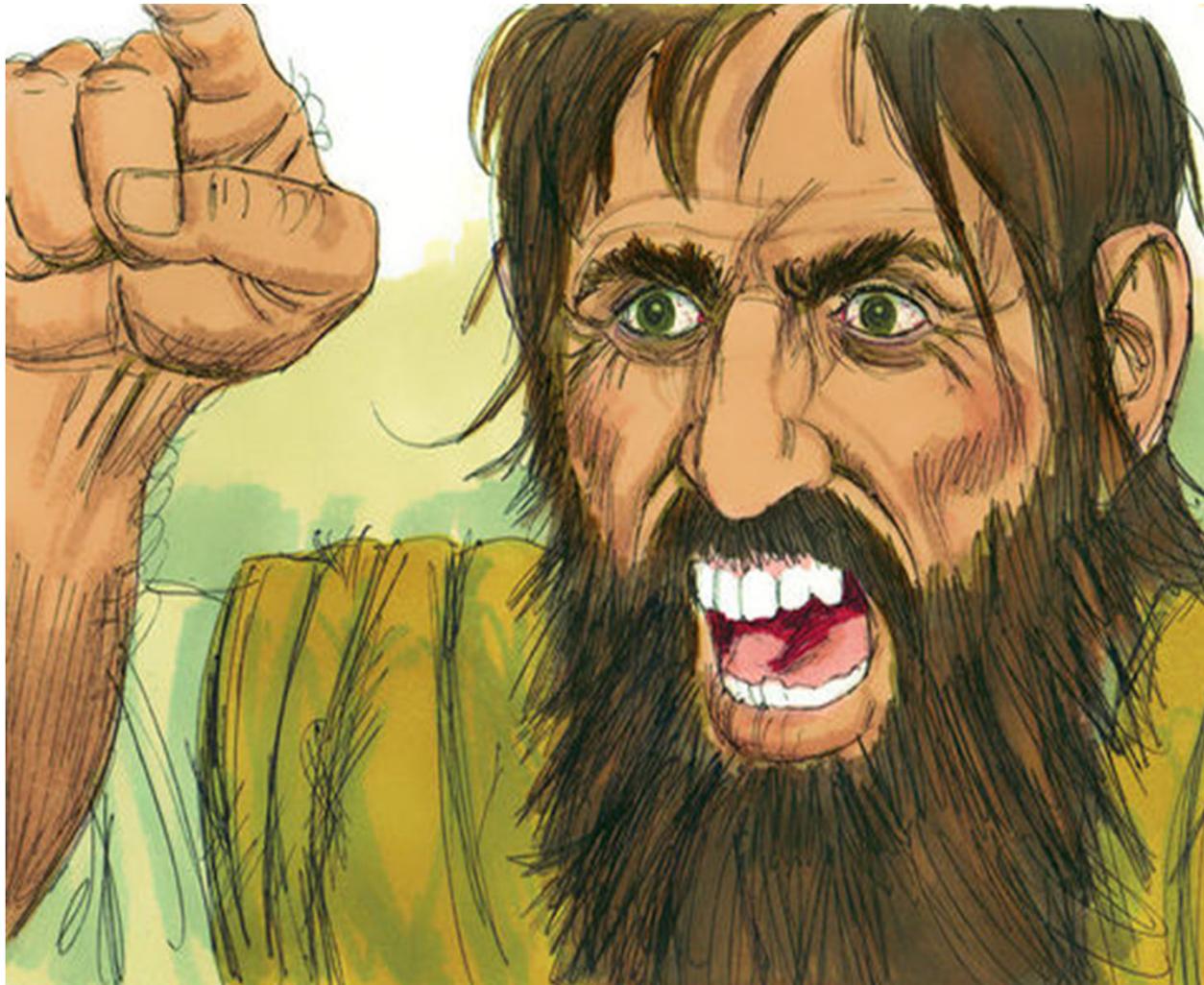
God gave Paul the power to perform unusual miracles. When handkerchiefs or aprons that had merely touched his skin were placed on sick people, they were healed of their diseases, and evil spirits were expelled.



Some Jews tried to copy what Paul was doing. Seven sons of Sceva, a leading priest, began trying to cast out evil spirits. They tried by using the name of Jesus in their incantation, saying, “I command you in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, to come out!”



But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?”



Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, overpowered them, and attacked them with such violence that they had to run from the house.



News of what happened spread quickly through Ephesus to both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was honored. Many who became believers confessed their sins. And a number of those who had practiced sorcery brought their expensive occult books and burned them at a public bonfire. So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.



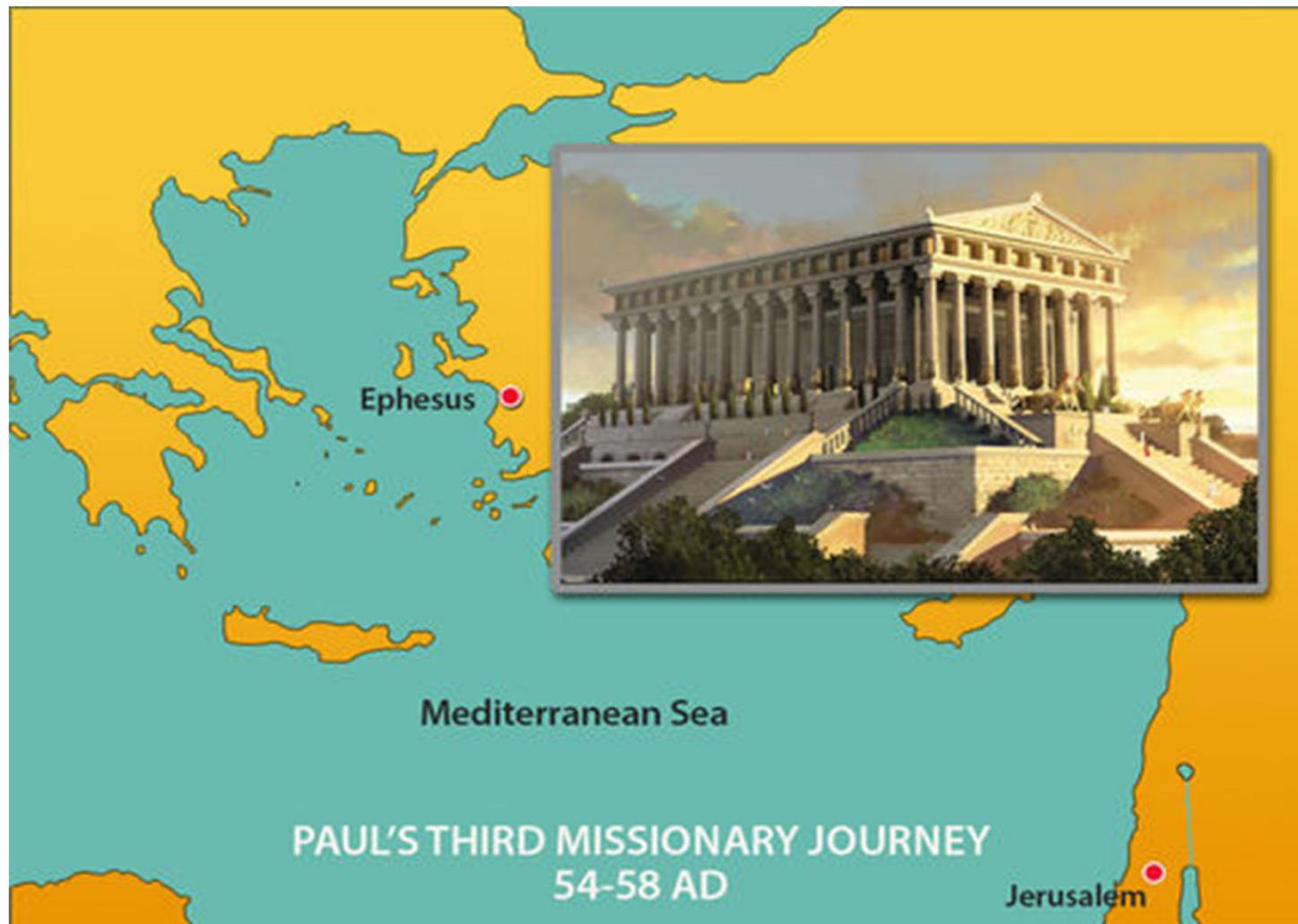
Afterward Paul was compelled by the Holy Spirit to go over to Macedonia and Achaia before going to Jerusalem. He sent his two assistants, Timothy and Erastus, ahead to Macedonia while he stayed a little longer in Asia.



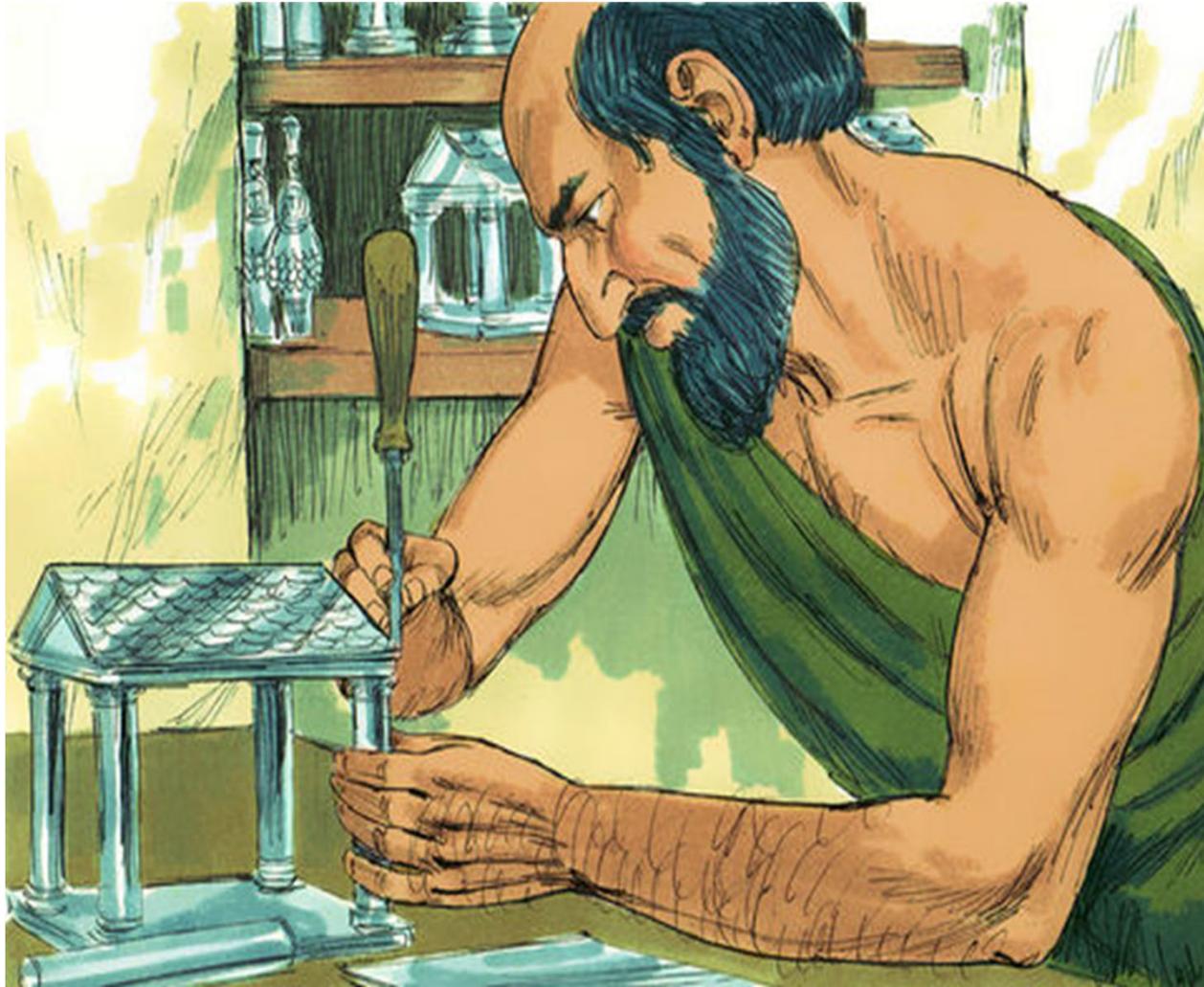
Paul had spent over two years in Ephesus preaching about Jesus being “The Way” to God. The new Christians became known as followers of “The Way.”



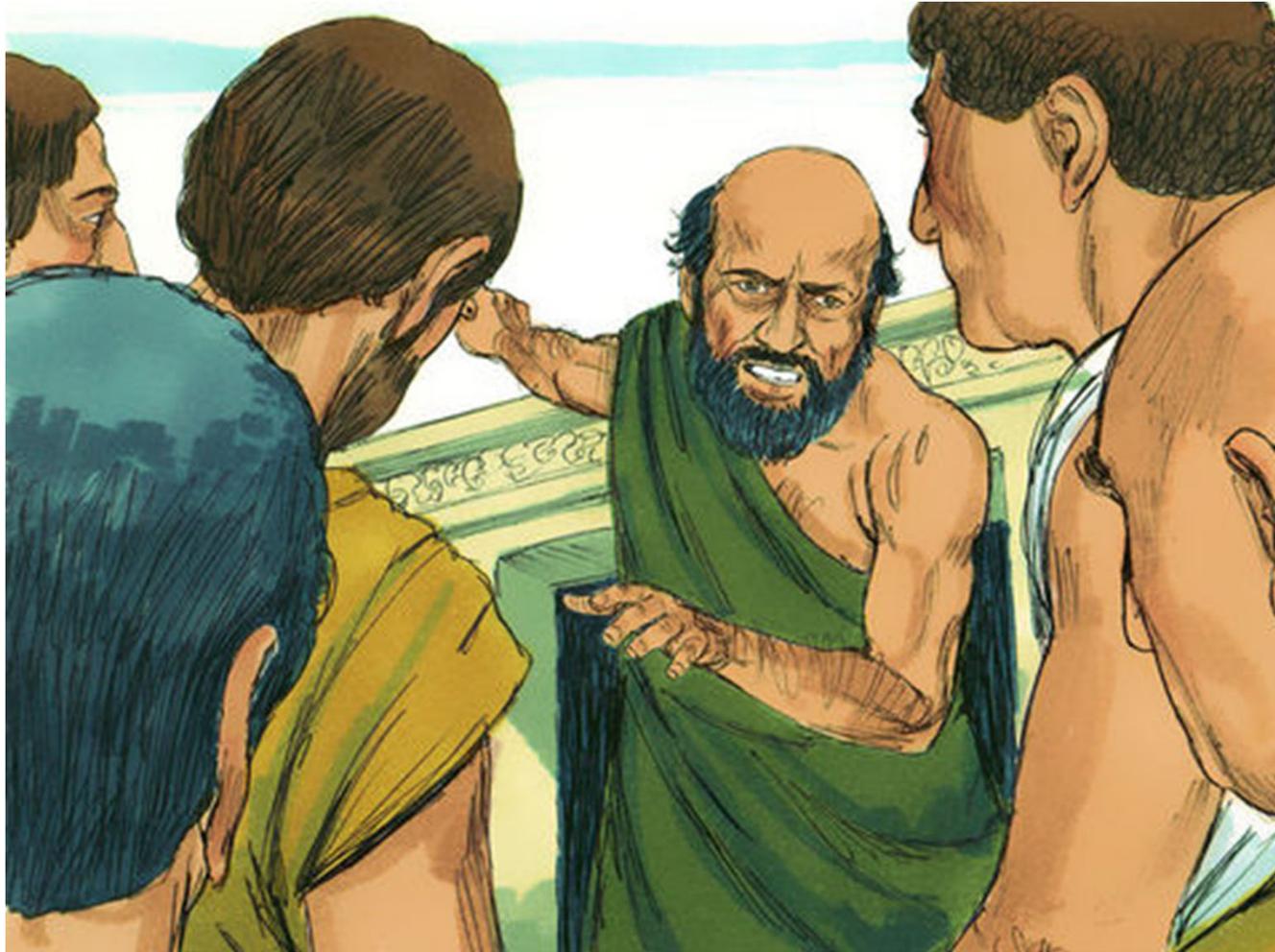
Remember that in Ephesus was the Temple of the Greek goddess Artemis (worshipped by the Romans as the goddess Diana). People from all around the area came to offer idol worship at the temple.



Demetrius, a silversmith, had a large business, employing many craftsmen, making silver shrines of the goddess Artemis. He called a meeting of craftsmen and traders who sold items to worshippers of Artemis.



Men, you know that our wealth comes from this business," Demetrius declared. "But this Paul has persuaded people around this area that handmade gods aren't really gods at all. I am concerned that the temple of the goddess Artemis will lose its influence and this magnificent goddess, whom all Asia and the world worship, will be robbed of her great prestige!"



On hearing this, the men became very angry and began shouting, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”



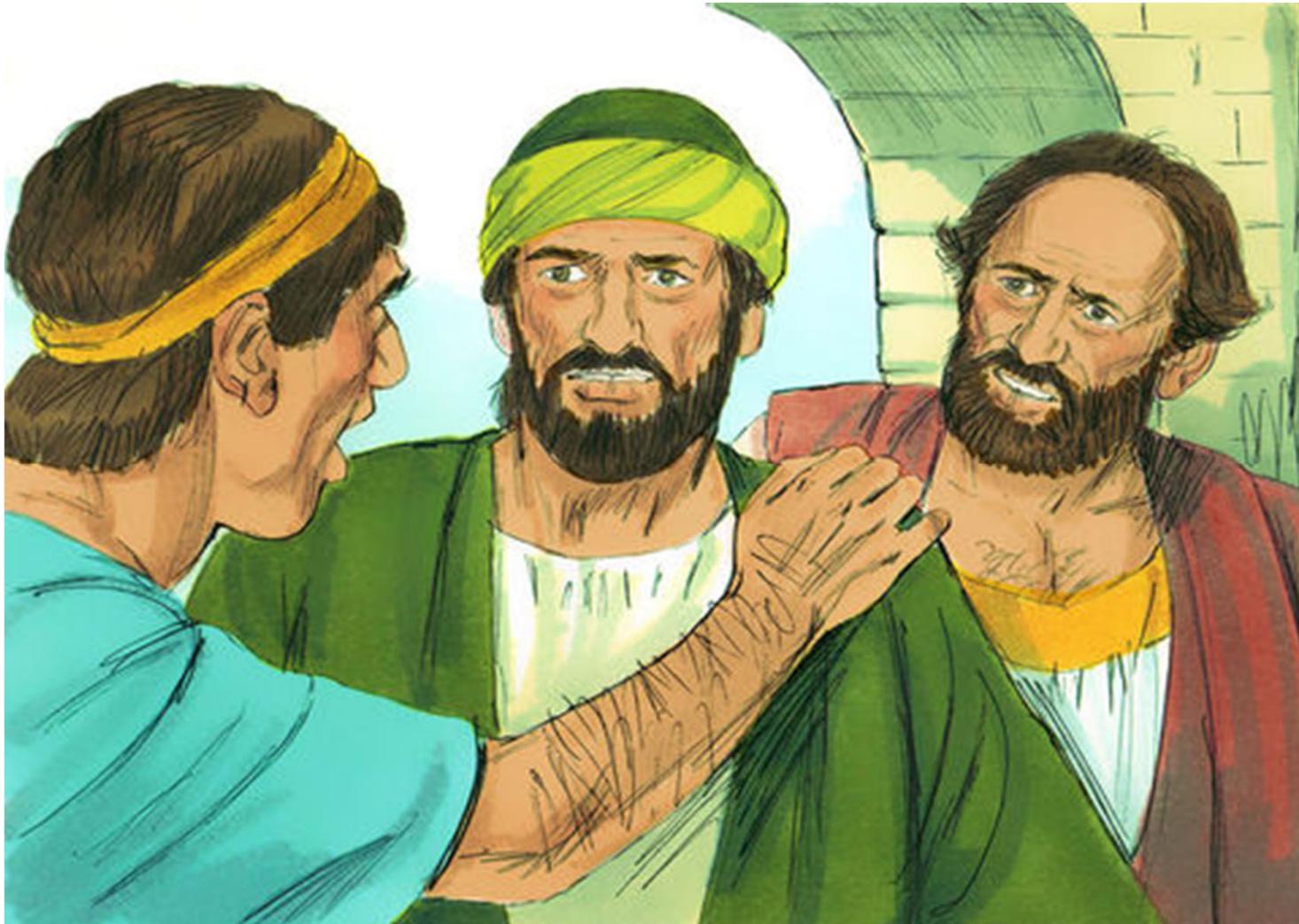
So the city was filled with confusion, and they rushed together into the amphitheater. (We saw a picture of this earlier.)



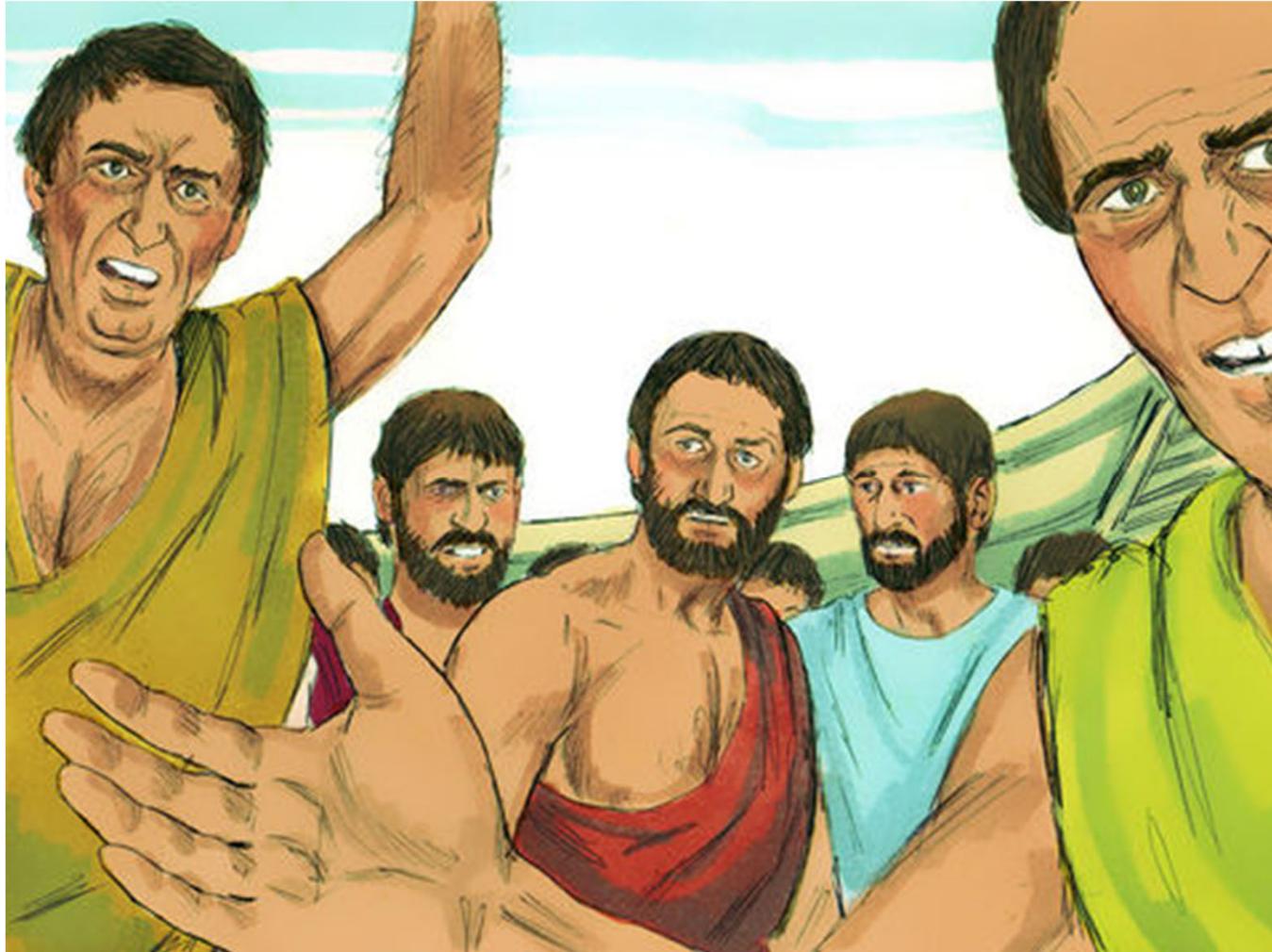
They dragged two of Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, Gaius and Aristarchus, into the amphitheater with them.



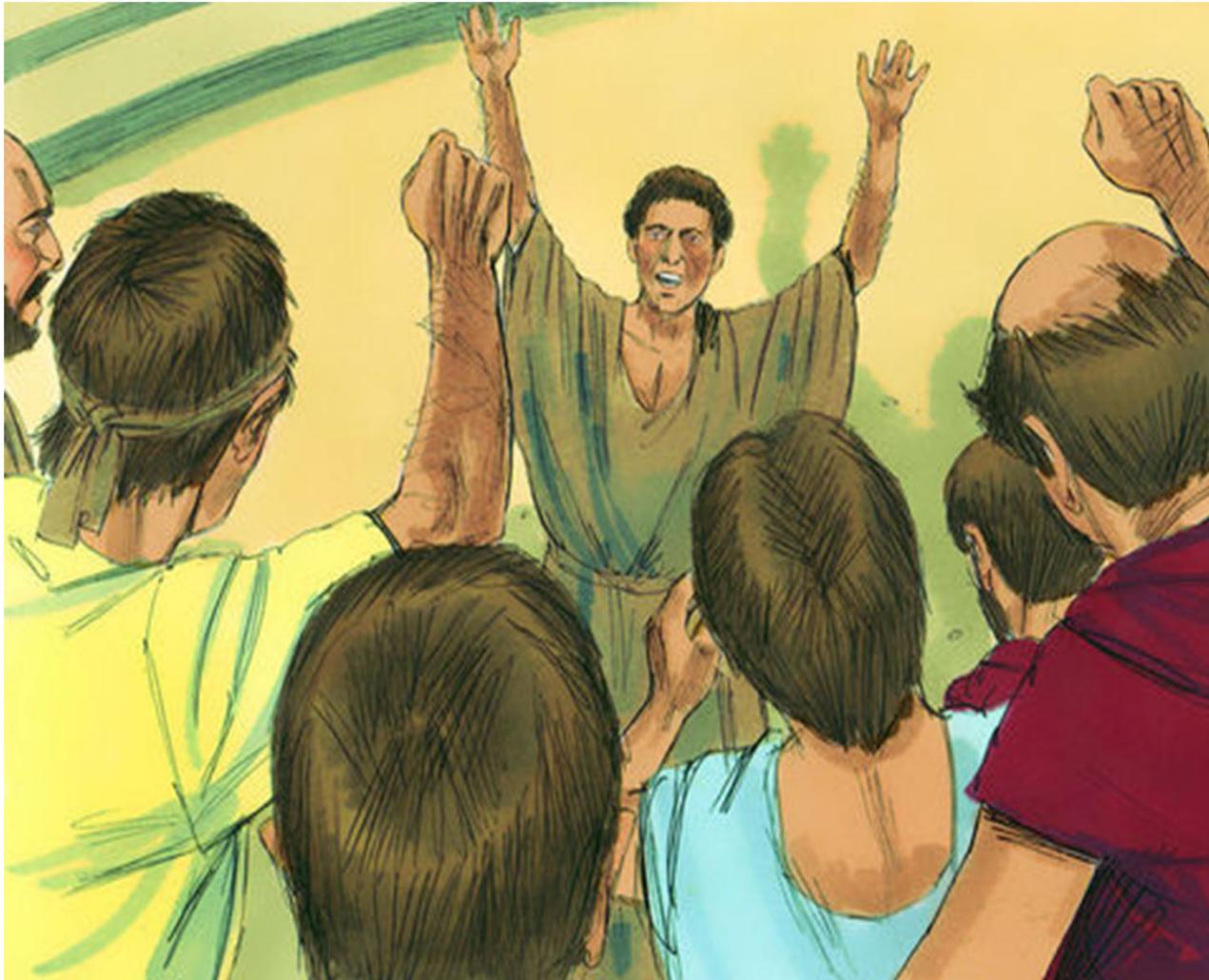
When Paul heard about the riot, he wanted to go to the amphitheater, but the believers wouldn't let him. Officials, who were also friends of Paul, were begging him not to risk his life and to stay away.



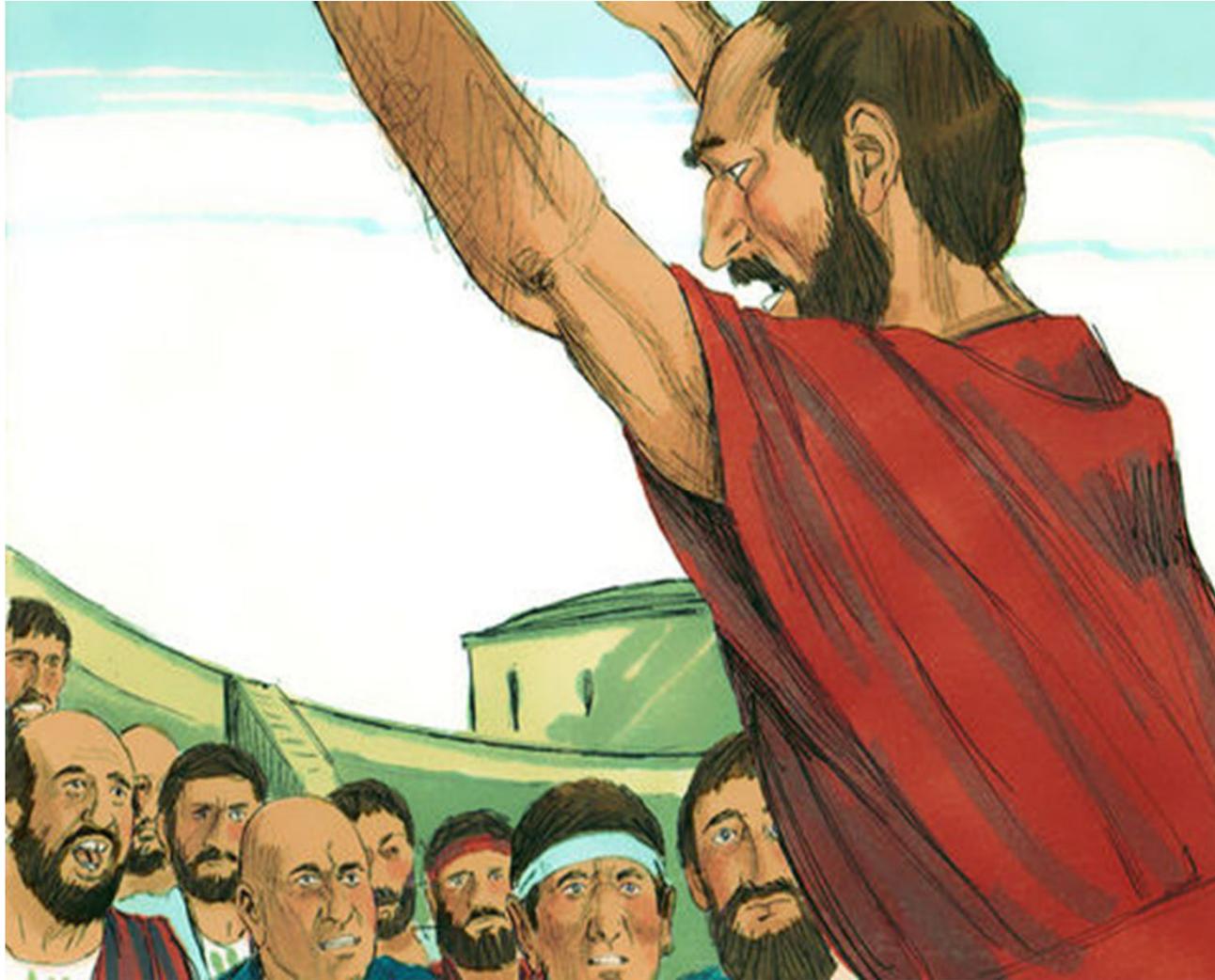
Inside, the people were all shouting, some one thing and some another. Everything was in confusion and many didn't even know why they were there!



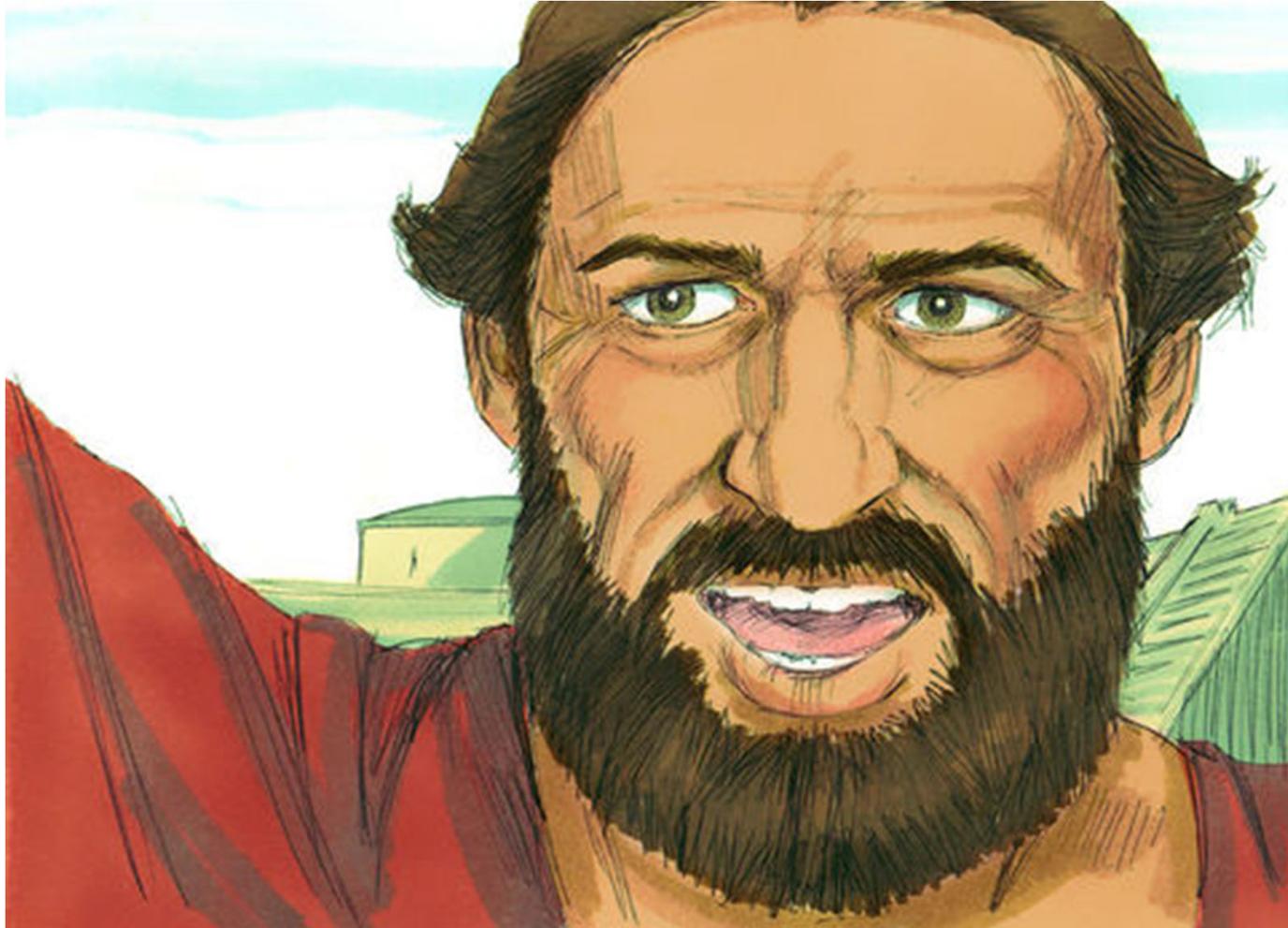
The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander forward and told him to explain the situation. He motioned for silence and tried to speak. But when the crowd realized he was a Jew, they started chanting again and again, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” They continued this chant for two hours!



Eventually, when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, “Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis, and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky?”



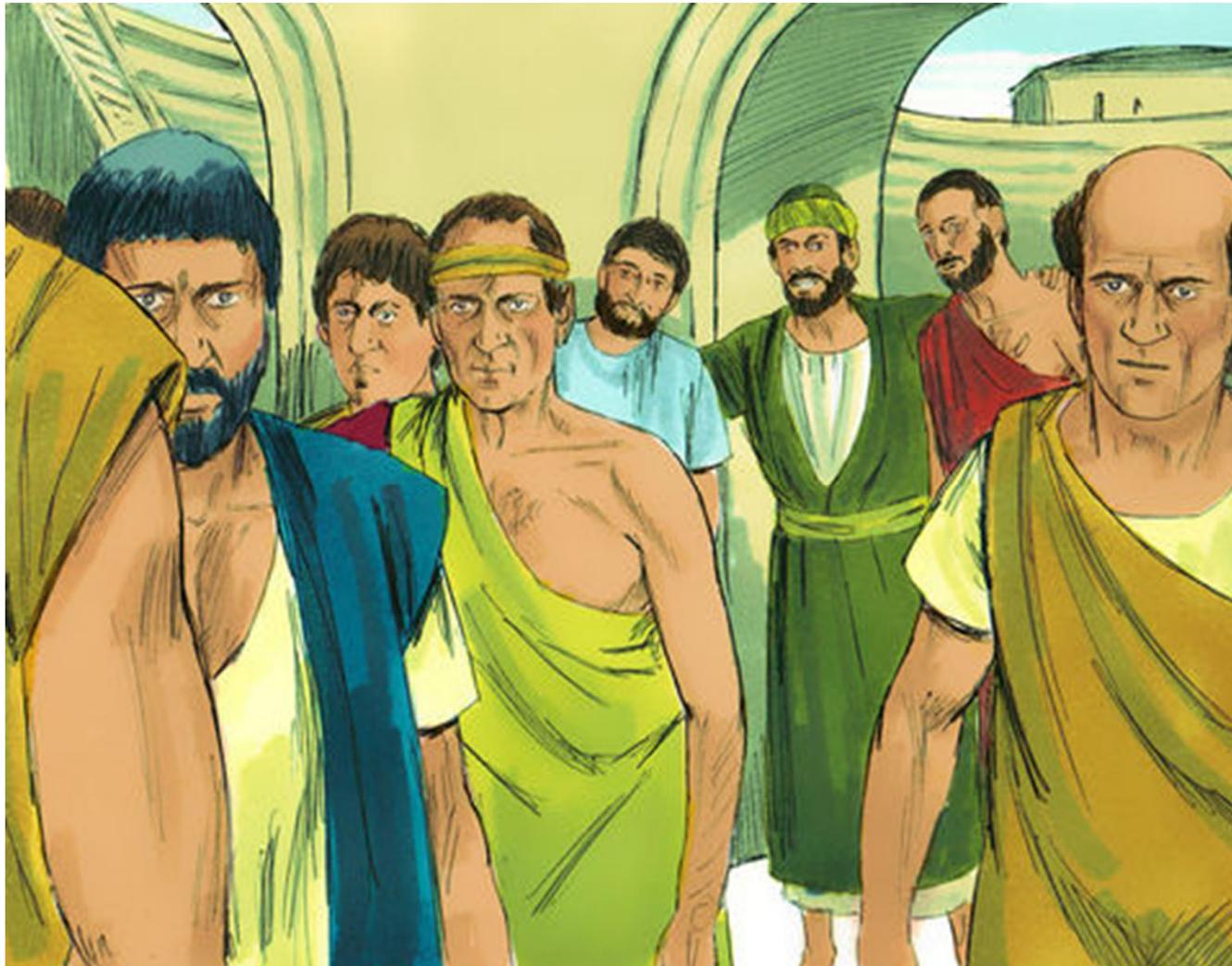
“Stay calm. You have brought these men here, but they have not stolen from the temple or spoken against our goddess. If Demetrius and the craftsmen have a case against them, they should make formal charges. The courts are in session, and the officials can hear the case at once.”



“For we really are in danger of being charged by the Roman government with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion.”



When the town clerk had said these things, he dismissed the crowd. After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.



After leaving Ephesus (center of map), Paul made his way to Troas and then sailed to Macedonia. As he traveled, he encouraged the Christians in each place he visited and continued to preach the gospel.



He then moved south into Greece and the region of Achaia. He was there for three months always encouraging the believers.



Paul was preparing to sail back to Syria when he discovered a plot by some Jews against his life. Because of this threat, he decided to return through Macedonia.



Paul then headed north for Philippi. Several men were traveling with him. They went on ahead and waited for Paul at Troas. After the Passover ended, Paul boarded a ship at Philippi and headed for Troas where he and the other men stayed for a week.



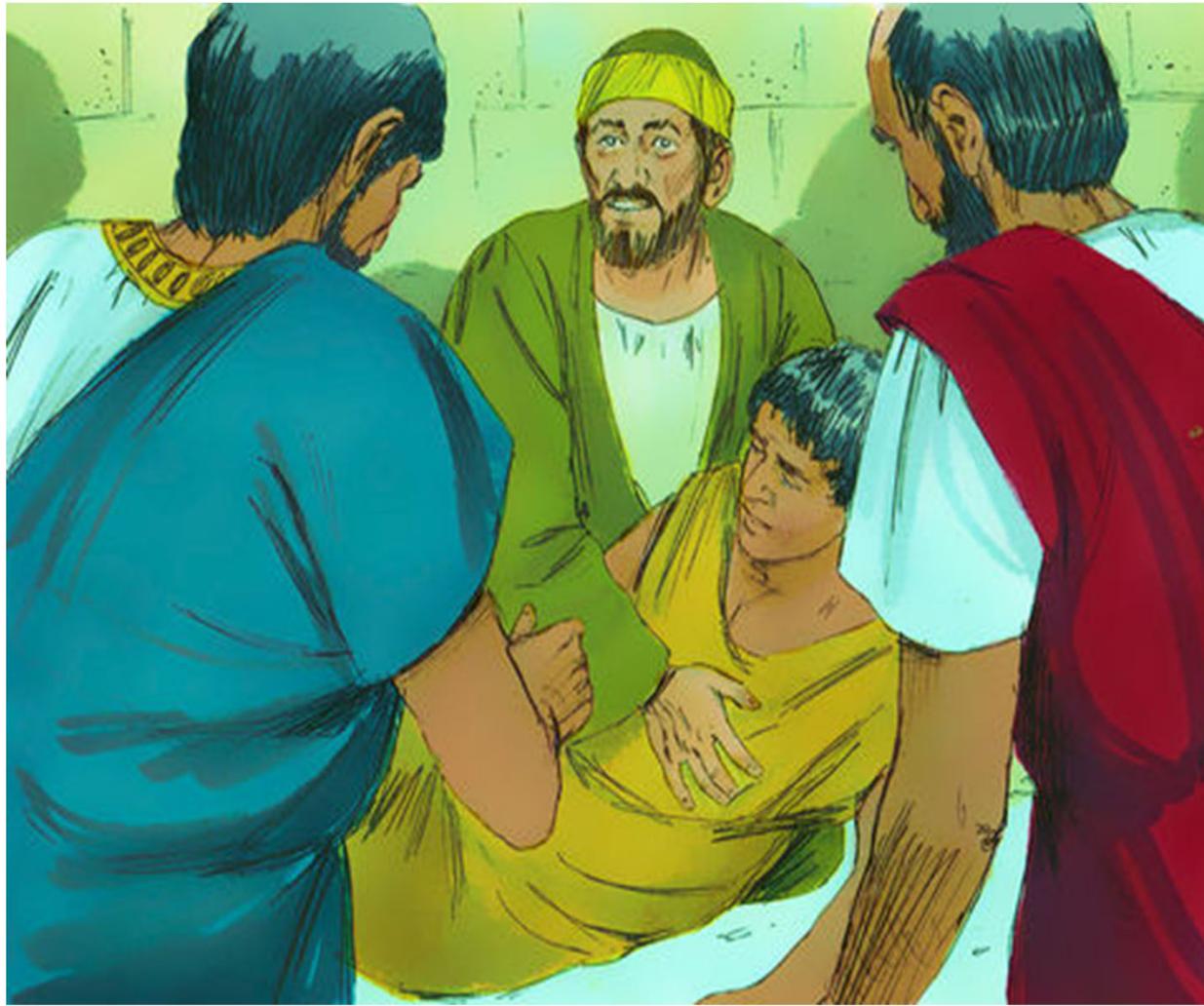
On the first day of the week, Paul gathered with the local Christians to share in breaking bread together. Paul was talking to them, and since he was leaving the next day, he prolonged his speech until midnight. The upstairs room was lit with many flickering lamps.



As Paul spoke on and on, a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story to his death.



Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.” Indeed, through Jesus, this wondrous miracle was performed.



They returned upstairs to break bread together, after which, Paul spoke with them until daybreak, and then he left. Meanwhile, the youth was taken home unhurt.



Paul and his companions continued on their journey. Because he was trying to reach Jerusalem in time for Pentecost, Paul did not stop in Ephesus. However, he did send a message asking the elders there to come and meet him at Miletus.



When they arrived, Paul told them, “You know that from the day I arrived in Asia, I have done the Lord's work humbly and with many tears. I have endured many trials and plots. My message to both Jews and Greeks has been to repent from sin and turn to God.”



“I am led by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit has told me that imprisonment and much suffering lie ahead. But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work for which I was called.”



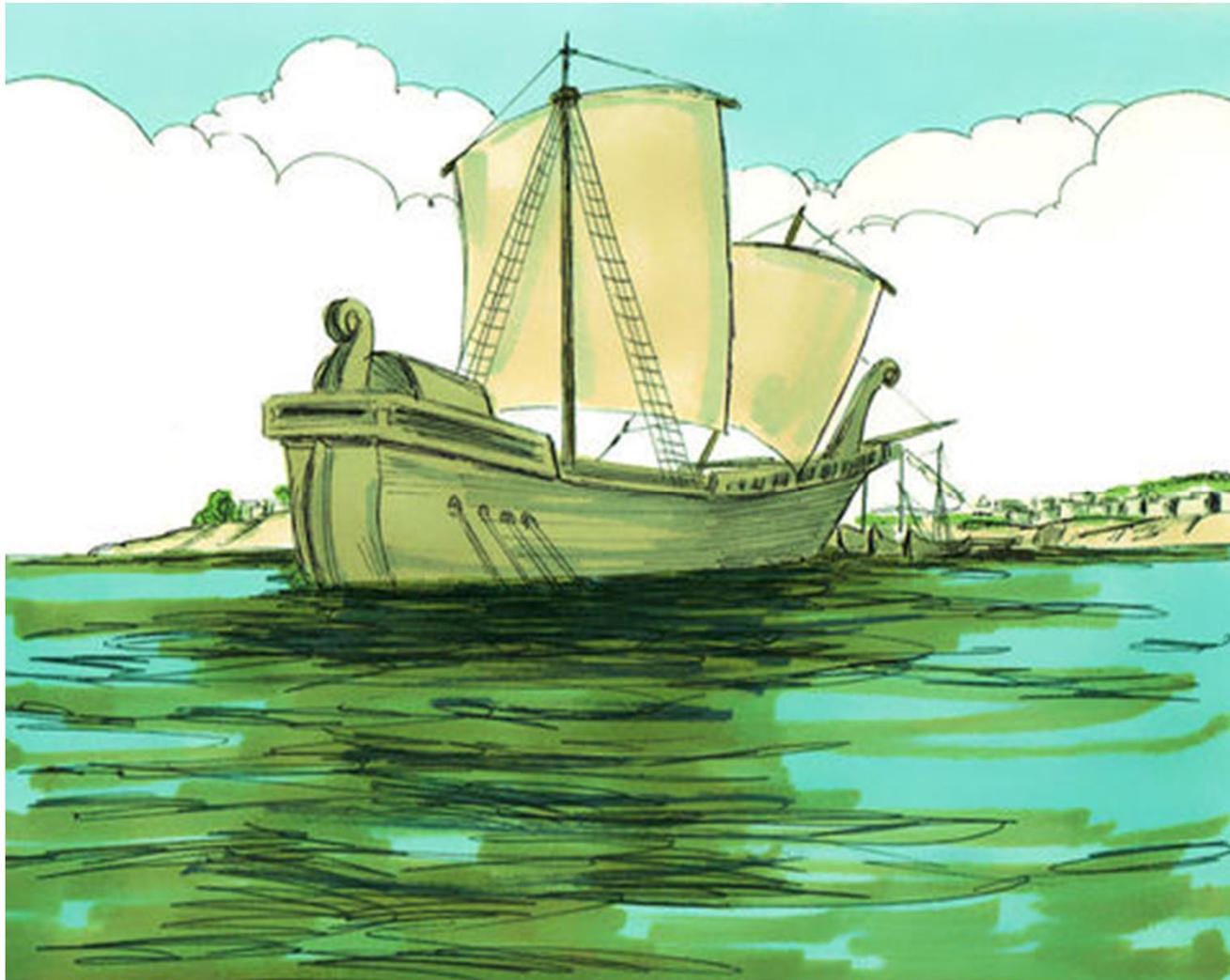
Paul told the elders to guard themselves and God's people and to beware of false teachers. He asked that they remember the three years he had spent with them preaching the gospel. When he finished speaking, he knelt and prayed with them.



They all cried and embraced knowing they would never again see Paul.



Then they escorted him down to the ship and waved goodbye as he set sail.



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