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Paul’s Anxiety in Troas

2: 12-13

Paul’s anxiety in Troas DIG: Until Titus returned with good news, Paul “could not rest.” What does that reveal about Paul’s concern for his church? What does the phrase “a door had been opened” for him mean? What was the source of Paul’s anxiety? Where was he headed?

REFLECT: When has the Lord brought you full circle back to the place you started ministering so you could finish what you started? When was the last time you couldn’t rest because of a ministry opportunity? What opposition to your ministry are you facing now?

ADONAI does not guarantee emotional peace in our ministry.

With these two verses we now come full circle in **Paul’s** explanation concerning **his** change of travel plans (**to see link click [AI](#) - A Change of Plans**). Moreover, these verses also form a wonderfully crafted transition that both opens the way for what follows (**2:14-17**), and yet anticipates the resumption of the travel narrative (**7: 5-16**), which both make reference to **the apostle** coming from **Macedonia**, to **him** not having **rest**, and to **Titus**. It also addresses **his** many troubles which have caused some of **the Corinthians** to question **his** suitability and qualifications as **an apostle**.⁷⁹

Now when I went to Troas to proclaim the Good News of the Messiah (2:12a). The full name of **Troas** was Alexandria the **Troas**, which distinguished it from other cities named Alexandria. It was located in the province of Mysia near the mouth of the Dardanelles. **It** was about ten miles from the famous city of Troy, for which **it** was named. **Troas** was founded in 300 BC, and Emperor Augustus had granted **it** the coveted status of a Roman colony. “The Troad” with the definite article may refer to the region of the Troad and not just the city of **Troas itself**; but since **the city** was a seaport on the Aegean Sea, it would have been the most likely rendezvous point for **Paul** to wait for the return of **Titus**.

And then a door of opportunity had been opened for me [in Macedonia] by the Lord (2:12b). The word **and** (Greek: *kai*) can be considered a conjunction, as communicating a consecutive event. Read this way, **the open door** came *following Paul’s* arrival in **Troas**. **The apostle** commonly used that phrase to describe ministry opportunities. In **First Corinthians 16:8-9** Paul spoke of **an open door** at **Ephesus**, “**But I will remain in Ephesus until Shavu’ot, because a great and important door has been opened for my work, and there are many people opposing me.**” After returning to **their** home church at Antioch after **their First Missionary Journey**, **Paul** and Barnabas **reported what God had done through them, that He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:27)**. Paul urged **the Colossians** to pray **that God may open a door for us to proclaim the message about the Messiah (Colossians 4:3)**.⁸⁰



Paul candidly shared **his** anxiety: **I could not rest** because of the opportunity in **Macedonia**, and **because I failed to find my brother Titus (2:13a)**. **Titus** had been an important traveling companion and associate of **Paul’s**, first mentioned in the Jerusalem meeting of **Galatians 2:1-3**, and as a Greek doubtlessly aided **Paul** in **his** many encounters in the Mediterranean world. **The apostle** was burdened because **he** didn’t know how **the Corinthians** had responded to **his** “severe letter,” and that anxiety was compounded when the days passed with no word from **Titus**. Could the unexpected delay signal that all had not gone well at **Corinth**? Had **his** worst fears been realized and the situation gotten much worse? **He** didn’t know. Therefore, **he** was beside **himself**. We learn later in the letter that the plans of **ADONAI** overruled, and **Paul’s** anxiety was transformed into joy (see **BI - The Effects of the Severe Letter**).

We do not know why **Titus** had been delayed in **his** travel, but it seems obvious

that **Paul** had expected **his** younger fellow minister, and was disturbed when **he** did not show up on time. In any case, **the apostle’s** statement that **he could not rest** is telling and adds to the overall picture of **Paul** being anxious over the situation in **Corinth**. However, it may also be that he was anxious because of the great opportunity to preach the gospel in **Macedonia**, as suggested by the glowing report of the churches there (see **Bn - A Biblical Model for Giving**). The opportunity, however, coincided with **all kinds of troubles - altercations without and apprehensions within (7:5)**, as ministry opportunity often does.⁸¹

It is important to understand that the leadership of **the Lord** and the purposefulness of the gospel ministry are not guarantees of emotional peace. **Paul** was anxious when **Titus** did not show up in **Troas**, and **his** initial experiences in **Macedonia** were anything but peaceful (**7:5**). **ADONAI** encouraged **the apostle** when **Titus** finally showed up, but **Second Corinthians** shows us a great deal of anxiety on **Paul’s** part (**1:8-9** and **11:27-28** for example). **He** was not debilitated by it, but **he** was affected, and driven to deeper dependence on the **Lord**. Therefore, we should not read a lack of emotional peace as an indication that **YHVH** has not led us in our ministries. We are sometimes led to difficult places for the sake of the gospel. Anxiety may simply be a normal part of life in such places.⁸²

So Paul left the fellow believers in Troas (Acts 16:8-11) and went on to Macedonia (2:13b). Travel was greatly affected by the seasons of the year. Perhaps winter had set in and closed the seas to travel by ship. **Paul** knew that if **Titus** had not arrived by that point, **he** would need to travel overland. So **Paul** moved north **to Macedonia**. Hopefully, **the Corinthians** would understand why.

As mentioned earlier, **Second Corinthians** is the most personally revealing of all **Paul’s** letters, and here is a great example. **Paul** wasn’t worrying about **himself**. **He** was anxious that **the Corinthians** would **not be taken advantage of by the Adversary (2:11-12)**! Humanly speaking, it looked like the end of the battle, with **the Evil One** as the victor. When speaking of **his open door** in **Ephesus**, **he** added: **And there are many people opposing me (16:9b)**. Now that doesn’t fit what most of us think. We believe that when **ADONAI opens the door** for ministry it’s going to be just smooth sailing. And if we do have any problems or opposition, that must not be **God’s** will or plan. But Scripture teaches us just the opposite. When **ADONAI** is at work . . . **the Adversary** is at work. So when you face opposition from **the Evil One** in your ministry, know that you are on the right track because you are a threat to **him**.

Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that **You** go with us in all our trials. **For God Himself has said: I will never leave you or forsake you (Hebrews 13:5).** Thank **You** that when we have no idea where to turn from the opposition – **You** have it all figured out. Though **You** are all knowing and can wipe out anything in **Your** path – **You** sometimes allow trials, for it is often thru trials that **You** receive the greatest glory. Trials are an opportunity for **You** to show **Your** wisdom and mighty hand and glorify **Your** name as the trial is turned into a victory. **Yes, you yourselves planned evil against me. God planned it for good (Genesis 50:20).**

Though it is hard when we are trying to serve **You** and injustice comes against us, yet we can still hold tight to **Your hand** that is holding us and trust **You**. **For You have been my help, My soul clings to You . . . Your right hand upholds me (Psalms 63:8a-9).** When David had been anointed king of Isra’el and Sha’ul was trying to kill him, David could have complained, but instead he looked up lovingly to **You** and chose to focus on his relationship with **You** as being the source of his joy. **Since Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You (Psalms 63:3).** Please remind us of the eternal nature of **Your** loving relationship and that trials soon will be over. **For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18).**

Thank **You** for the joy of sharing your eternal love with others. Though some may not listen, with eternity on the line, the problems and trials we encounter while sharing about you – are nothing compared to the joy of pleasing such a wonderful and loving Heavenly **Father!** **Your Spirit** can use the words we speak to remind and convict sinners so they repent, turn from their sins and have deep peace in loving and serving the **Great King of kings!** It is a joy to serve **You** – even in times of trials. In your holy **Son’s** name and power of resurrection Amen.