



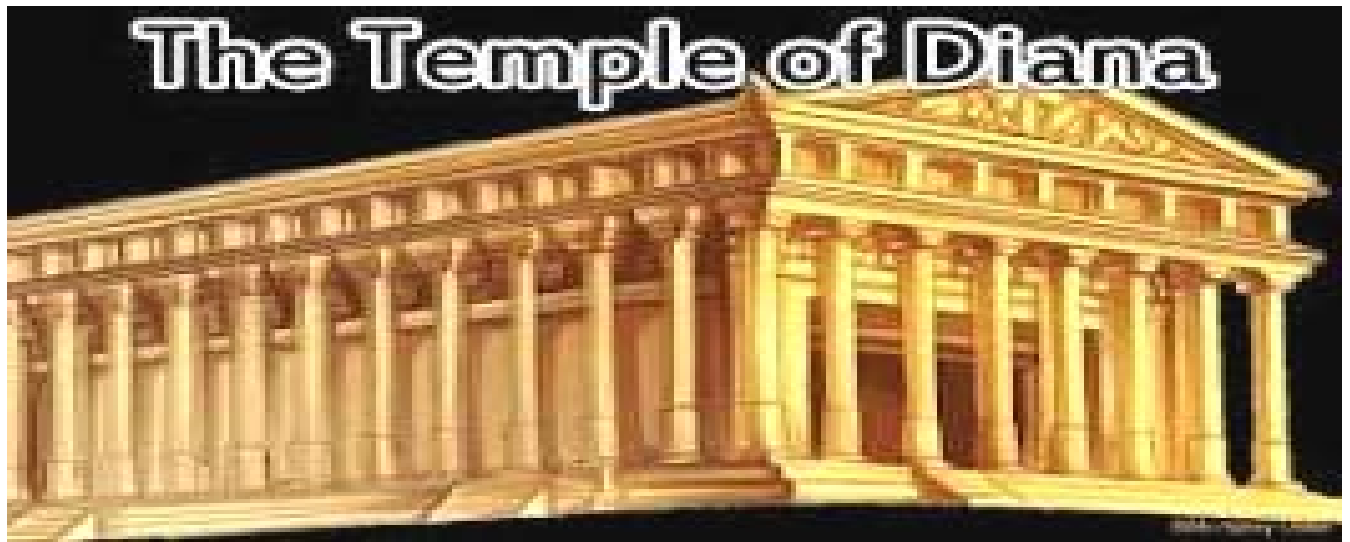
Ephesians

Background

I. History of Ephesus

- Today it is Seluk in Turkey located on the Aegean Coast.
- Ephesus was a major city of Asia Minor and was probably the most principal in all of Eastern Europe.
- It provided access to the silk road. It was known as the city of marble. There was a large stadium, library and the Temple of Diana.
- Ephesus can be tracked back to the Hittite Era. They worshipped Cybele, who was considered a Mother Goddess.

- e. In the 10th Century, there was an Athenian prince who sought guidance from an oracle on where to start a new city. The Oracle said that a fish and boar will show the way. The tale goes that one morning a fish jumped out of the pan and started a fire which drove out a boar. The Athenian Prince took that to be the sign and started a new Greek city in Ephesus. They transitioned the worship of Cybele to the worship of Artemis. Eventually, the Roman colonization used the Roman Goddess Diana from the Greek Goddess Artemis.
- f. The Temple of Artemis/ Diana was one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. It was the largest Greek temple ever built. It was 418 ft x 239 ft. It was even built on an artificial foundation so it wouldn't be affected by earthquake.



- g. Diana was a mother goddess and associated with fertility as evidenced by the statues depicting several eggs or breasts.
- h. They have found statues of Diana in archaeological digs.



- i. There is debate as to whether there were female temple prostitutes who were priestesses who raised money for the temple. Some modern scholars have challenged this due to lack of archaeological evidence.

II. Paul in Ephesus

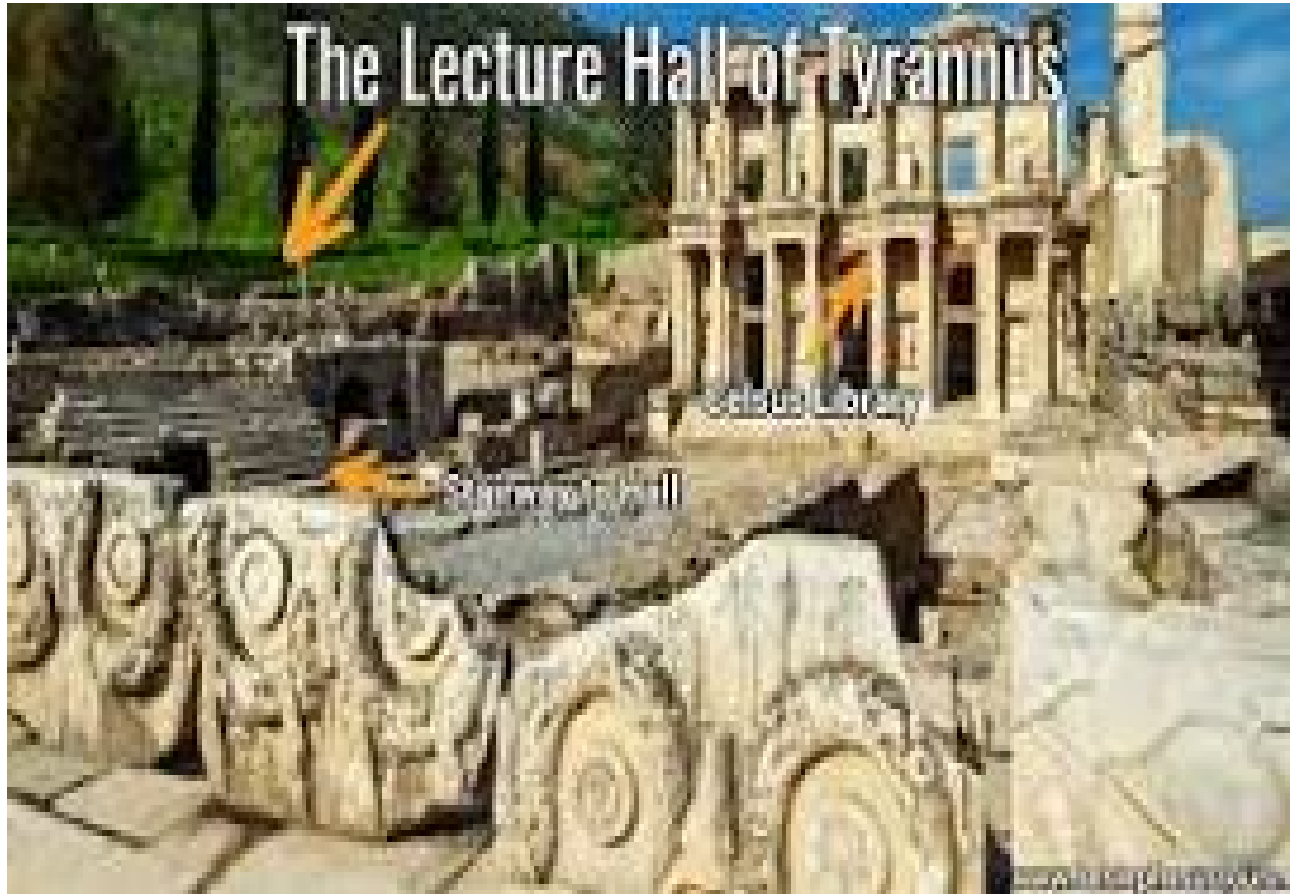
- a. Paul visited Ephesus briefly on his second missionary journey. The above map shows where this took place on the journey.
 - i. **Acts 18:19-21** ¹⁹And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰When they desired *him* to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; ²¹But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.
- b. This first encounter was brief. It's interesting that the Jews from the synagogue actually didn't want Paul to leave as he reasoned with them.

- c. Paul did end up back in Ephesus during his third missionary journey. See below map.



- d. This encounter ended up being the longest recorded time period that Paul ministered at one of the churches.
- i. **Acts 20:31** ³¹Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.
- e. Of the 3 years, we have a breakdown of at least 2 years and 3 months.
- i. **Acts 19:8** ⁸And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.
 - ii. **Acts 19:9-10** ⁹But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one

Tyrannus.¹⁰ And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.



- f. During the three years, several key events took place.
 - i. The twelve disciples who were baptized and spoke in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:1-7).
 - ii. From the synagogue to the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:8-10).
 - iii. Paul's miracles including the handkerchiefs and aprons (Acts 19:11-12).
 - iv. The evil spirit that jumped on and wounded the exorcists (Acts 19:13-16).
 - v. Ephesians (Jews and Greeks) magnified the Lord. The magic book burning (Acts 19:17-20).

- vi. Demetrius and the silversmiths in wrath because they made gods of Diana and Paul turned the hearts of the Ephesians saying there are no gods made with hands (Acts 19:24-28).
 - 1. **Acts 19:26** ²⁶Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands:
- vii. The mob in the theatre. The town clerk gets the mob to dismiss (Acts 19:29-41).
- g. During the third missionary journey, Paul went back by Ephesus to bid farewell to the elders of the church.
 - i. **Acts 20:17** ¹⁷And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.
- h. In verse 19 of the farewell, Paul mentions what befell him of the Jews.
 - i. **Acts 20:19** ¹⁹Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:
- i. The farewell prayer and dismissal was emotional.
 - i. **Acts 20:36-38** ³⁶And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. ³⁷And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, ³⁸Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.
- j. Paul's mention of Ephesus in other places
 - i. **I Corinthians 15:32** ³²If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.
 - ii. **I Corinthians 16:8** ⁸But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

III. Revelation

a. Ephesus was one of the seven churches of Asia mentioned in Revelation.

i. Mostly a positive evaluation.

1. Canst bear them which are evil (Rev. 2:2).
2. Tried false apostles and proved they were liars (Rev. 2:2).
3. Hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6)
4. Didn't faint (Rev. 2:3)

ii. The admonition

1. Left their first love (Rev. 2:4)
2. Repent and do the first works (Rev. 2:5)

IV. The diversity of Ephesus

a. There were several different groups in Ephesus.

i. The Jews from the synagogue

1. **Acts 18:19**¹⁹ And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

ii. Jews knowing only the baptism of John (Apollos).

1. **Acts 18:24-25**²⁴ And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.²⁵ This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.
2. **Acts 19:3**³ And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

iii. Greeks

1. **Acts 19:10**¹⁰ And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

iv. Vagabond Jews

1. **Acts 19:13-14** ¹³Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. ¹⁴And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did so.

V. **Who was it written to?**

- a. There isn't any debate whether the church at Ephesus received this letter. The question is whether it was intended to be a cyclical letter throughout Asia. Some would argue that the "at Ephesus" wasn't present in all manuscripts. It's clearly in the King James Version.
 - i. **Ephesians 1:1** ¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:
 1. Saints in verse 1
 2. Clearly this group includes Gentiles in chapter 2 (11-13)
- b. Some evidences of a cyclical letter
 - i. The only name mentioned in this letter was Tychicus. When you compare that to other letters Paul often mentions names that were there, people in that church that he is saluting...etc.
 - ii. "Heard of your faith", yet he ministered with them for 3 years and knew them very intimately.
 1. **Ephesians 1:15** ¹⁵Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,
 - iii. The letter doesn't address a specific problem of that church. Most of Paul's letters do.
 - iv. Colossians was a very similar epistle and it was to be read in other places. Some have even suggested Ephesians could be the other epistle referenced.

1. Colossians 4:16 ¹⁶And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the *epistle* from Laodicea.

VI. Who wrote Ephesians?

- a. Paul wrote Ephesians and he wrote it in Rome while imprisoned. The consensus is a writing date around 60-62AD.
 - i. **Ephesians 3:1** ¹For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,
 - ii. **Ephesians 4:1** ¹I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
 - iii. **Ephesians 6:20** ²⁰For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
- b. Tychicus helped Paul write this letter and was sent back to Asia with this letter
 - i. **Ephesians 6:22-22** ²¹But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: ²²Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.
 - ii. **II Timothy 4:12** ¹²And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

VII. What is the purpose?

- a. The purpose of Ephesians is for the saints to understand their riches in Christ, identity in Christ and purpose to live out in Christ.
- b. The book of Ephesians breaks down in two main parts with many subsections.
- c. Ephesians 1-3 deal with doctrine and then Ephesians 4:1 is a transitional verse that begins putting that doctrine into practice with the walk of the believer from chapters 4-6.

- i. **Ephesians 4:1**¹I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord,
beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation
wherewith ye are called,