

## Notes on Ephesians

The city of Ephesus was situated on the west coast of what is now Asiatic Turkey. It was located at the mouth of the Cayster River between the mountain ranges and the sea. In New Testament times it had perhaps a quarter of a million inhabitants.

The city had a glorious history. Its harbor had allowed it to serve as an import/export center. A magnificent road, 70 feet wide and lined with elaborate columns, and streets paved with marble. It contained a temple dedicated to the fertility goddess, Diana (also called Artemis). The temple became known as one of the wonders of the ancient world. Local tradition held that the temple contained an image of the goddess which had fallen from heaven. During New Testament times the city also served as a center of worship of the Roman emperor.

Paul first arrived at Ephesus after he left Corinth near the end of his second missionary journey (Act 18:18-21). The date was in A.D. 51 or 52. Later Paul returned to Ephesus on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:1), and he remained there between two and three years (Acts 19:8, 10; 20:31). During this time his preaching and powerful ministry won a hearing for the gospel (19:10-12).

After his nearly three-year stay in Ephesus, Paul left for a visit to Macedonia and Greece (around A.D. 56/57). He later returned to the vicinity of Ephesus and asked elders from the church to meet him in nearby Miletus, a distance of about 40 or 50 miles. He demonstrated his concern and love for the church in a moving appeal to three elders (Acts 20:17-38).