

EPHESIANS

Lesson 1

Background:

Very little remains from the Bible city of Ephesus. Historians and archaeologists have tried to assemble an overview of the city as it was nearly 2,000 years ago. Some conclusions are agreed upon, others have a wide range of discrepancy.

WHAT WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN

Ephesus was one of the largest cities in the Roman Empire. It's port was the gateway connecting Rome to the region of Asia and Babylon. It featured a main street from the port to the theater that was 35 feet wide with columns up to 50 feet deep on either side. Businesses were set up among the columns. The theater held up to 25,000 people and was the gathering place for the people.

Ephesus was home to one of the "Seven Ancient Wonders of the World". These included:

- The Great Pyramid at Giza, Egypt
- The Hanging Gardens of Babylon
- The Statue of Zeus at Olympia, Greece
- **The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus**
- The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus.
- The Colossus of Rhodes.
- The Lighthouse at Alexandria, Egypt.

The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus was the first marble temple made. Its size was around 450 feet long, about 225 feet wide and 60 feet tall. It was composed of 127 columns. The temple was said to be adorned with paintings, columns gilded with gold and silver and religious works of renowned Greek sculptors. It had been destroyed and rebuilt with the last incarnation, paid for (by the insistence of the people) by the Ephesians, who rejected the offer of Alexander the Great to pay for its rebuilding. The worship of Artemis was a great source of pride to the people of Ephesus and brought people from all over the world to see the temple.

WHAT IS UNCERTAIN

The population of the city at the time of the Apostle Paul can range from a low of 25,000 to a high of 300,000 (depending on the scholar or source you read). The dimensions of the temple vary slightly (except for one source that claims the columns were 197 feet tall).

APOSTLE PAUL'S FIRST RECORDED APPEARANCE THERE

Acts 18:18-23

WORK IN EPHEBUS

Acts 18: 24- 28

PAUL'S WORK WITH EPHEBUS ON 3rd MISSIONARY JOURNEY

Acts 19:1-7

Did you notice:

Acts 18:18-23 Paul was there during a stop-over from Corinth to Syria. Stayed long enough to do some teaching at the synagogue, but quickly moved on.

Acts 18: 24- 28 Work was not limited to Paul. Aquila and Priscilla were working in Ephesus. Apollos, coming from Alexandria, Egypt and would later head to Corinth, Greece; came and worked with the people. Lack of understanding about baptism was handled privately and cordially. Apollos was open to learning more, and Priscilla and Aquila were willing to share what they knew. The Christians at Ephesus then sent Apollos on as a missionary.

Acts 19:1-7 Paul found individuals that could have been taught early on by Apollos. Paul does not question their faith or salvation, but takes the opportunity to cordially teach them more about living for Jesus. They respond with being baptized. God shows them the difference as they are given Gifts of the Spirit.

What Lessons can you learn for your personal walk with Jesus?

What lessons can the church learn about how they can serve and function?