

INTRO TO EPHESIANS

Ephesians 1:1-2

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Author: The Apostle Paul

1. Formerly Saul of Tarsus
2. Apostle to the Gentiles

B. Date: c. 60-63 AD

C. Circumstances:

1. Under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28)
2. Wrote Ephesians, Colossians, & Philemon about same time
3. Letters carried by Tychicus, accompanied by Onesimus

D. Audience: “The Saints” (at Ephesus)—*saint* means *holy, sacred*

1. The Church at Ephesus
2. Maybe “Encyclical” (Col 4:16)
3. The Church throughout the Ages (2 Pet 3:15-16)

E. Focus: The Mystery of the Church

II. NOTEWORTHY DETAILS

A. Language and Style—similar but different from Paul’s other letters

1. Phrases build and multiply
2. Verbal similarities with Colossians
3. Earlier ideas more developed in Ephesians
4. Less instructional, more prayerful

B. Mature Church—well catechized, no major problems for Paul to correct

1. Apollos preached there before Paul (Acts 18:24-28)
2. Paul ministered longest here, 2+ years (Acts 19; 20:17-38)
3. Evangelism center for W Asia Minor during Paul’s stay (Acts 19:10)
4. John and Mary Mother of Jesus settled here (tradition)

III. **THE CITY OF EPHEBUS**—located in modern day Turkey

A. **History of the City**

1. Conquered by Alexander the Great c. 334 B.C. (Greek)
2. Under Roman dominion c.130 B.C.

B. **Capital of Roman province of Asia**

1. One of 5 leading cities of the empire
2. Affluent port city, very cosmopolitan
3. Celsus Library—one of greatest libraries of world (intellectual center)

C. **Pagan Worship**—14 different temples in the city

1. **Temple of Artemis** (Acts 19:23-41)—7 wonders of ancient world
 - a. Goddess of fertility and life
 - b. Priests were eunuchs (emasculated men)
 - c. Worship included drunken orgies & sexual immorality
 - d. Economic prosperity tied to pagan worship
 - Temple used as central bank by merchants
 - Silversmith trade prospered selling replicas of the goddess idol
 - Hundreds of Temple Prostitutes (male and female)
2. **Temple to the Emperor**—major center of imperial cult
 - a. 2 temples to emperors (Augustus and Domitian)
 - b. Caesars claimed titles of “Savior, Master, Lord, Son of Man, God”
 - c. Expected to burn incense to the emperor (to prove loyalty) as you enter the public square and at various yearly festivals

E. **Center of Occult & Magic** (Acts 19:17-20)—very aware of spiritual powers